

VISION



**Vision Charter School Baseball**

# **Player Handbook**

CULTURE OVER SKILLS  
COMPETE OVER TALENT  
WE OVER ME

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## **VISION BASEBALL COACHING PHILOSOPHY**

In all successful programs there is a coaching philosophy. The coaches need to demonstrate effective leadership. This is accomplished by maintaining the desired standards of behavior that instill confidence in all athletes knowing that their welfare and development is most critical. This environment encourages athletes to learn and develop on and off the playing field.

Each student-athlete needs to be given an opportunity to develop their core skills. The environment is structured to challenge the athlete while providing both encouragement and support. Athletes benefit most when exposed to drills that require effective decision-making and precise execution under pressure. The repetitiveness of these drills during practice helps develop competency and confidence.

Players are expected to be good student-athletes, with an emphasis placed on "student". We expect all student-athletes to conduct themselves in a mature manner in the school setting, out in the community, and on the playing field always. Players, who do not, will not be part of the Vision Charter School Baseball Program.

The goal is to build, establish, and maintain a tradition of excellence. We also want to make every effort possible to provide our players with the most enjoyable experience that in turn teaches valuable life lessons.

Thank you for your cooperation and continued support.

## **Mission Statement**

*Develop student-athletes who are committed to achieving excellence in the classroom, on the field, and in the community.*

## **Program Goals**

1. Field a successful team at all four levels
  - a. In the classroom - strive for excellent GPA(s)
  - b. On the field – compete to win
  - c. In the community
  - d. At school events
2. Provide each player with the opportunity to learn, develop, and improve baseball skills.
3. Teach players the rewards of hard work, both on and off the field.
4. Open doors for college advancement.

## Player Expectations

An athlete in the Vision Charter School Baseball Program is expected to:

1. Show up on time.
2. Work hard every day.
3. Maintain a positive attitude.
4. Dedicate yourself to improvement every day.
5. Put the **TEAM** ahead of personal goals.
6. Respect your school administrators, coaches, teammates, opposing teams, and officials.
7. Encourage your teammates to be the best.
8. Discuss questions or concerns with your coach in a positive, mature manner.
9. Represent the program appropriately on the field, in the classroom and in the community.
10. Remember your priorities.
  - a. Family first.
  - b. Academics second.
  - c. Athletics third.

## Team Selection Process

All students who are interested in trying out for the Vision Charter School Team will be evaluated during the try-out period by the coaches of Vision Charter School for a minimum of two days. The coaches of the Vision Charter School Baseball Program will select the team. If there are concerns, they should be addressed with the head coach and not with any other coaches on staff.

Playing time is earned through practice and performance in games. The number of players kept on the team will vary year to year based on the talent level of the group.

## **Baseball Program**

The purpose of the Baseball program at Vision Charter School is to:

- a. Develop and refine basic skills and conditioning of the athlete.
- b. Introduce, explain, and reinforce the rules of baseball and the team.
- c. Assess student-athletes athletic ability in baseball.
- d. Provide playing time to the athletes who have earned it (coaches' discretion).
- e. Provide talented student-athletes a chance to excel.
- f. Provide student-athletes with a chance to set goals, work to achieve goals, and serve as role models for the younger athletes.
- g. Develop program goals that include winning, team building skills, hard work and enjoyment of the sport.

The team will consist of players that have demonstrated the ability to be starters or key contributors. No players will be guaranteed a position based on the previous year. The best nine or ten players will play, others will be asked to play other vital roles that lead to a successful team.

## **Vision Baseball Communication Process**

When a player or parent has questions or concerns regarding the program or a player's individual role on the team, it is important to keep in mind the following communications process that has been adopted by the baseball program. This process provides an effective and efficient progression, focused on solving any problem that may develop throughout the season.

