VAA-Rules, Policies & Procedures
2016 Football Season

## SECTION 1 - PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY & GENERAL INFORMATION

The primary mission of the VAA In-house tackle football program is to provide instruction and training in football fundamentals. VAA has a strong commitment to encouraging teamwork, sportsmanship and fair, physical play at all levels.

## SECTION 2 – GENERAL INFORMATION

There are two separate divisions in the VAA Football Program; "MINORS" for 3rd and 4th graders and “MAJORS” for 5th and 6th graders. Any child residing in Independent School District 196 is eligible to play. However, the child should register for the association that they will attend high school. The grade the child will be entering in September determines whether the child will play in the MINORS or MAJORS league. "Playing-up" is prohibited. However, an exceptional player may be permitted to "play-up" at the discretion of the VAA Football Board.

Although there are two divisions each grade will only play against players at their age group, ex 3rd graders play against 3rd graders and 4th graders play against 4th graders and so on.

Parents can register on-line beginning MAY 1st. The VAA Football Program DOES NOT conduct parent informational meetings.

The initial player evaluation combine is generally conducted in early August (August 1st thru 4th 2016), followed by a player team placement or a draft process. **No team placement or car-pool requests will be honored.**

After teams have been selected in mid-August, additional players may be accepted at board discretion. Each team generally consists of 14-16 players. There are minimum playing time and weight limitation rules applicable to both divisions.

Team practices generally start the second week in August, after team rosters have been distributed and the coaches have contacted their players. Times and locations of practices are set by the coaching staff. Teams are limited to no more than four practices per week (two hours per practice) before the first game takes place. After the first game, teams are limited to no more than four "team events" (game or practice) per week (two hours per event). League events such as team pictures do not qualify. Parents should expect 4 events every week.

The first games typically begin the last week of August. Each team plays 8-10 regular season games. Games are usually scheduled to take place on Tuesday and Thursday evenings and Saturday mornings, but sometimes exceptions have to be made due to scheduling. Generally, each team will play two games per week.

**Game locations for the 2016 season**

VAA Hayes fields 14599 Hayes Road Apple Valley

EVHS 6200 140th Street West Apple Valley

Falcon Ridge Middle School 12900 Johnny Cake Ridge Road

Blackhawk Middle School 1540 Deerwood Dr Eagan

Goat Hill 4291 Lexington Ave S Eagan

Eagan High School 4185 Braddock Trail Eagan

Our VAA team with the best record is the League Champion. At the conclusion of the regular season, all teams participate in a tournament with teams seeded by regular season record. The tournament games are generally held in mid-October.

The two teams that are ranked the highest after our playoff tournament will receive trophies. These are the players on the team that ends in first place and also the team that is runner up.

Equipment provided to the player by VAA must be returned and the end of the 2016 Football season. In-House players get to keep their VAA issued jersey. (players must purchase football pants, cleats and water bottle)

## SECTION 4 - PROGRAM FUNDING

Costs to equip each player is approximately $225-250 (this is not the registration fee). This does not include any additional team equipment or field equipment. Each year, the VAA Football Program has to retire a significant portion of its equipment and purchase new equipment. In order to keep registration costs low, the league counts on parents and numerous volunteers to assist in our fund-raiser.

## SECTION 5 - REFUNDS

Because the vast majority of revenue necessary to run the league is based on registrations, once a player is placed on a team, there will be no refund. This rule applies regardless of circumstance. VAA see website for more details.

## SECTION 6 - CONDUCT POLICY

Coaches are responsible for their own behavior, as well as controlling the behavior of their players and fans. Harassment of coaches, referees, players or fans will not be tolerated. Any coach, player, parent or fan involved in ANY physical altercation may be subject to a lifetime ban from all VAA sports participation. Subject to VAA Governing Board review.

Coaches, players and parents must review the VAA Code of Ethics provided below, and will be required to acknowledge this code at registration. We must strive to teach the children of our community respect for themselves, referees, coaches and opposing players.

The official referees are in control of all games and have the authority to eject a coach, player, parent or fan from the game and field area. The referees have been reminded to give a coach, player, and parent or fan one verbal warning. If a second behavioral infraction occurs, the VAA Football Program encourages the official to eject the offending coach, player, parent or fan from the game and field area. It is the official's sole decision to determine the seriousness of the infraction and, also, to decide if the game should be called or forfeited.

The referee’s decision to remove a coach, player, parent, and fan or call a game is final, no appeals will be heard.

