

Table of Contents



Community Baseball Handbook 2011



1.0 Baseball Commission	3
2.0 Key Dates	3
3.0 Introduction	4
3.1 Philosophy	4
4.0 Coaches' Code of Ethics	5
5.0 Parents' Code of Ethics	6
6.0 Players Code of Behavior	7
7.0 General Policies.....	8
7.1 Behavior	8
7.2 Inclement Weather	8
7.3 Blood Policy	8
7.4 Equipment Abuse	9
7.5 Equipment Abuse	9
7.6 Tobacco Policy	9
7.7 Suspensions	10
8.0 Conflict Resolution Guidelines	11
9.0 General Information	12
9.1 Budget	12
9.2 Games and Practices	12
9.3 Neighborhood Parks	12
9.4 Team Pictures	12
9.5 Playing Time	12
9.6 Safety Equipment	13
9.7 Suggestions	13
9.8 Surveys	13
9.9 Team Selection	13
9.10 Team Refreshments	13
9.11 Uniforms	13
10.0 League-Specific Information.....	14
10.1 Team Selection	14
10.2 Rules	14
10.2.1 Kindergarten through 3rd Grade Leagues	15
Eligibility	15
Playing Field	15
Safety Equipment	15
Umpires	15
Game Rules	16
Rainouts and Makeup Games	16
Playing Rules	16
10.2.2 4th through 6th Grade Leagues	20
Eligibility	20
Playing Field	20
Safety Equipment	20
Umpires	21

Game Rules211
Rainouts and Makeup Games211
Playing Rules.....222
10.2.3 Infield Fly Rule255
10.2.4 Bat Size Restrictions266

1.0 Baseball Commission And Voice Mail Messaging

To contact any of the volunteers, please contact the organization where your child is registered. Our suggestion to you is that you use the web sites as your primary method of contact.

Field locations and other information are available at each organization’s web site.

Organization	Phone	Web site
EVAA - Eastview	952-985-3830	http://www.evaasports.org
VAA – Apple Valley	952-432-5618	http://www.valleyathletic.org

2.0 Key Dates

Coaches Call Players	2 nd or 3 rd week of April
Practices Begin	3 rd week of April
Games Begin (K-6th)	first week of May
Pictures	(get exact time/place from your organization)
No Games Scheduled	during week of July 4
Games End (K-3rd)	2 nd week of July
Tournaments (2nd – 6th)	3 rd week of July

3.0 Introduction

Welcome! On behalf of the Community Baseball league, we would like to welcome you to the baseball program. In our continuing efforts to provide the best for the youth of our community, we designed this handbook to provide you with the fundamental information needed to make your baseball experience fun, interesting, and worthwhile.

This league is a non-profit volunteer organization serving the youth of our community. We rely heavily on the parents of our participants to provide the volunteer services to make our program successful. The baseball program requires thousands of volunteer hours to be successful. We encourage all parents to contribute their time to support the baseball program; we have many tasks that require a minimal amount of your time.

The volunteers in the baseball program include commissioners, coordinators, directors, coaches and umpires for the younger age levels, and many others who assist with sign-ups, pictures, equipment, uniforms, surveys, and implementing changes to the program. You can share your skills in any of these capacities or any others in which you may have an interest. Please contact any baseball volunteer for more information on how you can be involved.

Please remember that as volunteers we sometimes make decisions with which you may not agree. We ask you to share your concerns in a supportive manner.

We hope this baseball season will be a positive and fun experience for your child...this is our goal!

The Community Baseball league baseball program thanks you for your participation.

3.1 Philosophy

The Community baseball program's philosophy is to provide a positive environment in which each individual has equal opportunity to further develop the fundamentals and skills of the game. Every player should experience a variety of fielding positions.

4.0 Coaches' Code of Ethics

- I hereby pledge to live up to the League Guidelines by following the listed Code of Ethics:
- I will place the emotional and physical well being of my players 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 same 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.

4.1 Coaches Are Responsible:

- for the good sportsmanship and proper behavior of team players and their guests.
- for attending the coaches meeting in April to pick up their team roster, schedule and equipment.
- for the equipment that is issued to them. If any equipment is lost or damaged, coaches should report the problem to the league director.
- for locking the base boxes after practices and games.
- for attending any type of coaching clinic if possible.
- for holding a parent meeting. At this meeting, the coach should set the tone for the season and distribute their team schedule and roster.
- for enforcing the league rules.
- for picking up uniforms, pictures, and trophies and distributing them to their team.
- for ensuring the playing time requirements are met for each of their players.
- for contacting the league director(s) to arrange any make-up games.
- for contacting the umpire coordinator to cancel umpires for canceled games and to report umpire "no shows."
- for reporting any problems with the fields to the league director.
- for recruiting parent volunteers as necessary.
- for attending the coaches meeting in July to return their equipment.
- for finding someone to attend any of the meetings listed above, if they cannot make the scheduled times.

