



When are we informed, officially, of our child's team placement?

Team assignments (via "Team Assignment Email") come out no later than the first week of November. VABA has almost 1,000 players to evaluate over a six-week span. Please be patient as team/roster formation is a challenging task. Please check your email inbox 5-10 days after Halloween. An email will be sent from The VABA Team (info@playvaba.org) with your team assignment. Practice details and team rosters will be sent by the coach at a later date.

How are teams formed?

VABA prioritizes the following when forming teams: High School Affiliation, Parity/Balance. In the JBL, VABA's staff aims to create a balanced league. This stated, there are, invariably, stronger and weaker teams. For the VDBL, Gold and Silver Divisions are determined via evaluations. The Gold & Silver Leagues begin in 5th grade VDBL – these are structured and organized the same way – although divisions are formed based on what is most "developmentally appropriate." VABA does what it can, while also honoring the value of high school affiliation, to balance the teams.

Can my child "play up?"

Only VABA Team members may recommend a child playing outside their assigned grade level. These recommendations are based on evaluations.

If my private/public school doesn't have enough to form a team, which team am I placed on?

The VABA Team considers fair and balanced team combinations, geographic proximity, and available coaches when this occurs. Private School attendees also have the option of participating on their public school team but must indicate this in advance.

When Team Assignment Emails come out, and the practice details present a conflict with another activity, can I request to change teams? Or, if I don't like my child's roster, can I request to change teams? No. VABA families prioritize their basketball commitment. The VABA Team dedicates hundreds of hours to team placements and cannot and will not make changes after team assignments are made. Please be mindful of this and respect the process in place. Thank you!

When do we hear from our coach?

Your coach's official "Intro/Roster Email" arrives between 5-10 days of receiving your "Team Assignment Email." This email includes roster and practice information.

When do practices begin?

Team practices begin the week before Thanksgiving. This information is included in your coaches "Intro Email" (see above). JBL 1-2 teams practice 60-minutes 1x/week. JBL 3-4 teams practice 75-minutes 1x/week. VDBL teams practice 90-minutes 2x/week.

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What time and location are our practices?

Typically, practices cannot begin *before* 6:30 pm. It is county policy that outside gym rentals cannot begin

prior to 30 minutes after school activities must be dismissed (at 6:00 pm). For JBL teams, it is possible (although not likely) that your team will *start* practice at 7:30 pm. Practices are scheduled in the following order of priority, earliest to latest (due to correlating "bedtimes"): 1st-2nd grades, 3rd-4th grades, 5th-6th grades, 7th + grades. It is possible, also, that your team will practice on Fridays. VABA is working with a limited amount of gym space and allocates practice days and times according to the following: availability, head coach requests. The VABA Team strives to have all practices within the same high school district as your public school. Private school teams' facilities are priority, although public school facilities may be used to schedule practice if/when private school is not available.

Who controls our practice and game facilities/sites? How are practice/game days/times

reserved? VABA has spent over two decades establishing positive working relationships with all local public and private schools. For the most part, your practices will be on the same day and at the same time each week. However, *VABA is at the mercy of the schools for scheduling. Schools reserve the right to alter schedules to accommodate their needs. School districts make decisions on cancellations and alterations. Please be aware and patient of possible practice and game adjustments during the season. These are, oftentimes, unavoidable. VABA does its very best to anticipate and communicate any schedule adjustments, but these "come with the territory."*

Who will our coach be?

Some teams know their coaches in advance. However, others may not know until they receive their "Intro" email. Typically, your head coach is a volunteer parent of a team member. All VABA coaches are trained via VABA's "Coaching Certification" (academy).

I'm interested in, possibly, coaching, but I'm not sure I can handle it. Should I give it a shot?