When a game is called, the official is required to explain his decision to both benches and leave the field. The referees and coaches are responsible for reporting any such incident to the VAA Football board president and/or the age group coordinator, immediately following the event.

Any problems with a coach, referee, player or fan, should be directed in writing to the VAA Football Board President.

Fans are restricted to the same side of the field as the team they are supporting. They can sit from the 30-yard line to the goal line on each side of the field. Parents are asked to not interact with the players unless a player is injured or the coach has asked for assistance from a parent. Players are expected stay in the bench area when they are not playing in the game. Players will treat their teammates and opposition with respect. After each game, the teams will line-up and shake hands.

By VAA rule/policy, any coach, player, parent or fan ejected from a game or field area, will serve a one-game suspension (the next game immediately following the infraction). THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS AND APPEALS WILL NOT BE HEARD.  The severity of the infraction that resulted in ejection, may be reviewed by the Football Board and additional sanctions imposed.

## SECTION 7 - GENERAL PROGRAM RULES

### 7.1 - Coach Selection Criteria

* The VAA Football Board must approve all coaches.
* Head coaches must be at least 21 years old.
* All coaches must fill out a "Background Check" form. CONCUSSION TRAINING MUST BE CURRENT.
* Parents may indicate a desire to coach at registration or by contacting the Age Group Coordinator. The VAA Football Board reviews applications and decides who will be a head coach. The head coach will select one assistant coach. A second assistant coach may be chosen after the draft has taken place.
* Each team coach will be interviewed by VAA Football board.
* If a coach is ejected from a game, the coach will not be allowed to coach the next game. Such situations will be reviewed by the VAA Football Board and may be subject to additional action; where deemed appropriate. If a second similar instance occurs, Football Board will review the matter and appropriate action will be taken.
* The Football Board reserve the right to remove a coach at any time.
* Coaches must complete the concussion awareness screening offered by VAA

### 7.2 - Coach Responsibilities

* Coaches must follow the "Coaches Code of Ethics" supported by VAA
* Along the sidelines, coaches must remain within the 40-yard area between the 30 and 30 yard lines on their side of the field.
* For grades 3rd to 6th only one coach from each team is allowed on the field at all times
* Coaches are responsible for demonstrating good sportsmanship and proper behavior
* Coaches are responsible for attending the coaches meeting in August to review the game schedule, field, field location and any general questions concerning the upcoming season.
* Coaches are responsible for the equipment that is issued to them. If any equipment is lost or damaged, coaches should report the problem to the Age Group Coordinator.
* There is a limit of three coaches on the sidelines for games. Parents may volunteer to assist with practices but only the head coach and two assistants are allowed on the player’s side of the field during games. No other non-players are allowed.
* Coaches are responsible for holding a parent meeting, and informing parents and players of the expectations for the season. At this meeting, the coach should determine an appropriate method of team communication, and distribute a practice schedule.
* Coaches are encouraged to have two volunteer parents to handle special activities.
* Coaches are responsible for enforcing the VAA rules.
* Coaches are responsible for picking up team uniforms, pictures and trophies and distributing them to their team.
* Coaches are responsible to ensure the minimum playing time requirements are met for ALL players.
* Coaches are responsible for reporting any problems with the fields to the Age Group Coordinator or Board President.
* Coaches are responsible to police the field area for trash after the game to ensure that the grounds are left free of all trash.
* Coaches are responsible for their players during practices and games until they are picked up by their parent or guardian. No player should ever be left alone at the field after a game or practice.
* If there is no subsequent game on the field, coaches are responsible to collect all field markers, chains and down markers and bring them to the equipment shed.
* The winning coach is responsible to inform the Football Commissioner or person in charge of game results within one day of the game's completion.

### 7.3 - Parent Responsibilities:

* Parents must follow the "Parents Code of Ethics" supported by VAA.
* Parents are responsible for demonstrating good sportsmanship and proper behavior.
* Parents are responsible for the good sportsmanship and proper behavior of their children and their guests.
* Parents are responsible for getting their children to practices and games on time as determined by the coach.
* Parents are responsible for picking up their children from practices and games on time.
* Parents are responsible for informing the coach whenever their child will miss or be late to a practice or a game.
* Parents should volunteer to assist the coach whenever possible, however they are to remain on the opposite side of the playing field from the players. The three designated coaches and players are allowed on the player’s side of the field. The only exception would be to tend to an injured player.
* Parents are responsible to discard any trash in the waste receptacles located around the field areas. They are also responsible to assist the coach to police the field area after the practice or game to ensure the fields are left free of trash.
* Parents are responsible to assist the coach in collecting all field markers, chains and down markers and returning them to the equipment shed after the game.
* Parents of the home team as asked to help with the score and time keeping. The Visiting team parents are asked to run the first down chains and down marker.

