

SCVAA Youth Football Policies and Standards

The following policies and standards are intended to ensure that the SCVAA Football experience is equally enjoyable and beneficial to all players. These policies are intended to be applied as consistently and completely as possible but could accommodate unique and extraordinary circumstances.

It is also the policy and standard of SCVAA Football to follow all guidelines and regulations set forth by the governing league in which they currently play.

Please communicate any observed deviations from the policies and standards during the season to your grade coordinator or Commissioner/Vice Commissioner.

Playing Policies for players and coaches participating in SCVAA Football

- Team selection or assignment will not consider the past performance of a team to intentionally affect the relative skill level of another team. Teams will be coordinated primarily on school affiliation and/or home address geography. Exceptions to this policy can include but are not limited to coach/player request, physical size of players-ie: linemen, or positional depth. Team assignments must meet the approval of the SCVAA Football Commissioner before roster distribution to coaches. Players will not be added, removed, or “traded” once rosters are set. Late registrations will only be accepted with approval from the Commissioner and/or Vice Commissioner after consulting with the specific grade coordinator and/or head coach.
- Players playing up or down: Players may NOT play down a grade level unless it is approved by the league in which SCVAA plays. Playing up grade levels must meet the following requirements AND be approved by the Football Commissioner.
 - A player may play up by 1 (ONE) grade level if the player has an older sibling playing football at that level. Sibling players must be on the same team.
 - A player may play up by 2 (TWO) grade levels if the player has an older sibling playing football at that level AND they have a parent that is a head coach or assistant coach at that level. Sibling players must be on the same team. Playing up 2 levels is not recommended.
 - Players may not play up for any other reason or more than max 2 levels.
- Playing down one grade level is permitted by the MEYFL but that player must play as a Red Stripe player for the entire season despite their weight. This is a League rule.
- Players should be given every reasonable opportunity to tryout or play any position they request as long as they qualify under league rules.
- Equal playing time is the goal for all players on the team. Coaches should design and maintain a substitution chart to ensure all players are getting as equal playing time as possible. Some reasons for unequal time are as follows but not limited to:
 - A player returning from an injury where player hasn’t practiced for an extended period of time.
 - A player missing multiple practices due to scheduling conflicts.
 - A reasonable safety concern of the head coach, assistant coach, or parent.
 - The head coach should communicate any reasons about potential playing time situations with the parent(s) of the player before the game so that there are no misunderstandings. It is also

the responsibility of the head coach to get a player prepared at all times to ensure equal playing time.

- Parents and players need to make every reasonable effort to attend practice consistently. Team cohesiveness and dependence on others is a major factor in safe and successful football.
- Football activities and weather-related delays or cancellations: All parents and coaches should refer to the “Weather Information” section of the SCVAA website to understand SCVAA policies regarding inclement weather. Coaches will adhere to these policies and not deviate from them. The final decision on delays or cancellations will come from the school district, the SCVAA Executive board, The MEYFL, or the football commissioner. In the event of an Away game, SCVAA teams will defer to the home team authorities on whether play is going to happen.
- Starting: A coach will prioritize starting as many players as possible on offense and defense each half. In addition, the coach and the assistants should prioritize substituting players as often as possible to ensure players participate. A player can start on both offense and defense but this should be as limited as possible. If a player doesn’t start on either offense or defense, the coach will prioritize that player “starting” on special teams as much as possible until that player is ready to start on offense or defense. The coach has final say on where they believe a player is best suited positionally to help the team be successful. An exception to player positions is in 4th and 5th grade where the league (MEYFL) requires players to only play one half of football at a skill position.
 - Every player should have an offensive and defensive position for each game and should have the opportunity to play both positions in each game as long as they understand the plays and assignments of the position.
- Borrowing players: Borrowing players from another team is strictly prohibited unless it is approved by the Commissioner. In addition, tackle players are not allowed to play as substitutes on ANY flag football teams.
- Postseason, in-season Bonus games or tournaments: Teams may participate in post season games or tournaments as long as they are concluded prior to the end of season equipment return date.
 - Coaches must inform the Commissioner their intention to play in the postseason with as much notice as possible. This is for insurance purposes
 - Teams from SCVAA that elect to participate in postseason play must do so with only the team that was assigned to them at the beginning of the season.
 - Teams may not “borrow” players from other teams to fill in for depth
 - Teams may not consist of “Select” or “All-Star” rosters. This is prohibited by the SCVAA governing board
 - Players that elect to not participate in any postseason or in-season bonus games will not be penalized in any way for their decision.
- Football activities and events: Teams are limited to a MAXIMUM of 4 football activities per week. This includes any combination of practices, scrimmages, walk throughs, and games. No activity will exceed 2 hours.
 - It is recommended for youth football that practices be limited to 90 minutes or less.
 - It’s encouraged that activities are limited to 3 per week while school is in session
- Scrimmaging: Teams within the same grade level are encouraged to scrimmage each other. Teams can scrimmage teams 1 (one) grade level above or below their grade level. Coaches will ensure safety is the top