5.0 Parents' Code of Ethics

- I hereby pledge to live up to the League's Parents' Guidelines by following the listed 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.

5.1 Parents Are Responsible:

- for demonstrating good sportsmanship and proper behavior.
- for the good sportsmanship and proper behavior of their children and their guests.
- for getting their children to practices and games on time.
- for picking up their children from practices and games on time.
- for informing the coach whenever their child will miss or be late to a practice or a game.
- for volunteering to assist the coach whenever possible.

6.0 Players Code of Behavior

- I hereby pledge to live up to the League's Players' Guidelines by following the listed Code of Ethics:
- 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 the 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 in 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.

6.1 Players Are Responsible

- for demonstrating good sportsmanship and proper behavior.
- for being attentive at practices and games.
- for reminding their parents that they should be at practices or games on time.
- for informing the coach whenever they will miss or be late to a practice or a game.
- for having fun playing the game.

7.0 General Policies

7.1 Behavior

Coaches are responsible for their behavior as well as the behavior of their assistant coaches, their players, and their fans. Harassment of umpires, coaches, or players will not be tolerated. Coaches may have discussions with officials on the interpretation of a rule or a call. They do not have the right to challenge judgment calls (e.g., balls and strikes, safe or out, and rule interpretations). Blatant criticism of the umpires by coaches, players, or fans will not be tolerated. The umpires are responsible for the control of the game and have authority to eject any coach, player, or fan from the playing area. The umpires and/or coaches are responsible for reporting the incident to the league director(s). Subsequent violations may result in suspension from the league.

If you have a problem with the performance of an umpire, please direct your concerns to the league director for your grade level. We must strive to teach the children of the community respect for the officials.

Fans are restricted to the areas that are “out of play” and away from the bench. Participants are expected to be on the bench when they are not actively playing. Coaches should make sure that a single person is in the “on deck” circle at any time.

Players will treat their teammates and opposition with respect. After each game, the participants will line-up and shake hands.

7.2 Inclement Weather

In case of inclement weather, your coach is responsible for determining if there will be a game or practice. If you have any questions regarding inclement weather, please contact your coach.

At all age levels, games and practices shall be suspended when lightning is visible or thunder is heard. A single vote by either of the coaches or the umpires results in the game being suspended. Remember that the safety of the players in inclement weather is the number one concern.

7.3 Blood Policy

Consistent with the League’s policy on blood, players are not allowed to participate while bleeding or blood is on the uniform.

7.4 Drug and Alcohol Policy

The league believes that all players and coaches participating in a youth activity should refrain from the use of alcohol and/or a controlled substance.

It shall be a violation of this policy for a player or coach while participating in a youth activity to use a beverage containing alcohol or use or consume, have in possession, buy, sell or give away any controlled substances.

Once a violation has been brought to the attention of the Board and the Board has made a decision, the player or coach will be informed of his or her ineligibility in the sport by a written letter from the Board of Directors.

First Violation: Upon notification by the 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 for that sport season. No exception is permitted.

Accumulative Penalties: Penalties shall be accumulative beginning with and continuing throughout the player or coach’s participation in the organization.

7.5 Equipment Abuse

Under no circumstances will the abuse of equipment be tolerated. Umpires and coaches are instructed to give a player one warning. After the warning, each instance of equipment abuse will result in that player sitting on the bench for the remainder of the game. If the abuse of the equipment results in any damage to the equipment, that player and their parents will be responsible for reimbursing the replacement cost of the equipment to the baseball program. Players may be barred from future programs until reimbursement of damaged property is made.

7.6 Tobacco Policy

The league does not condone the use of tobacco by players under the legal tobacco age.

It shall be a violation of this policy for a player participating in any activity to use tobacco.

Once a violation has been brought to the attention of the Board, the player will be informed of his or her ineligibility. Ineligibilities will be the same as for the Drug and Alcohol Policy.

In addition to the league's policy on tobacco, the baseball commission requests that all coaches and parents refrain from tobacco use while participating in a baseball activity. If a coach or parent must use tobacco during a baseball activity, they must remove themselves from the playing area, which includes the bench area.