### 7.4 - Player Responsibilities:

* Players must follow the "Players Code of Behavior" supported by VAA
* Players are responsible for demonstrating good sportsmanship and proper behavior.
* Players are responsible for being attentive at practices and games.
* Players are responsible for reminding their parents that they should be at practices or games on time.
* Players are responsible for informing the coach whenever they will miss or be late to a practice or a game.
* Along the sidelines, players must remain within the 20-yard area between the 45 and 25 yard lines on their half of the field.
* Fighting, intentional kicking, kneeing, or use of fists is cause for immediate ejection from the game.
* Players are responsible for wearing a mouth piece and protective cup.
* Players are responsible to help police the field for trash after a practice or game to ensure the field is left free of all trash.

### 7.5 - Minimum Playing Time Rule:

The intent of the minimum playing time rule is to ensure that each player has an opportunity to play an entire game. Each player is **REQUIRED** to play at least 50% of each game. Each player must have a starting position that they are assigned for each game. This can be accomplished in the following combinations:

* Whole game on offense
* Whole game on defense
* Half the game on offense, the other half on defense
* Both offense and defense in the same half
* In overtime the playing time rule does not apply.

In addition to the Minimum Playing Time Rule, VAA Football encourages a Minimum Touch Philosophy. This philosophy is that a **Minimum of 6** different players on each team should have the opportunity to carry or catch the football at least twice per game. This is not an enforceable rule, but it is commensurate with our philosophy on developmental youth football at VAA. Our goal is to develop as many players as possible.

### 7.6 - Exceptions to Minimum Playing Time Rule:

All coaches are expected to run organized practices and prepare for games. In order for them to accomplish this, players and parents need to communicate planned or unexpected absences to the coach as soon as possible. The minimum playing time rule is subject a coach's discretion in the event that a player does not participate at practice(s), does not attend practice or the player engages in disruptive behavior at practice(s) or in games, requiring disciplinary action.

At the coach's discretion, the player may be subject to reduced or restricted playing time in the next game. At the beginning of the season, the coach should advise players and parents of this exception to the minimum playing time policy.

The coach **MUST** advise the player’s parents, Age Group Coordinator or Football Board President, as well as the opposing head coach of any intended departure from the minimum playing time rule, **BEFORE** applying it in a game setting. Failing to communicate this intent before a game means it CANNOT be applied in that game.

### 7.7 - The 18 Point Rule:

The VAA Football program discourages "running up the score". If a team achieves a lead of 18 points over its opponent, it is required to replace its entire offensive backfield on the next offensive series (this does not include the extra point attempt immediately following a lead of 18 points or more) The offensive backfield consists of four positions, including the quarterback and three running backs and/or flanker. Also, the original backfield may not return punts or kickoffs if the lead is 18 points. The coach must remove the main original back field players that achieved the 18-point lead. The coach can choose not to play them on offense or put them at a non-backfield position. Any concerns about players by the opposing coach should be addressed immediately after the 18-point lead. original backfield may return (and also return punts and kickoffs) in the event that the lead becomes less than 18 points. Violation of this rule will result in a 15-yard penalty and loss of possession for the first violation and, subject to the referee's discretion, an automatic forfeit of the game for the second violation.

### 7.8 - Points/Scoring:

* Touchdown 6 points
* Rushing Extra Point 1 point
* Passing Extra Point 2 points
* Safety 2 points

All Extra Point attempts are attempted from the 3-yard line. You do NOT need to declare what you are going for prior to the play.

### 7.9 - Team assessment & Placement:

A four-day clinic will be conducted by the Apple Valley HS coaching staff and players prior to assembling teams.

The clinic is for all players from 3rd – 6th grade for both the Minors (3rd-4th grade) and the Majors (5th and 6th), the coaches will use the 4-day clinic to assess the players and then form teams. Special requests for players and /or coaches can be submitted but there is no guarantee that all of them will be granted.

#### Exceptions for player placement:

* Siblings: Siblings in the same division are placed together on the same team.
* The son/daughter of both the head coach and the assistant coaches will automatically be placed on their team. The remaining players will then be divided and placed on the teams

After the evaluations have been concluded, the coaches meet to select and assign players to teams. The draft order follows an "over and back" sequence in which the team with the last pick in the first round will get the first pick in the next round, etc. Each team is allowed three minutes to announce its pick in each round. If a player does not attend any of the evaluation/combine sessions, the VAA Football Board and Age Group Coordinator will determine that players draft status.