### **Communication you should expect from the coaching staff:**

- Expectations the coaches have for student-athlete as well as all the players on the team
- Locations and times of all practices and contests
- Team requirements (practices, special equipment, pre-season conditioning)
- Disciplinary actions that may result in the denial of your child's participation

### **Means of communication**

- Vision Baseball Athletics Website - <https://www.visioncharter.net/baseball.html>
- Remind101 text/email alerts will be the primary means of mass communication during the season. With this, you choose where you want the alerts sent (email address or cell phone). This is what will be used to announce cancellations, changes of any kinds, or other reminders.
- If there is something more urgent or private, we may contact you at your cell phone. Likewise, if there is something urgent on your end, you may contact us by cell phone.

### **Topics of communication and appropriateness**

- Appropriate concerns for parents to discuss with coaches: (1) the treatment of your child, (2) improving your child's athletic performance
- Issues that are NOT appropriate to discuss with coaches: (1) playing time, (2) team strategy, (3) other student-athletes
- Please DO NOT attempt to confront a coach before or after a game or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature rarely promote resolution.

4 Step Action Plan		
Step	Action	Contact
1	The concerned player should approach his immediate coach to <b>schedule a time</b> to discuss his questions or concerns. If the player is not satisfied or comfortable with the outcome of this meeting, he should move forward to Step 2.	Coach
2	The concerned player should <b>request a meeting</b> involving himself and the head coach. If the player does not feel comfortable with the outcome of this meeting, he should move forward with step 3.	Player & Head Coach
3	<b>Request a meeting</b> involving the player, necessary Vision Charter School baseball coaches and parent(s)/guardian(s) should be requested via e-mail. This e-mail should include a brief explanation of the player/parent concerns. If this meeting does not resolve the situation, the player and his parents should then move forward with step 4.	Player, Coaching Staff, Parent(s)/Guardian(s)
4	<b>Request a meeting</b> involving the player, appropriate Vision Charter School Baseball coaches, parents and the Athletic Director. If all the parties involved are still not comfortable with the outcome of this meeting, additional alternatives should be discussed to resolve this matter.	Player, Coaching Staff, Parent(s)/Guardian(s), & Athletic Director

Note: Before leaving any meeting, be sure to clarify and summarize your thoughts and feelings to ensure this will not be a lingering issue.

## **Coaches' Code**

We understand as coaches that we are leaders and are dedicated to more than just the balls and strikes of competition. As a coach, leader, and role model for these student athletes we will do the following:

- Exemplify the highest character as a role model for young people.
- Teach and abide by the rules of the game.
- Promote personal fitness and good nutrition.
- Strive for excellence in coaching skills and techniques through professional improvement.
- Encourage and assist team members to set personal goals to achieve their highest academic potential.
- Gain an awareness of the importance of prevention, care and treatment of athletic injuries.
- Establish a realistic team goal or vision for each season and communicate that to the athletes and coaches.

## **Parent's Code**

We understand that parents play a vital role in the development of student athletes and the success of our program. Therefore, we expect parents to do the following:

- Be a “team” fan, not a “my kid” fan.
- Weigh what their student–athlete says.
- Don’t instruct their student-athlete before or during a game because it may conflict with the coaches’ plan and strategies.
- Parents are not allowed in the dugout.
- Any communication with the coach(es) needs to be requested by email. Meetings by appointment. No texting. No communications after 9:00pm. Limited discussion about players at the field and not before or after games.
- Praise student-athletes in their attempt to improve themselves as students, as athletes and as people.
- Recognize and show appreciation for an outstanding play by either team.
- Gain an understanding and appreciation for the rules of the contest.

## **Vision Charter School Baseball Team Rules**

The following team rules have been developed as a guideline for all Vision Charter School Baseball players to follow and adhere to. These guidelines will set the foundation for a successful and respected baseball program. While it may be difficult to follow these rules, it is important to remember: "As a Vision Charter School baseball player, you not only represent yourself, but also your school, your parents, the Vision Athletic Program, the Vision Charter School Baseball Program and your community." Your performance and success will not only be measured in wins and losses, but also by your conduct in the classroom, in the community, and in the locker room. After careful consideration, the following rules and guidelines have been selected to best exemplify respectable appearance, attitude, and the actions of a baseball player in this program.