7.7 Suspensions

The baseball commission reserves the right to suspend any coach, parent, player, or fan that violates the Code of Ethics provided by the Board of Directors. Suspensions will be documented and distributed to the Board of Directors.

A coach or umpire may suspend any player who acts in an unsportsmanlike manner, which includes fighting, swearing, and taunting. The player is given one warning. The second violation results in the player sitting on the bench for the remainder of the game. The third violation results in suspension of the player for the remainder of the game plus the next game played. Subsequent violations may result in the player being suspended from the league. Any violations must be reported to the league director.

A coach may reduce the playing time of any player for failing or refusing to attend practice sessions or games. The coach must give the player one warning and discuss the situation with the player's parents. The warning should include a fair description of intended discipline. The coach must discuss the intended discipline with the league director before discipline is administered.

8.0 Conflict Resolution Guidelines

These guidelines are to be followed whenever there may be concerns or questions regarding the policies and programs of Community Baseball.

When a player or a parent has a concern regarding the policies or procedures of Community Baseball, they should bring those concerns to the attention of the coach.

If the problem persists or is unable to be resolved at the coach level, the player or parent should contact their league director. The league director will involve the baseball commission as necessary.

Once the baseball commission is involved, the commission will act as the mediator between the participant and the coach. All parties involved will discuss together the situation and find a solution.

The baseball commission will communicate with the Board Liaison any necessary mediation and the outcome of the mediation.

If necessary, the parties involved can contact the Community Baseball Liaison to help mediate the dispute. The Board Liaison will meet with all parties to discuss the situation and find a solution.

The Board Liaison will communicate with the Board of Directors 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 should be written to the "Executive Committee." The Executive Committee consists of the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary of the Board of Directors. The Executive Committee shall consult with the Board Liaison on the issue. At this time, the Executive Committee may make a decision on the issue or refer the issue to the full Board of Directors.

The decision of either the Executive Committee or the full Board of Directors will be final.

9.0 General Information

9.1 Budget

Here is a rough breakdown of the expenses paid from the baseball registration fee:

Expense	Estimated Percentage of Registration Fee
Equipment	15%
Miscellaneous	7%
Trophies	10%
Umpires	24%
Uniforms	29%
Athletic Assoc.	15%

9.2 Games and Practices

The season begins with practices in May. Games start near the end of May and run through the third week of July. A weekend playoff tournament is held for third grade and above the third weekend of July. No games are scheduled for the week of July 4, however, this week may be used for making up games.

Games and practices are scheduled Monday through Thursday. If necessary, games and practices may also be scheduled on Friday, Saturday or Sunday.

9.3 Neighborhood Parks

To accommodate the number of participants that we have, baseball must utilize neighborhood parks. In the past, the city has heard concerns from the residents about the usage of the neighborhood parks.

If you have a game at a neighborhood park, please be considerate of the residents: park your vehicle appropriately, drive safely, use sidewalks, pick up your trash, and keep your children out of other people's property. We cannot afford to lose the use of these parks!

9.4 Team Pictures

Commissioners make arrangements for individual and team pictures to be taken mid-season. As a courtesy to teammates, please make every effort to attend.

9.5 Playing Time

Over the course of the season, all participants should have approximately the same playing time at both infield and outfield positions and approximately the same number of at bats.

Playing Time Exceptions:

Players that are suspended for equipment abuse, unsportsmanlike conduct, or that miss or come late for games and/or practices.

9.6 Safety Equipment

Batting helmets and catcher's equipment are provided by the league. Parents are responsible for providing any additional safety equipment. Mouth guard and protective cup are recommended - see grade level information.

9.7 Suggestions

The community baseball volunteers value your opinions. If you have suggestions for improving the baseball program, please include them on the online survey at the end of the season. Include as much detail as necessary for the volunteers to understand what you would like to see implemented. If unable to complete an online survey, contact your league director with your suggestions.

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.

9.8 Surveys

All participants are asked to complete an online survey on their experience with community baseball. This is your opportunity to express your opinions about community baseball. Please use this opportunity to offer your ideas on how the program can be improved.

Online surveys can be found on your league's website.

9.9 Team Selection

Team and coach selection will be completed and communicated to the parents by the end of April. If your child's coach has not contacted you by May 1, please contact the director for your league.

Requests are allowed only for persons requesting to coach together or for siblings. For complete details on how the teams are selected, please refer to the section on "League-Specific Information."

Trading players is not allowed in any league.

9.10 Team Refreshments

It is customary for team members to take turns bringing pop for after game sharing. Please refrain from high caffeine pop. Coaches usually assign game refreshment responsibility at the start of the season.