priority for all scrimmages, especially when competing against a team not in the same grade. Teams will not scrimmage each other if separated by 2 (two) grade levels.

- Game Captains: Coaches will ensure that every player that has had good attendance, practice participation, and behavior should be given the opportunity to serve as a Game Captain at least once during the season.
 - This is an important recognition for a lot of players each game. Especially at the younger levels. Parents are encouraged to stress the importance of being a good teammate and prioritizing attendance so that their player can earn this recognition during the season.
- Coaches are NOT allowed on the field during games except due to injury, timeout, or if indicated within league rules. Currently, MEYFL rules state only 4th grade coaches are allowed on the field during play.
- Head injuries: Coaches will report any and all confirmed or suspected head injuries to any player on their team to the Commissioner within 48 hours of receiving the information. These can be football or non-football related.
 - The Commission needs to know this information in the event any action must be taken within the football season.
 - Players that sustain a head injury are NOT permitted to return to practice or game play until they have been released by a doctor. A parent saying that “They’re OK” is not an acceptable release.
 - The doctors release must be in writing with the medical facility and contact information listed and emailed to the Commissioner
- All head coaches, assistant coaches, parents, players, and spectators will refrain from any and all forms of altercation, condemnation, or verbal or physical contact with game officials. It is the responsibility of the head coach to inform members of their team of this rule and hold themselves accountable as well. Failure to meet this standard by anyone could result in suspension or removal from coaching games, watching games, or both. Disciplinary action is at the discretion of the Commissioner.
- Spectators must be AT LEAST 10 yards behind the back side of the sidelines of any field on which the players are playing.
 - Spectators also may not interact or confront the coaches during a game unless it is an emergency.
 - Spectators should sit in bleachers when available and refrain from placing lawn chairs on tracks.
 - If a game is being played at Pony Stadium, lawn chairs are prohibited from the track or the turf
- All players must have all required protective equipment before participating in any live contact drills or scrimmages.
- A head coach and/or team cannot require “Team Fees” to cover any expenses that are outside the scope of the registration fee and ability to play regular season league games. Playing time for a player cannot be withheld or limited because a fee request was not met. Head coaches and/or teams assume the financial risk for any additional activities outside of the season. This can include but not limited to:
 - Games at venues outside of league locations
 - Uniforms
 - Additional equipment not safety related and otherwise provided by SCVAA.
 - A team cannot request or require the player or their families to fundraise to offset costs associated with playing outside the league season parameters.

- A coach can reasonably request financial help to help offset something like a post season BBQ or souvenir T-shirt.
- Equipment. A players must take responsibility for the equipment that is issued to them for the duration of the season. See the EQUIPMENT POLICY page for further details.

When a parent registers their player for SCVAA Football they are electronically acknowledging that they have read, understand, and agree with these set policies. Be sure to read them carefully. Copies of these policies can be downloaded and printed off anytime by the parent. Head Coaches will keep a copy with them during the season.

I hereby agree to apply these policies and standards consistently as a Youth Football Coach, parent, or player in the St Croix Valley Athletic Association. I understand that parental or league concerns regarding my adherence to these policies and standards or the spirit therein will be brought to my attention and if confirmed I will adhere to the requests of the League regarding my responsibilities as a Coach and/or parent. A copy of this is available upon request.