### **Baseball Rules and Regulations**

#### 1. Coaches' Expectations:

- a. Be on time
  - b. Be positive Be responsible for yourself and your actions.
  - d. Accept constructive criticism
  - e. No Cell Phones
    - Cell Phones are expected to be turned off as you arrive to practice and may not be turned back on until the coach dismisses the team.
- This includes texting unless there is an emergency.

#### 2. Come to practice prepared with proper attire and equipment:

- a. Practice uniform: shirt tucked in, hat worn correctly, baseball pants or sweats, white, or black socks.
- b. No Jewelry allowed.
- c. Glove, bat, cleats, etc.
- d. No flip-flops are allowed at practice, cages, and games. Make sure you have cleats or turf shoes on depending on the location of practice.

#### 3. Practice will begin and end at the scheduled times listed below:

- a. Practice is from 4:00 pm and ends at 6:00 pm Monday through Friday.
- b. There will occasionally be Saturday practices.
- c. Players arriving to practice late will be responsible for their own actions and will be required to fulfill the consequences associated with their tardiness. Players in tutoring, making up exams, or retaking tests will be exempt from this if it is communicated prior to practice.

d. Student-athlete tardiness more than one instance will result in team discipline.

Each player will be assigned duties and responsibilities to be completed prior to leaving. Permission is necessary to leave without completing those duties.

b. If a player misses practice it is the head coach's discretion if player plays in game(s).

2. Parents/Guardians are to pick up their student-athlete at a reasonable time:

a. Please pick up your student-athlete from practice no later than 20 min after scheduled event.

b. Games are harder to estimate, but they are generally around 2 1/2 hours.

5. Players are to adhere to the Vision and IHSAA minimum guidelines for academics.

6. Players who miss a practice, will not play in the next game, unless:

a. You are not in school that day because of illness.

b. You have a doctor's appointment that can only be done at that time and is pre-approved by the Head Coach

c. You have an academic requirement that can only be done at that time and is pre-approved by the Head Coach

7. Players who miss a game, may not play up to the next two (2) games, unless:

a. There are circumstances beyond your control and a conference has been scheduled with the Head Coach

8. Game Days: Travel to and from baseball games:

a. It is highly recommended that Players be transported in school-sponsored vehicles to and from away games as a team. If a player is not going to ride with the team, then this communication will need to be addressed prior to game day.

b. Players are allowed to be checked out at the end of the game with parents consent to transport from the game.

c. All team gear will be properly worn before and after the game.

d. Players will travel to and from away games as a TEAM.

e. Only in the case of an emergency, will any player be allowed to ride with anyone other than the team.

9. Discipline:

- a. If you receive a Discipline Report:
  - Up to one game suspension (depends on severity)
  - Major infraction may lead to dismissal from the team and is up to the discretion of the head coach and the Athletic Director.
- b. Second Discipline Report:
  - Up to three-game suspension.
  - Major infraction may lead to dismissal from the team and is up to the discretion of the head coach and the Athletic Director.
- c. Third Discipline Report:
  - May lead to being dismissed immediately from the program.
- d. If a player receives a discipline report for fighting or verbal abuse toward any administrator, teacher, or faculty member of Vision Charter School, they will be suspended and evaluated for dismissal from the program.
- e. If a player is involved in matters of the police or school administrator's investigations such as: drugs, alcohol, theft, vandalism, etc. the student-athlete(s) status will be reviewed by the school administrators.
- f. Umpires:
  - All communication or conflicts will be handled by the coaching staff. Players are not to argue calls. Suspension may apply to a player if they argue a call.
- g. No player is to ever:
  - Talk back to an umpire.
  - Gesture to an umpire.
  - Show them up in anyway.
  - Argue a call for any reason.