### 7.10 - Scheduling of Practices and Games:

* Practice and/or game times will be limited to a maximum of four times per week.
* Practice and/or game times will be limited to a maximum of two hours per event.
* The Board will decide game dates and game times.
* The regular season champion is the team with the best overall record during the regular season. In the event of a tie between two or more teams, head-to-head records will serve as the first tie-breaker. In the event of that does not break the tie, the tie will be broken based on fewest points allowed over the course of the regular season. In the event of that does not break the tie, the tie will be broken by a flip of the coin.
* The play-offs will be seeded based on the regular season records of the teams. In the event of a tie between two or more teams, head-to-head records will serve as the first tie-breaker. In the event of that does not break the tie, the tie will be broken based on fewest points allowed over the course of the regular season. In the event of that does not break the tie, the tie will be broken by a flip of the coin? The highest seed will always play the lowest seed remaining throughout the play-offs. We will re-bracket after each round.

### 7.11 - Equipment

* Each player must provide an athletic supporter with protective cup.
* Players may wear tennis shoes or molded rubber cleats. Football shoes with metal cleats or removable cleats are prohibited.
* Each player must wear a mouth guard.
* Helmets and equipment must be VAA issue. Players may purchase a helmet for their own use, however the VAA Board must approve it prior to use.
* In each league, games will be played with a properly inflated "Junior" size football. Teams will be issued "game balls" at the beginning of the year. Each team must play games with a VAA issued game ball.
* Under no circumstance will abuse of equipment be tolerated. If equipment is abused beyond normal wear and tear, that player and the parents will be responsible for reimbursing the cost of replacement.

### 7.12 - Referees & Parent Assistants:

* One (1) professional referee and two (2) youth referees will be hired for each game.
* Two parent volunteers from the visitor’s team will assist with chains and two from the home team will assist with the downs marker and the game clock. (or a total of 4 volunteers) No harassment of the referees will be tolerated by coaches, players, parents or fans. Coaches yelling at a referee does not set the example of sportsmanship we expect from VAA coaches and violates the VAA conduct policies. The professional referees are in control of all games and have absolute authority to eject a coach, player, parent or fan from the game and field area if they believe their behavior to be "unsportsmanlike" or in violation of the VAA conduct policies; on or off the field. The referees are reminded to give a coach, player or parent on the sidelines one warning. If a second behavioral infraction occurs, the official is encouraged to eject that coach, player, parent or fan from the game. It is the official's sole decision to determine the seriousness of the infraction and, also, decide if the game should be called. When the game is called, the official is required to explain his decision to both benches and leave the field.
* We must respect the judgment call of any official. If a coach believes that an incorrect call has been made (or a call should have been made), the coach shall use a time out and discuss the situation with the official and coach of the opposing team. If the official determines, upon review of the rules, that the decision was incorrect, the team that called the time-out will not be charged with a time-out. In the event that an official and coach cannot agree on the rule, the professional referee's decision will be final. **ALL JUDGMENT CALLS MADE BY REFEREES ARE FINAL!**
* Coaches should have a copy of the league rules in their possession at each game.
* Specific responsibilities of the parent assistants:
1. Ensure that the chains and down markers are located correctly and displaying the correct information.
2. Retrieve the ball for the referee

### 7.13 - Weight Limits:

### A representative from either Eagan Eastview and VAA will be onsite during weigh-in of players. The same format will happen at EVAA and EAA

* Players weigh-in **ONE TIME** during the coach's assessment sessions. That weight is the player's official weight for the entire season. Players who were not weighed during one of the coach's assessment sessions must be weighed in and their official weight recorded prior to the first game.
* No player may play in a game unless they have been assigned an official weight by weighing in with program officials. At each game, each coach must have in his possession a copy of the official roster for his team including the official weights of each player.
* To be eligible to carry the ball on Offense (QB, RB, Tight End, Wide Receiver), The player must weight;

Minors 3rd grade: 80 lbs. or less to carry the ball on offense.

Minors 4th Grade: 90 lbs. or less to carry the ball on offense.

Majors 5th Grade: 105 lbs. or less to carry the ball on offense.

Majors 6th Grade 115 lbs. or less to carry the ball on offense.

Players that are over the limit to carry the ball in their division will be marked on their helmets with a sticker. No player exceeding their respective age weight can be in a receiving position”. The player on the offensive side cannot run the ball out of the backfield, catch a pass or return a kick.

