



## INSTRUCTIONS FOR CANDIDATE SCHOOLS

### **Application and Fee**

Any school interested in VISAA membership should email Aaron Gregory, Director of Communications and Membership, at [agregory@visaa.org](mailto:agregory@visaa.org) with their school name, address, and a list of their varsity sports competing in each season of the current school year. When VISAA has verified the candidate school's accreditation status with the Virginia Council for Private Education (VCPE), the candidate school will receive a link to the full new membership application. If the application and any requested supporting documentation are in order, VISAA will issue an invoice for the nonrefundable \$500 application fee.

The application form requires the candidate school to affirm the following:

- The school is fully accredited by an approved accrediting association recognized by the Virginia Council for Private Education (VCPE);
- The school is recognized by VCPE as an accredited private school in the Commonwealth of Virginia;
- The school sponsors at least one varsity team per gender per season (fall, winter, and spring) in a VISAA-sponsored sport (verified by submitting rosters and completed competitive schedules for each team to VISAA);
- The school does not offer athletic scholarships; if it awards need- or merit-based scholarships, the school must have a written financial aid policy approved by its governing board;

- The school has access to safe and appropriate athletic facilities to host home contests and will provide VISAA with a description of all such facilities; and
- The school's athletic philosophy aligns with the mission and vision of VISAA.

**Note: All requirements listed above must be met *prior to* scheduling a campus visit.**

### **Application Timeline**

A candidate school must submit the New Membership Application no later than **February 15**, preceding the academic year for which it is seeking provisional membership. This timeline allows adequate opportunity for a campus visit and for the VISAA Board of Directors to review the application at its spring meeting. Full accreditation, recognition by VCPE, and the minimum sport requirement must be fully met before any application can move forward.

### **Campus Visit**

Once the application form is accepted and the application fee is received, VISAA staff will coordinate a campus visit with the candidate school. The purpose of this visit is to meet with school leadership and evaluate athletic facilities and programs.

The visiting team typically includes:

- A VISAA staff member;
- A member of the VISAA Board of Directors; and
- Up to four Athletic Directors from VISAA member schools

### **Report to the Board of Directors and Initial Board Vote**

The visiting team will prepare a report for the VISAA Board of Directors summarizing its observations, including an evaluation of programs and facilities and any concerns or recommendations.

After reviewing the visiting team's report, the VISAA Board of Directors will determine whether to invite the candidate school to **Provisional Membership**.

### **Provisional Membership Term and Final Board Vote**

The minimum period of provisional membership is *one academic year*. At the conclusion of that year, the Board of Directors will review the school's experience, the resolution of any identified concerns, and compliance with VISAA rules and policies. Based on that review, the Board may:

- Grant full membership;
- Extend the provisional period for another year; or
- Terminate provisional membership without an offer of full membership.

### **Provisional Membership: Responsibilities and Limitations**

During the provisional year, the school's athletic director should attend a VISAA regional meeting and the annual conference of the Virginia Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (VIAAA).

Provisional members (teams, student-athletes, coaches, and staff) are:

- Ineligible to compete in VISAA state championships;
- Ineligible to receive VISAA postseason awards; and
- Ineligible to serve on VISAA committees

### **Full Membership Requirements**

Upon attaining full membership, a school must:

- Maintain full accreditation and recognition by VCPE;
- Continue to offer the required minimum number of sports; and
- Remain in full compliance with all VISAA rules and policies.

As part of the annual membership renewal process, each school must:

- Update all relevant personnel contacts;
- Reaffirm its commitment to follow all VISAA rules and policies;
- Indicate the sports it will sponsor during the academic year;
- Report enrollment; and
- Pay annual membership dues.