9.11 Uniforms

Shirts and hats are provided by the baseball program. Sizes are predetermined by grade level to expedite ordering and receipt of uniforms by the coaches meetings. A team shirt and at will be provided for coach and co-coach. Parents are responsible for supplying pants for their children. Parents may want to wait until after the first team meeting before purchasing pants, since the team may decide on one color of pants.

10.0 League-Specific Information

10.1 Team Selection

Kindergarten through Third Grade:

Up to three people may request to coach a team together. The remainder of the team roster is selected by placing children together with other children from their school to the extent possible. Coach or car pool requests are not guaranteed.

Fourth through Sixth Grades:

Two people may request to coach a team together. The remainder of the team roster is selected via a blind draft of like-rated players. Their coaches from the previous year rate the players. Thus, car pool requests are not honored. An effort is made in the seventh and eighth/eleventh grade leagues to balance pitching among teams to the extent possible.

Coaches are recruited from parents of players. Often times, there are volunteers for assistant coaches, but not head coach. When this occurs teams will be formed with only assistant coaches designated.

10.2 Rules

This section contains the basic rules for each of the leagues. We do modify some of the normal baseball rules to adjust them to the age level of the participants and/or the philosophies of the board. These rules may be modified in the coaches' meetings at the beginning of the season. Rule changes must be written, approved by the baseball commission, and distributed to the coaches before they are enforced.

If there are rules that you do not agree with, please work with the baseball commission to change them. Coaches are not allowed to mutually agree to suspend any of the rules for any game.

10.2.1 Kindergarten through 3rd Grade Leagues

Eligibility

1. Players must have been attending first, second or third grade at the time of the sign-ups. For the kindergarten grade level they only need to be of kindergarten age and not actually attending kindergarten.
2. Each of the grades will have a league of their own. Third grade will also play games against other community teams.
3. Players may only play in the league for their grade, unless the player has a disability that keeps them from being able to play with their grade level. The community baseball commission must approve any exceptions.
4. Only league registered players may play in a game. If one team is short players, the opposing team provides any extra players they have available. If the coach knows his team will be short players, he may contact the opposing coach to determine if the opposing team will have extra players. If the opposing team will not have extra players, the coach may contact the league director for approval to find substitute players from other teams in the same league.

Playing Field

1. Bases are 60 feet apart.
2. The pitching rubber will be approximately 30 feet from home plate except for 3rd grade, which will be 42 feet from home plate.
3. Bases furnished by the league shall be used.
4. Baselines shall be up to the discretion of the umpire in the case of a runner trying to avoid a tag.
5. The umpire shall determine an imaginary batter's box.
6. The "on deck" circle shall be located on the bench side of the fence.

Safety Equipment

1. Catchers must wear a chest protector, shin guards, facemask, and helmet.
2. All batters and runners must wear protective helmets. Any batter or runner throwing their helmet (in the judgment of the umpire) will be called out.
3. The baseball commission strongly recommends that all male players wear athletic supporters and a protective cup.
4. Baseball shoes with molded (plastic or rubber) cleats are allowed. Shoes with metal spikes or cleats are not allowed.
5. The Board of Directors has recommended the use of mouth guards.
6. Kindergarten will use a soft-core baseball, 1st a RIF 5 baseball, 2nd a RIF 10 baseball and 3rd will use a standard baseball.

Umpires

1. Umpires K-2nd grade are volunteers recruited by the coaches and can be coaches, assistant coaches, or parents. Umpires for 3rd grade will be at the discretion of the league commissioner(s).
2. Direct complaints about umpiring to the league director(s).

Game Rules

1. Games consist of five innings; with a maximum time limit of 60 minutes.
2. Normally, there are two games per field per night for K-2nd grade. The first game begins at **6:00** p.m. with no new inning starting after **6:55** p.m. The second game begins immediately after the first game with a five-minute warm-up, by **7:15** p.m. at the latest. For third grade there will only be one game and the start time is **6:15** p.m. and no new inning will start after **8:00** p.m.
3. Extra innings may be played at the discretion of the coaches, if extra time is available and parents are willing to allow the game to continue.
4. The “home” team is responsible for setting the bases, providing the game ball, and providing the home plate umpire.
5. The “visiting” team is responsible for providing the base umpire and returning the bases to the locker boxes.
6. There will not be any score kept in K-2 (except to determine when a half inning is over). Score keeping for grade 3 will be at the discretion of the coaches.
7. No league standings are kept. There are not any playoffs at the end of the season except for 3rd grade, which will have a tournament.