***If player does any of these things, they will be subject to removal from that game and the baseball program if repeated offenses continue to occur by the head coach.***

### **Sportsmanship**

All players in the program are expected to conduct themselves in a mature, disciplined, and professional manner. It is important to remember the significance and responsibility of participating as a member of the Vision Charter School baseball team. Every time you step onto the field, you not only represent yourself, but also your school, your parents, the Vision

Athletic Program, the Vision Charter School baseball team, and your community. Act appropriately.

### **Team Equipment/Uniform Care Policies**

1. Each player will be responsible for any team equipment provided to them. Any equipment lost or damaged, will be replaced at the player's expense.
2. All equipment will be properly maintained by each player.
3. Each player is responsible to ensure their uniform is clean before every game.
4. Players should never throw, kick, or abuse a batting helmet or any other piece of equipment. This is unacceptable. This goes for coaching staff as well. Throwing of equipment may result in suspension or discipline by the Head Coach.

### **Sponsorships/Donations/Volunteers**

The Vision Baseball program would not be a success without sponsorships, donations, and the numerous volunteers both on and off the field. This is not a prerequisite to any player's standing on the team.

## Keys to Winning

If our team shows the ability to follow this philosophy, we will always be in a position to win. We may not win them all, but we will have given ourselves the chance.

### **I. Team**

- A. Play Hard/**Hustle**
- B. Practice Hard
- C. Trust One Another
- D. Believe In One Another
- E. Play With Confidence
- F. Pick Each Other Up
- G. Make The Other Team Beat You
- H. Execute
- I. Stay Positive

### **II. Pitchers**

- A. Challenge Hitters
- B. Throw Strikes
- C. Work Ahead of Hitters
- D. Keep the Ball Down
- E. Focus
- F. Take one pitch at a time.
- G. Control Emotions on the mound!!

### **III. Defense**

- A. Make Routine Plays
- B. Remember, Great Plays Happen, Routine Plays Win Games
- C. Deny Big Innings
- D. Take Away Individual Hitters
- E. Cover Every Base
- F. Focus

### **IV. Offense**

- A. Focus On One Pitch at a Time
- B. Swing At Strikes
- C. Hit Line Drives and Hard Ground Balls
- D. Run The Bases with Desire to Always Take an Extra Base
- E. Do Not Miss Signs
- F. Have a plan at the plate
- G. Step into the box with confidence

**Disclaimer:**

I \_\_\_\_\_ hereby abide to all rules and regulations set forth by the Vision Charter School Baseball handbook and IHSAA guidelines. I will conduct myself in a mature manner in the school setting, community, and on the playing field always.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Returned Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Head Coach: \_\_\_\_\_

## Positional Responsibilities

- **Requirements for Defensive Unit**
  - Call for all Fly Balls!
  - Know and go for sure outs.
  - Effectively back each other up on all batted and thrown balls.
  - Have all bases covered on all plays.
  - Know when to “eat” the ball.
  - Know where the force-outs are and which ones to take. It can change on every pitch!
  - Be aware of base runners trying to advance after an out.
  - On pop flies and line drives, cover bases! You can double up runners.
  - Throw ahead of base runners.
  - On balls hit to the outfield, use the cutoff.
  - Always think ahead of the play. Know what you’ll do when the ball comes to you
  - Always know the count. It affects the way a batter will hit.
  - Chatter, chatter, chatter!!!
- **Requirements for the Pitcher**
  - Throw strikes
  - On ground balls to the right side, cover first base
  - When third basemen makes play on bunt, cover 3B if there are runners on base
  - Back up throws to 3B and Home from Outfield
  - Cover home plate on wild pitches with runners on 3B or 2B
  - Hold runners on base, if applicable
  - Keep the base runner from advancing on the throw from the catcher
- **Requirements for the Catcher**
  - Control your pitcher. Work together as a unit. Talk about batters between innings and strategize.
  - Minimize the number of balls that get past you.
  - Catch all pop-ups. Remove and drop mask in one movement as you stand up to locate the ball.
  - QUICKLY retrieve wild pitches and passed balls and get the ball back to home plate.
  - Throw out base runners attempting to steal.
  - Come out quickly on bunts and topped balls.
  - With no one on base, back up the player at 1st base on ground balls to the infield.
  - Let the infield cut-off know what to do if the throw is coming to him.
  - Know when to pick off runners leading too far off the base.
  - Keep runners from advancing on the throw back to the pitcher. Throw the ball back on a line.
  - Block the line on close plays at the plate. Make them earn the run.