Players in 5th grade that weigh between 105 and 120 and 6th Grade between 115 and 130 lbs. can catch a forward pass across the line of scrimmage. They cannot run the ball out of the backfield or return a kick. These players will have a blue stripe on their helmet.

* No Offensive end may carry the ball unless he receives a forward pass beyond the line of scrimmage.
* Defensive ends may weigh more than the weight limits mentioned above. On defense, interior lineman must be within one yard of the line of scrimmage, and may not drop back into a linebacker position. The interior line position does not include the offensive end (the player on the outside position at each end of the line).
* No player exceeding the offensive weight requirements for back field/ receiver positions may be in a receiving position for kick-offs, punts or advance a kick. If a player exceeding these weight limitations catches a kick-off or punt, the ball is considered downed at that point.
* Any defensive player who intercepts a pass or recovers a fumble may advance the ball.
* An offensive player recovering a fumbled football beyond the line of scrimmage may not advance it. The ball will be marked down at the spot of the fumble.

## SECTION 8 -GAME RULES

### 8.1 - General Game Rules:

The State High School League rules govern the VAA Football program in cases not covered by specific VAA rules. Where conflicts exist between VAA rules and State High School League rules, VAA rules govern.

### 8.2 - Game protest:

If a coach wishes to discuss a game situation, they should do so in a quiet and controlled manner with the Age Group Coordinator, or Football Board President immediately following the game. However, all game results will be final!

### 8.3 - Coach's area:

During games. Each team will be on opposite side of the playing field between the 30 yard lines.

### 8.4 - Fewer than 11 Players:

If a team has less than 11 players, the coach who can field a full team can agree to play the game with fewer players to even the sides and have it count as an official game.

### 8.5 - Game Length:

* A game consists of four 12-minute quarters. (See section 8.6 for clock stopping details).
* Half time will be five minutes between the second and third quarters.
* Delay of game: There will be a maximum time limit in the huddle of 35 seconds. A penalty will not be assessed for neither the first TWO games for the 3rd and 4th grade nor the 5th & 6th grade level. Any violation of this rule after the first TWO games of the season at both levels will result in the clock being stopped after 35 seconds, and a five-yard penalty being assessed. For both levels prior to calling a penalty, the referee will ask the coach if he wants a time out upon expiration of the 35-second clock.
* Each team is allocated two time outs per half.
* Only one coach is allowed on the field on offense or defense for (3rd & 4th Only), No coaches are allowed on the field for 5th and 6th

### 8.6- The Game Clock/Time Keeping:

-If the field has a clock, a parent from the Home Team will run the Clock and Scoreboard

-If there is not clock, the referees will keep the game clock and score.

Game Time:

Four 15-minute running quarters and the clock only Stops for the Following:

1. Time-outs
2. Injuries
3. Penalties
4. Touchdowns
5. Change of possession

The clock will not start until the ball is snapped or touched on a punt return or kick return.

Last Two Minutes: the clock will stop for the following:

1. Time-outs
2. Injuries
3. Penalties
4. Touchdowns
5. Change of Possession
6. Incomplete Pass
7. Out of Bounds
8. First Downs

The clock will not start until the ball is snapped or touched on a punt return or kick return.

Any questionable situations during the game where the clock needs to be stopped will be the call of the Referee team.

### 8.7 - Overtime:

* If the score is tied at the end of regulation play, an overtime session is played to determine the winner. The overtime begins with a flip of the coin, called by the visiting team. The winner of the coin toss has the choice of being on either offense or defense. The loser chooses which goal they will defend. The ball will be placed on the 10-yard line to start each set.
* The overtime session is comprised of two sets of four downs. A set is defined as each team having played both offense and defense.
* The overtime session is completed with the 1st untied set. The winner of the game is the team scoring the most points in that set.
* Extra points are not counted as a play in a set, however, extra points should be tried after every score.
* The overtime session is played according to the governing rules, except when the defense gains possession of the ball in which case the ball is dead and the offensive series is complete.
* At the completion of two sets, if there is no winner, the game shall be declared a tie. Only in the case of a playoff or championship game shall the above format continue until a winner is determined.