Rainouts and Makeup Games

1. Coaches are responsible for determining whether or not a game should be called off due to rain. Safety of the children is the primary consideration to take into account for this decision. If it is questionable, i.e. light “on & off” rain, the game status should be decided at the field.
2. If you can see lightening or hear the thunder, the game stops immediately. Either coach or the umpire can call the game, no consensus is required.
3. If rain stops a game before its completion, the entire game may be replayed at a time agreed upon by both coaches.
4. To make up a rained out game, the coaches must contact the league director for a list of available field times and locations. The coaches then work out a time to replay the game. The coaches must reserve the field time with the league director.

Playing Rules

General

1. All players must experience an equal amount of playing time each game, as nearly as possible, unless the player is injured, suspended, or late for a game.
2. All players should have approximately the same amount of playing time (proportional to attendance) over the course of the season.
3. Players should be rotated every two innings at a minimum. No player shall play more than two innings at the same position per game. Players can play no more than 4 innings in the infield per game. Infield positions include, Pitcher, Catcher, 1st, 2nd, 3rd and SS. Over the course of the season, each player should play all of the defensive positions. The coach must ensure that each player can “safely” play a position before the player plays the position. The coach must inform the player’s parents if they believe the child cannot “safely” play a position.
4. Round-robin batting (all players present) shall be in effect. The “on deck” batter at the end of a game shall be the “leadoff” hitter in the following game.

5. An inning ends when the defensive team records three outs or when the offensive team scores five runs.
6. The team batting order will include all members of the team and will be followed the entire game regardless of defensive assignment.
7. A batter gets a total of five pitches to hit. If the batter fails to hit a fair ball in five pitches, the batter is out. Exception: if the pitcher has difficulty in throwing good pitches, two additional pitches may be thrown to a batter. For 3rd grade during the second half of the season the players will pitch, see pitching section below for both batting and pitching rules.
8. Any player who (in the judgment of the umpire) throws the bat after swinging at a ball will be called out.
9. All offensive players except the batter and the “on deck” hitter should remain seated on the bench. Only one hitter may be in the “on deck” circle. Only players and coaches should be on the bench.
10. Team players are not permitted to be base coaches.
11. If a batted ball hits the designated pitcher, the play is dead; all players must return to their positions at the time the ball was pitched and the pitch is replayed.
12. If a batted ball hits a runner before being touched by a defensive player, the runner is out and the batter is awarded first base.
13. Bunting is not allowed.
14. A defensive team will consist of pitcher, catcher, 1st baseman, 2nd baseman, 3rd baseman, shortstop, and four outfielders. All players shall be positioned in “normal” defensive positions. No stacking of any defensive position or area is allowed. If coaches agree, extra players may be positioned in the deep outfield.
15. All outfielders must be positioned on the outfield grass, with at least ten feet of grass between them and the infield.
16. The defensive pitcher must stand within five feet behind and to the left or right of the designated pitcher. The pitcher should have a clear view of the batter.
17. Batted balls that go above the batter’s head and are caught by the catcher are recorded as outs.
18. If a fielder deliberately inhibits a runner’s progress, the runner will be awarded an extra base beyond the base they could have advanced to by the end of the play.
19. If a fielder deliberately throws their glove at a ball, all runners will be awarded two extra bases beyond the base they could have advanced to by the end of the play.
20. No infield fly rule exists.
21. For K-2nd grade two defensive coaches are permitted on the field of play. No defensive coaches are allowed on the field for third grade.
22. Players and coaches are not allowed behind the backstop during the course of the game.

Pitching (K-2nd Grade)

1. Coaches or parents do all the pitching
2. The coach or parent pitches can be either overhand or underhand. The ability of the player should be taken into consideration when deciding which method to use; the fundamental of hitting is more important than how the pitch is delivered.

Pitching (3rd Grade)