YES! Rosters and Players make teams – BUT TEAMS CANNOT PLAY WITHOUT COACHES. PLEASE CONSIDER STEPPING UP! Any athletic and/or teaching and/or parenting experience makes for a good youth coach! VABA trains and supports its coaches! Some teams have two (2) Co-Head Coaches who divide the load 50-50. Every team is required to have a VABA-Certified Head and Assistant coach – not to mention, every team has a TEAM MANAGER who supports the Head and Assistant coach by handling all administrative and communication duties.

Who is our point-of-contact for VABA if we have a question or concern?

Your primary point-of-contact is your Head Coach. Head Coaches are trained and VABA-Certified and can answer most questions. Head Coaches also have at least one Assistant Coach and a Team Manager to assist with logistics. Prior to your team assignment, please refer to the VABA website (www.PlayVABA.org) for information and/or utilize info@playvaba.org as your point-of-contact. After team assignments are made, your Head Coach is your primary point of contact. VABA staff cannot handle thousands of emails, but your "Team Pod" (HC, AC, TM) is trained to do so.

When do games begin?

Games begin the first weekend of December. JBL games are on Saturdays. 1st – 2nd grade games run from 8:00 am – 1:00 pm. 3rd – 4th grade games run from 12:00 pm to 8:00 pm. JBL games are held at local elementary schools. VDBL games are held on Saturdays and Sundays and usually begin after 1:00 pm. VDBL games are held at local high schools (and, occasionally, at middle school locations).

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When is the game schedule published?

Game schedules are published after Thanksgiving (usually on or around the week of December 1). Head

Coaches inform their families when games are officially posted.

What is the duration of the VABA basketball season?

The VABA basketball season spans from the week before Thanksgiving (first practice) to the final week of February/first week of March (final game). Starting the first weekend of December, there are nine (9) weekends of basketball scheduled. This takes into account one (1) possible inclement weather cancellation. When a cancellation occurs, we will determine if there is enough time and space for make-up games. There is no guarantee that canceled games will be made up. Many factors impact the feasibility of make-up games. Each team plays at least one (1) game/weekend, although divisions with an odd-numbered number may play a double-header. Double-headers are typically played back-to-back or with one game between them for rest.

Is there a post-season tournament?

Yes! After the final regular season game, a single-elimination tournament is scheduled. All teams qualify. Championship Game Finalists are determined, and "Championship Weekend" occurs the following weekend. JBL 1-2 teams participate in a "February Frenzy"/"March Madness" event at the end of the year which involves team pizza parties, exciting game-day intros and much more!

What is the P.P.A.?

The PPA is the VABA "Positive Parent Assessment." Every parent/guardian intending to be present at games must complete this online assessment form. In this online assessment, Parents review VABA's "Code of Ethics" and the important role they play in supporting VABA's Mission of "building character and shaping lives." The PPA is found on the VABA Website (www.PlayVABA.org) – please find the "Parents" tab at the top of the navigation bar and complete your PPA prior to the first weekend of December. If you have already passed the PPA (in previous seasons) you do NOT need to complete it again. Thank you for supporting The VABA Mission!

May I make a tax-deductible donation to the "VABA Scholarship Program?"

YES! VABA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All donations go toward the VABA Scholarship Program.

Is my family eligible for financial aid?

VABA's Scholarship Program provides financial aid for families that qualify. Families may apply online and may receive up to 85% financial aid depending on qualification criteria. One of VABA's vision priorities is "funding scholarships for families in need!" Feel free to apply or donate to our community's youth!

What can I do to help?

GREAT QUESTION! Thanks for asking! 😊 VABA always needs volunteers. When you registered, you identified possible volunteer positions you'd be willing to fulfill. **VABA always needs Head Coaches!** VABA trains and supports its coaches, including manuals, descriptions, practice plans and videos! There is no better way to help your community than via coaching. VABA also needs Assistant Coaches and Team Managers. During the season, on game-day, your team will need Scorekeepers, Clock-Keepers and Culture Keepers. Please have a helpful spirit in stepping up to put on a wonderful experience for everyone! If interested, please email info@playvaba.org.

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