- **Requirements for First Base**

- Play the ball first, and the base second. On any contact, the player
- should know whether the ball is coming in his general direction or
- not. If so, he should attempt to make the play, just as should any
- fielder. If not, he must cover the bag, whether or not he believes that
- there is any hope of a play at first base.
- Scoop 999 out of 1000 balls out of the dirt.
- Give infielders a good target
- Always be aware of other base runners after the play at first base
- When a throw is off target, move off the bag – if necessary – to
- catch it
- Charge bunts and topped balls down the 1B line
- Don't commit bag foot until you see the throw – then STRETCH!
- On bloop hits, or on grounders that pull him far off of his bag, first
- base should know when to tag the base himself, and when to toss it to the
- covering pitcher (or second base).

- **Requirements for Second Base**

- Turn the double play. With a runner on first and less than two outs,
- the top priority should always be to attempt a double play. If fielded
- near the bag, the player should know whether to step on the bag
- himself or to make the throw to second base via the underhand toss.
- However, the player should always bear in mind that the first
- responsibility is a sure out - make the throw to first if he does not
- think he has a chance to get the runner at second.
- Cover 1B on bunts and topped balls that the 1st Base charges
- When covering 1B, get there quickly – give the fielder a stationary target
- Cover 2B on ground balls to short or third with a runner on first base
  - AND on balls hit to Left and Left Center field.
- Cover or back up 2B on steal play. Usually, the shortstop will cover the base,
- while the second base will back up the play a good ten feet deep. It is vital
- that the second base and the shortstop communicate and clearly understand
- when each will be covering the base! If they get into one another's way, outs
- will be lost.
- On throws from the Catcher to Pitcher, make it a ritual to back up the play
- every time.
- Play positionally sound defense. Always play the ball first and the base
- second.
- The right side of the infield is the responsibility of the player at second base -
- anything hit between 2B and the right foul line is his responsibility. If he can
- get to the ball, he should do so. If the ball is hit to first base, it is his job to
- back up the play. If the ball gets into the outfield, he should sprint out onto the
- grass and act as a cutoff.

- **Requirements for the Shortstop**

- Turn the double play. With a runner on first and less than two outs,
- the top priority should always be to attempt a double play. If fielded
- near the bag, the player should know whether to step on the bag

- himself or to make the throw to second base via the underhand toss.
- However, the player should always bear in mind that the first responsibility is a sure out - make the throw to first if he does not think he has a chance to get the runner at second.
- Cover 2B on hits to the right side of the infield
- Cover or back up 2B on steal play. Usually, the shortstop will cover the base, while second base will back up the play a good ten feet deep. It is vital that second base and the shortstop communicate and clearly understand when each will be covering the base! If they get into one another's way, outs will be lost.
- On throws from the Catcher to Pitcher, make sure either you or the 2nd base backs the throw up
- Play positionally sound defense. Play the ball first and the base second.
- The left side of the infield is the shortstop's domain - anything hit between 2B and the left foul line is his responsibility. If he can get to the ball, he should do so. If the ball is hit to third base, it is his job to back up the play. If the ball gets into the outfield, he should sprint out onto the grass and act as a cutoff.