### 8.8 - Kicking:

* 3rd grade – No kick offs Start at own 40-yard line
* 4th grade – kick off from 40-yard line (No Onside kicks)
* 5th and 6th kick off from own 40-yard line (Teams can onside kick)
* Front line offensive players cannot advance the ball.
* On kickoffs, the ball will be placed on the kicking team's 40-yard line.
* The receiving teams free kick line is the mid field line (50-yard line). The receiving team must have at least five players between its own 45-yard line and the 50-yard line.
* If the kick goes out of bounds without having been touched by a member of the receiving team, it will be put in play at the receiving team's 35-yard line or at the spot where it went out of bounds, whichever is nearest the kicking team's goal line.
* Touchback: Any kick that breaks the out of bounds plane of the receiving team's goal line, without the receiving team having had control, will be put in play on the receiving team's 20-yard line. The receiving team will have possession.
* "On Side Kick" The kicking team may recover, but not advance the kickoff, if the ball crosses the receiving team's free kick line (50-yard line).
* If the kicking team touches the ball before it crosses the receiving team's free kick line (50-yard line), the ball will be awarded to the receiving team at the spot it was touched.
* All teams must declare punts. On the 4th down, the offensive player in deep punt formation must receive the snap. No rushing is allowed. The punting team must line up in one of the approved offensive formations with the exception that the Fullback may line up on the line of scrimmage. No member of the punting team is allowed downfield before the punt. 8.8.8 No player exceeding the 5th Grade 105 lbs. & 6th Grade 115 lbs. may be in a receiving position for kick-offs or punts or advance a kick-off or punt. If a player exceeding these weight limitations catches a kick-off or punt, the ball is considered downed at that point.
* Minors 3rd and 4th punt returns: There are NO returns…. Ball is moved 30 yards from the original spot after the punt was declared by opposing team.

### 8.9 - Safety

* In the event of a safety, the kicking team will kick a free kick from its own 20-yard line. The receiving team's free kick line will be the 30-yard line of the kicking team. The team must have at least five players between the kicking teams 30 and 45-yard lines. The defensive team is awarded two points for the safety.

8.10 - Unique Penalties**:**

The following is a summary of the most common penalties and those that are unique to the VAA Football Program. It is not meant to be a complete list of all possible penalties.

The State High School Rules offer a complete list of possible penalties.

5-Yard Penalties:

* Failure to wear a mouth guard. If an official finds a player not wearing their mouth guard when the quarterback begins the cadence, the official should stop play, inform the player, inform the coach and penalize the team 5-yards.
* Any line of scrimmage violation.
* Too many players on the field.
* Linebackers and/or Defensive Backs moving forward before the ball is snapped.
* Backfield in motion
* Delay of game: The first two games of the season…. you will be encouraged to speed things up. After the first two games of the season warning after the first infraction (35 sec) There will be a penalty on the second infraction. The referee will ask the coach if he would like to take a time out upon expiration of the 30 seconds before calling a penalty.

10-Yard Penalties:

* Weight restriction violation.
* Illegal block.
* Illegal use of the hands.
* Each coach should have a roster with player’s names number and weight.

15-Yard Penalties:

* Unsportsmanlike conduct by a coach, player or parent, including arguing with the officials, swearing or fighting. **At a minimum, the offending player must sit out the remaining offensive or defensive series for the first violation**. The referee has discretion to eject the offending player from the game. A coach or parent that engages in unsportsmanlike conduct will be required to leave the playing area for a second violation. (Unsportsmanlike conduct violations must also be reported to the VAA Football Commissioner)
* Violation of the 18 Point rule. This will also result in a loss of possession. A second violation of this rule in the same game may result in a forfeiture of the game.
* Face mask
* Defensive Pass interference
* Offensive pass interference/downfield blocking before the ball is in air.
* Clipping
* Horse Collar Take Downs
* Roughing
* Over use of time outs
* Minimum Playing Time Rule violation

If multiple personal fouls are committed during a game witch include: Roughing, Horse collar, Face Mask, Late Hit, the following process will be followed.

1. 1st Personal foul – player will be warned
2. 2nd Of the same personal foul – player will be ejected for the remainder of the current game and one additional game.
3. If there are recurring personal fouls by the same player further suspensions could be enforced by league officials.

### 8.11 - In House Football Special Rules/Formations & Alignments for Offense (MINORS & MAJORS):

* Failure to comply with the rules in this section will result in an illegal procedure penalty (a five-yard penalty).
* Quarterback must take the snap under Center ("Shot-Gun" snaps are NOT allowed for 3rd and 4th grade)
* If the ball is snapped to any back other than the Quarterback or Punter, the ball is dead (e.g., no center sneaks)
* A player who is not an Offensive backfield player or an Offensive End, may not advance the ball.
* An Offensive End may not advance the ball unless the End receives a forward pass across the line of scrimmage.
* NO OFFENSIVE PLAYER may be in motion prior to the snap of the ball.
* No player will be allowed motion with the exception of 6th grade.