1. The first 4 weeks of the season is coach pitch. Once the players start pitching it is required that each pitcher will warm up during the prior inning.
2. On coach pitches, the coach must pitch overhand and from the 46-foot pitching rubber.
3. Third grade does not have paid umpires. Once players begin pitching, however, there is a need for a home plate umpire to call balls and strikes on the hitters. The home team should supply a volunteer umpire unless the coaches of the two teams agree otherwise.
4. Unlike the first 4 weeks of the season, the batter is out as soon as the player records three strikes (swinging or called). If a pitcher completes 4 maximum pitches to a batter and that batter has not previously gotten a hit or has been previously retired, the coach of the team that is batting will immediately come in without delay to pitch. The umpire should call balls and strikes on all pitches, whether they are pitched by the player or the coach. The coach can throw a maximum of 3 more pitches to the batter even if the batter has not yet reached strike three in the count, with the following exceptions:
 - a. The batter fouls off the last pitch, and it is not caught by a defensive player.
 - b. The final pitch to the batter is a ball and the batter does not swing at the pitchAs an example of the above, a player fouls off pitch 7, and then gets pitch 8. He also fouls off pitch 8. The coach misses the strike zone on pitch 9, and the batter does not swing. The batter is thereby entitled to pitch 10. The last pitch to a batter cannot be a ball.
5. There will be no walks.
6. A batter hit by a player pitch can proceed to first base. A batter hit by a coach pitch cannot proceed to first base.
7. Pitchers can throw a maximum of 2 innings per game and 4 innings per week. Tournament pitching limits are counted from the beginning of the tournament (i.e. regular season pitches do not count in tournaments).

Base Running

1. No stealing is allowed.
2. Runners are not permitted to lead off. They may leave the base only after the ball has been batted.
3. Runners are not allowed to advance on pass balls or wild pitches.
4. On an overthrow, runners can advance to the base they were running to. If a runner was not running towards the next base then they must return to their original base (**no extra**

bases on an overthrow).

5. On a hit to the outfield, the runners may advance as many bases as they can while the ball is in the outfield. Once the throw reaches the infield dirt, runners may advance only if they were half way to the next base.

Tournament

1. There are no tournaments for kindergarten through 2nd grade. Third grade will have a tournament. The league tournament schedules will be issued early in the season.

10.2.2 4th through 6th Grade Leagues

Eligibility

1. Players must have been attending fourth, fifth, or sixth grade at the time of the sign-ups.
2. Each of the grades will have a league of their own. Games will also be scheduled against other organization teams.
3. Players may only play in the league for their grade, unless the player has a disability that keeps them from being able to play with their grade level. The community baseball commission must approve any exceptions.
4. Only league registered players may play in a game. For the regular season, if one team is short players (has six or less), the opposing team provides any extra players they have available. If the coach knows his team will be short players, he may contact the opposing coach to determine if the opposing team will have extra players. If the opposing team will not have extra players, the coach may contact the league director for approval to find substitute players from other teams in the same league. All substitutions to be approved by the league director or his/her alternate.

Playing Field

1. Bases are 60 feet apart for the fourth and fifth grade leagues and 65 feet apart for the sixth grade league.
2. The pitching rubber is 46 feet from home plate for the fourth and fifth grade leagues and 52 feet for the sixth grade league.
3. The home team is responsible for putting out the bases and chalking the field if applicable. The visiting team is responsible for returning the bases to the box and making sure the box is locked
4. Bases furnished by the league shall be used.
5. Imaginary lines running from the ends of the line fences and parallel to the foul lines shall bound the field-of-play. The umpire(s) shall decide and call balls that are “out-of-play.”
6. The “on deck” circle shall be located on the field side of the line fences.

Safety Equipment

1. It is strongly recommended that all male players wear athletic supporters, which include a protective cup. Catchers are required to wear athletic supporters, which include a protective cup. Catchers must also wear a chest protector, shin guards, facemask, helmet, and catcher’s glove.
2. All batters and base runners must wear protective helmets. Any batter or runner throwing their helmet (in the judgment of the umpire) will be called out.
3. Baseball shoes with molded (plastic or rubber) cleats are allowed. Shoes with metal spikes or cleats are not allowed.
4. The Board of Directors has recommended that mouth guards be used.
5. Refer to 10.2.5 for specific limitations on bats. Metal bat handles must be wrapped or the umpire will not allow the bat to be used. Wood bats are allowed.

Umpires

1. If at all possible, two umpires will be provided for each game.
2. The league-supplied umpires will be at least in ninth grade at signup time and are required to complete an umpire’s clinic. They are not required to be certified.
3. If no umpire’s show up for a game, the coaches shall agree on an alternate volunteer who will act as the umpire for the game.
4. Direct umpiring complaints to the umpire coordinators.