- **Requirements for Third Base**

- Cover 3B on balls hit to others.
- Always be ready to charge bunts and topped balls.
- Take any pop flies toward home plate that you can get.
- Must constantly work on long throws to 1B and on charging bunts.
- In the event of a bunt, third base will be charging the ball, leaving third base vacant. Usually, the only play here is to throw the runner out at first unless you are dealing with very slow runners at other bases.
- The extreme left side of the infield is the responsibility of third base responsibility domain - anything hit between the shortstop and the left foul line is his responsibility. If he can get to the ball, he should do so. He should be prepared to cover third base if there is any possibility of a play there.
- If the ball is hit between second base and the right foul line, the player should always cover third base, in the event of a throw there.
- With a runner on first and less than two outs, the top priority should always be to attempt a double play. If possible, make a clean throw to second base in an effort to "turn two." However, the player should always bear in mind that the first responsibility is a sure out - make the throw to first if he does not think he has a chance to get the runner at second.
- If there is a force play at third (runners on first and second), the first option is usually to step on third base to begin a double play - either to second or first, depending on the judgment of where the best chance for an out is. Preference is always given to the lead runner - that is, if it is possible to get the lead runner out (at third or at

- second), then do so before getting the runner at first.
- With the base loaded and two outs, third base may pursue
- whatever out is easiest to get - this may be stepping on his own
- base, or making a throw to any base. With less than two outs, the
- call may be for a double play, unless the coach has decided that
- runs cannot be sacrificed (tie game late). In this case, the only
- priority is to attempt to force the runner at the plate.
- **Requirements for the Outfield**
  - You are the goalie of the defensive. Nothing should get past you.
  - Back each other up on ALL balls hit to outfield.
  - Back up infielders on balls hit to them AND on subsequent throws.
  - Go for short flies and – if you can reach the ball – call the infielder off
  - and make the catch.
  - Throw ahead of the base runners and to (or through) the cutoff.
  - Edge in and back-up bases on attempted steals and on pick-off
  - plays.
  - Know and tell a fellow outfielder where to throw when he is fielding a
  - ball.
  - ALWAYS(!!!) throw through the relay so he can cut it if necessary.
- **Backing Up**
  - **Left Fielder**
    - If there is a runner on third then they backup baseline after every
    - pitch.
    - Ball hit to center, backup the center fielder.
    - On a ball hit to right, play at second, backup the throw to second.
    - On a ball hit to right, play at third, backup throw to third.
    - On a groundball to third or shortstop assume an error and charge
    - hard.
    - Rundown going home or third – backup third.
    - Rundown going to second – backup second.
  - **Right Fielder**
    - If there is a runner on first then they backup baseline after every
    - pitch.
    - Ball hit to center, backup the center fielder.
    - On a ball hit to left, play at second, backup the throw to second.
    - On a ball hit to left, play at first, backup first in foul territory.
    - On a groundball to first or second assume an error and charge hard.
    - Rundown going to third – backup second.
    - Rundown going to second – backup first.
  - **Center Fielder**
    - If there is a runner on second then they backup second after every
    - pitch.
    - Ball hit to left, backup the left fielder.
    - Ball hit to right, backup the right fielder.
    - On a groundball to second or shortstop assume an error and charge
    - hard.

- Rundown going to second or third – backup second.
- **Catcher**
  - Bases empty, on a groundball rundown first base line to backup
  - throw to first.
  - Runner on first move up the third base line to provide backup at
  - third.
  - Runners on second or third, cover home.
- **Pitcher**
  - Runner on first, ball hit to right, backup third.
  - Runner on second, ball hit to any field, backup home.
  - Cover first on anything hit in infield to your left.
- **Second Base**
  - Backup every throw to pitcher.
  - Bases empty, backup throw to first on groundball.
  - Cover first on groundball to first.