**8.11.1 MINORS Offense:**

The 3rd grade will run only one offense. Each association will pick an offensive formation to use for entire season and will make the others teams aware of their choice, the following examples T formation or I formation split etc.

The 4th grade will run two offenses which will be chosen by their respective association.

* Offensive line consists of 7 players, 3 on each side of the center.
* Interior lineman may not line up more than one yard apart from each other including the Offensive End.
* Offensive Ends must be lined up on the line of scrimmage.
* Halfbacks may not line up any wider than the outside leg of the Tackle.
* The offensive line must be balanced with a Guard, Tackle and End on each side of the ball.
* Minimum three count No silent count
* No reverses.

### 8.11.2 MAJORS Offense: 5th grade

The 5th grade offensive sets are open to the discretion of each association.

* Pistol formation is acceptable.
* No motion
* Anyone in the backfield can run the ball, if under weight limit (see section 8.13 for backfield weight limits)
* No tight end or wide receiver can run thus no reverses.
* Cadence – min 2 count, ex Ready Set.

**8.11.4 – Majors Offense 6th grade**

The 5th grade offensive sets are open to the discretion of each association.

* Pistol formation is acceptable.
* Motion Is acceptable
* Anyone in the backfield can run the ball, if under weight limit (see section 8.13 for backfield weight limits)
* Wide receivers can run the ball, ex reverse
* Cadence – min 2 count, ex Ready Set

### 8.12 - In House Football Special Rules/Formations & Alignments for Defense (MINORS & MAJORS):

* Unless the ball is on or inside the defensive team's 10-yard line, the defensive team must employ an Any goal line defense.
* No nose guard 3rd thru 5th
* The defensive team may employ any defense when any part of the ball is on or inside the defensive team's 10-yard line. No defensive player may be in motion prior to the snap of the ball.
* The 3rd and 5th grade will run a 4-4 or 4-3 defense.
* The player needs to make initial contact with the offensive player directly in front of them.
* No slanting or stunting.

### 8.12.1 - Deployment of the defensive line (Ends and Tackles):

* All interior linemen must line up between 1 foot to 1 yard off the line of scrimmage and must be in a 3 or 4-point stance.
* Defensive Tackles must line up head to head on Offensive Tackle; no lining up in gaps.
* Nose tackle must be head to head with the center.
* Defensive Ends may line up on the outside shoulder of the Offensive End through head up on the Offensive End. They do not need to be in a 3 or 4-point stance.
* The player needs to make initial contact with the offensive player directly in front of them.

### 8.12.2 - Deployment of Linebackers:

* Linebackers must be lined up between 2 and 4 yards from the line of scrimmage until the ball is snapped.
* Middle Linebackers are restricted to only lining up head to head on the offensive guards; no slanting.
* Linebackers must hold their positions until the snap of the ball, at which time they may proceed in any direction.
* The 5th and 6th graders can use the following defenses. 5-2, 5-3, 4-4, 4-3.
* No blitzing or stunts.

### 8.12.3 - Deployment of Defensive Secondary (Corners and Safeties):

* Safeties can line up anywhere and may move laterally prior to the snap of the ball, but must remain at least 6 yards from the line of scrimmage.
* Corners must be 2-4 yards outside of the Defensive End Corners must also be 2 -4 yards off the line of scrimmage.

### 8.12.4 - Defensive punt alignment:

* The two Corners and two Safeties may line up anywhere behind the linebackers.

## SECTION 9 – MISCELLANEOUS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### 9.1 - Blood Policy:

Consistent with the VAA policy on blood, players are not allowed to participate while bleeding.

### 9.2 - Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco Policy:

The VAA believes that all players and coaches participating in an VAA youth activity should refrain from the use of alcohol and controlled substances. The VAA does not condone the use of tobacco by players under the legal tobacco age. In addition, smoking is not permitted at any time on District 196 School property. It shall be a violation of this policy for a player or coach while participating in a VAA youth activity to use a beverage containing alcohol or use or consume, have in possession, buy, sell or give away any controlled substances. It shall be a violation of this policy for a player participating in a VAA activity to use tobacco.

#### First Violation:

Upon notification by the VAA Board, the player or coach shall lose eligibility for the next two consecutive games or two weeks of a sport season in which the player or coach is participating, whichever is greater. No exception is permitted. This excludes them from dressing at the games or participating in practices during the suspension.