Game Rules

1. Games consist of six innings.
2. All weekday games begin at **6:15 p.m.**, and no new inning can start after **8:15 p.m.** In the case of darkness, the game can be and should be called at anytime by the umpire OR either coach. The safety of the players is paramount when considering whether the game should continue or not.
3. Each team is allocated 10 minutes for infield practice before the game. The visiting team will practice during the time period from 20 minutes before the game to 10 minutes before the game. The home team will practice from 10 minutes before the game up until game time. For safety reasons, use of the infield for batting practice during this time is not allowed.
4. Three completed innings constitutes an official game.
5. No more than five runs per inning per team will be allowed. Even though the visiting team leads by more than five runs in the top of the sixth inning, the bottom of the sixth inning will be played. Games may end in a tie.
6. The defensive team shall field a maximum of nine players and a minimum of seven players. (If both teams agree at the start of a game and have the players, ten defensive players can be used.) A grace period of fifteen minutes will be given before a forfeit is called. The delay in game time can be added to the end of the game (safe light playing conditions will prevail).
7. The home team provides one new ball and the visiting team provides one quality back-up ball at the start of each game.

Rainouts and Makeup Games

1. In case of inclement weather prior to game start time, the coaches should contact each other and discuss if the game should be canceled. If the game is canceled, the home team is responsible for calling the umpire coordinator immediately so that the umpire can be notified.
2. Once at the field, both coaches and the umpire should mutually decide if the game should be played, canceled, or suspended. Every effort should be made to make a poor field condition playable, weather permitting. (Except in the case of lightning – see section Inclement Weather.)
3. The coaches must contact the league director to re-schedule the game.
4. Make-up games can be played on open nights, on weekends or during the July 4th break and will take precedence over practices.
5. The league director is responsible for contacting the umpire coordinator and arranging umpires for all makeup games.

Playing Rules

General

1. Coaches may not mutually agree to suspend any rule(s) for any given game.
2. The “Official Regulations and Playing Rules” of Little League Baseball shall govern any and all rules not addressed here. Coaches and umpires are urged to interpret the rules liberally and generously, considering the intentions of this league.
3. All players must play a minimum of three defensive innings, unless the player is injured, suspended, or late for a game. The philosophy of community baseball is to give players experience at a variety of fielding positions.
4. Players should be rotated every two innings at a minimum. A player can play no more than three innings at the same position per game but it is recommended that a player only play two innings at the same position. Players can play no more than 4 innings in the infield per game. Infield positions include Pitcher, Catcher, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and SS. Over the course of the season, each player should play all of the defensive positions. The coach must ensure that each player can “safely” play a position before the player plays the position. The coach must inform the player’s parents if they believe the child cannot “safely” play a position.
5. Round-robin batting (all players present) shall be in effect. All players should have approximately the same number of at bats over the course of the season (proportional to attendance). A simple implementation is to utilize a fixed batting order with the first batter of each game being the batter who was on-deck at the end of the previous game.
6. Free player substitutions are allowed and do not alter the batting order.
7. Bunting is not allowed in the fourth grade league. Bunting is allowed in the fifth and sixth grade leagues.
8. The batter may not run on a dropped third strike. Base runners may advance at their own risk. Runners at third base may not advance to home.
9. No defensive player, while not in possession of the ball or in the act of fielding the ball, shall impede (obstruct) the progress of any runner. This includes the attempting a “fake” tag. Penalty shall result in all base runners being awarded an extra base.
10. The ball remains live (i.e. “in-play”) at all times unless an umpire calls “time-out” or unless the ball goes “out-of-play.”
11. Players should remain seated on the bench except for the on-deck hitter. Only players and coaches are allowed on the bench.
12. The infield fly rule is in effect. Please refer to the section 10.2.4 on the infield fly rule for detailed information.
13. Players and coaches are not allowed behind the backstop during the course of the game.

Pitching

1. For the fourth grade league, a player can pitch a maximum of two innings per game and no more than four innings in any week (Monday - Sunday). Coaches should try to limit pitchers to approximately 40 but not to exceed 50 pitches per game. For the fifth and sixth grade leagues, a player can pitch a maximum of three innings per game and no more than six innings in any week (Monday - Sunday). Coaches should try to limit pitchers to a total of 60 pitches per game.
2. If a player throws one pitch in an inning, it shall be recorded as an inning pitched.
3. A player, once removed as a pitcher, may not pitch again in the same game.
4. A pitcher is allowed a maximum of five warm-up pitches before each inning. A new

pitcher is allowed seven warm-up pitches.

5. Pitchers are only allowed to throw fastball and change up pitches. The first violation results in a warning. The second violation results in the pitcher being removed from the game. The pitcher may not return to the game at any position.
6. The strike zone will include any part of the ball crossing the plate between the top of the batter’s kneecaps and the batter’s armpits, when the batter assumes a natural stance. (In practical terms, of course, players must be taught that the strike zone is wherever the umpire calls it!)
7. For the fourth, fifth and sixth grade leagues, coaches are required to replace a pitcher if they walk or hit four consecutive batters. The umpire shall allow the replacement pitcher as many warm-up pitches as the umpire deems necessary.
8. If a game is called due to weather, the pitcher will be charged with any innings pitched, regardless if it is an official (complete) game or not.