#### Second Violation:

The player or coach shall lose eligibility in the VAA for that sport season. No exception is permitted. Cumulative Penalties: Penalties shall be cumulative beginning with and continuing throughout the player or coach's participation in the VAA.

### 9.3 - Suspension Policy:

The Football Commissioner and Football Board of Directors reserve the right to take appropriate disciplinary action and/or suspend any coach, parent, player or fan that violates the VAA Code of Ethics provided in this manual. Any person may report a violation to the VAA Football Commissioner in writing. A second violation may result in suspension from a game and/or subsequent games. Depending on the severity, a second violation may also result in suspension from the league for the remainder of the season. A third violation may result in the coach, player or fan being suspended from the league for the remainder of the year and/or the following year.

### 9.4 - Conflict Resolution Guidelines:

These guidelines are to be followed if concerns are raised regarding the policies and procedures of the VAA Football Program. When a player or a parent has a concern regarding the policies or procedures of V AA Football, they should first bring those concerns to the attention of their coach. If the problem persists or is unable to be resolved at the coach level, the player or parent should contact the VAA Football Commissioner in writing. Once the Commissioner is involved, the Commissioner will act as the mediator between the involved parties. All parties involved will discuss together the situation and find a solution. The Commissioner will communicate with the VAA Board Liaison regarding any necessary mediation and the outcome of the mediation. If necessary, the involved parties can contact the

VAA Board Liaison to help mediate the dispute. The VAA Board Liaison will meet with all parties to discuss the situation and find a solution. The VAA Board will advise the EVAA Football Board of any situations that are being mediated in their sport. If mediation is unable to resolve the issues and all the above steps have been followed, a letter stating the issues must be directed to the VAA FOOTBALL BOARD. The VAA Football Board will consult with the EVAA Board on the issue. At this time, the VAA Football Board will make a decision on the issue or refer the issue to the VAA Board of Directors. The decision of either the VAAFootball Board or the VAA Board will be final!

### 9.5 - Inclement Weather:

In case of inclement weather, the coach is responsible for determining if there will be practice. During games it is at the discretion of the referees to call a game. At all age levels, games and practices shall be suspended when lightning is present.

### 9.6 – Suggestions:

If you have suggestions for improving the VAA Football Program, please include them in writing at the end of the season. Include as much detail as necessary for the volunteers to understand what you would like to see implemented. All suggestions should be written. Each year, we receive suggestions that would be wonderful to implement. Unfortunately, time constraints on our volunteers make implementation difficult to accomplish. Please help us implement your good ideas by volunteering.

# PARENTS' CODE OF ETHICS:

* I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches and officials at every game, practice or other youth sports event.
* I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my child ahead of any personal desire to win.
* I will insist that my child play in a safe and healthy environment.
* I will provide support for coaches and officials working with my child to provide a positive, enjoyable experience for all.
* I will demand a drug, alcohol and tobacco-free sports environment for my child and agree to assist by refraining from their use at all youth sports events.
* I will remember that the game is for children and not for adults.
* I will do my very best to make youth sports fun for my child.
* I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, fans and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed or ability.
* I will promise to help my child enjoy the youth sports experience within my personal constraints by assisting with coaching, being a respectful fan, providing transportation or whatever I am capable of doing.

# PLAYERS' CODE OF BEHAVIOR:

* I will do my best at all practices and during all games.
* I will listen to my coaches when at practices and at games.
* I will practice good sportsmanship by treating all players, coaches, parents and officials with respect.
* I will do my best to help my parents get me to games and practices on time.
* I will keep my equipment and the equipment of the team in good condition by not throwing it or using it improperly.
* I will play and practice the game to have fun and not be concerned about winning or losing.
* I understand that improvement comes from practice and sometimes I may decide to practice on my own, away from scheduled practices and games.
* I agree to use safety equipment when instructed to do so and pay attention to other safe play ideas provided by coaches, players and parents.

# COACHES' CODE OF ETHICS

* I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my player ahead of any personal desire to win.
* I will remember to treat each player as an individual, remembering the large spread of emotional and physical development for the same age group.
* I will do my very best to provide a safe playing situation for my players.
* I promise to review and practice the necessary first-aid principles needed to treat injuries to my players.
* I will do my best to organize practices that are fun and challenging for all my players.
* I will lead by example in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all my players.
* I will ensure that I am knowledgeable in the rules of each sport that I coach and that I will teach these rules to my players.
* I will use those coaching techniques appropriate for each of the skills that I teach.
* I will remember that I am a youth coach, and that the game is for children and not adults.