Base Running

1. Fourth grade, stealing is not allowed until the third week of the season.
2. Base runners may not leave the base until the pitched ball crosses home plate. Stealing bases includes wild pitches and passed balls. For game, the first violation by a team results in a warning. Subsequent violations for the team result in the base runner being called out. The ball is “dead” and the runner(s) must return to their original base.
3. Base runners may not steal home except 6th grade.
4. For the fourth grade league only, runners may not advance or score when a defensive play is initiated by a steal. For example, if the runner at first steals second and the catcher’s throw is misplayed; the runner may not advance to third. Also, if there are runners at first and third, the runner on third may not advance on the play at second.
5. For the fifth grade league, a runner on third can advance on any play other than a pitched ball. For the sixth grade league, a runner on third can advance on any play *including* a pitched ball.
6. If a runner returns to base or an opposing catcher “looks” a runner back, the ball is dead, no runner can advance, or make an out, and play resumes with the next play. This rule does not apply to a rundown situation.
7. Any base runner must slide *or otherwise must attempt to avoid bodily contact* when a tag is being attempted. Violation of either method will result in the player being called out. (Of course, leaving the baseline to avoid a tag or bodily contact also causes the runner to be called out.) The purpose of this rule is to prevent collisions that can cause injuries.
8. An overthrow that remains “in-play” entitles base runners to advance at their own risk except for fourth grade where they can only advance one base on an overthrow or a series of overthrows. An overthrow that goes “out-of-play” entitles base runners (including the batter-runner) to one additional base beyond the base, which they are trying to reach, as determined by the umpire. [Interpretation: If a runner has not moved off the base, or is moving back toward a base, the runner is not trying to reach the next base and only gets one base. Runners must be moving toward the next base in order to get one plus one.]

Tournament

1. Tournament rules are the same as for the regular season except that pitching limits are subject to change. However, a pitcher cannot pitch in consecutive tournament games.
2. The tournaments are usually held the third or fourth weekend in July. The VAA champion will play the EVAA champion following the tournaments.

10.2.4 Infield Fly Rule

The infield fly rule applies when there are fewer than two outs, and there is a force play at third (runners on first and second base, or bases loaded). In these situations, if a fair fly ball is hit that, in the umpire's judgment, is catchable by an infielder with ordinary effort, the batter is out regardless of whether the ball is actually caught in flight. The rule states that the umpire is supposed to announce, "Infield fly, if fair." If the ball will be almost certainly fair, the umpire will likely yell, "Infield fly, batters out!" or just "Batter's out!" Umpires also typically raise one arm straight up to signal to everyone that the rule is in effect.

Any fair fly ball that could have been caught by an infielder with ordinary effort is covered by the rule, regardless of where the ball was caught. The ball need not be caught by an infielder, nor must it be caught in the infield. For example, if an infielder retreats to the outfield in an effort to catch a fly ball with ordinary effort, the Infield Fly Rule would be invoked, even if an outfielder ultimately caught the ball, and even if no infielder attempted to make a play on the ball. Similarly, a fly ball within the infield that could have been caught by an infielder with ordinary effort, but is caught by an outfielder, would also be covered by the rule.

On a caught infield fly, the runners must tag up (retouch their base at the time of pitch) in order to be eligible to advance, as on any catch. If the infield fly falls to fair ground untouched, or is touched and dropped, runners need not tag up. In either case, since the batter is out, the force play on other runners is removed.

10.2.5 Bat Size Restrictions

Up to 4th Grade:

Maximum diameter at the thickest part: $2\frac{1}{4}$ " or less with unlimited weight differential

5th Grade:

In diameter at the thickest part: $2\frac{1}{4}$ " or less with unlimited weight differential

In diameter at the thickest part... $2\frac{1}{2}$ " to $2\frac{3}{4}$ " with no greater than minus 10 weight differential

6th Grade:

In diameter at the thickest part... $2\frac{1}{4}$ " or less with unlimited weight differential

In diameter at the thickest part... $2\frac{1}{2}$ " to $2\frac{3}{4}$ " with no greater than minus 10 weight differential

All grades bat length...36" or less

All bat handles must be wrapped or the umpire will not allow the bat to be used