

South County Crew Club
Handbook

2025-2026 Season

The South County Crew Club (SoCo Crew Club) is a co-ed crew team, which competes at the scholastic level in rowing events locally, state-wide, and nationally. SoCo Crew Club is a member of the Virginia Scholastic Rowing Association¹ (VASRA), which is comprised of public and private member schools from Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax, and Prince William counties in Virginia as well as schools from Maryland and the District of Columbia. VASRA organizes and runs the local regattas on the Occoquan Reservoir.

VASRA works jointly with the Coaches and the Crew Council (comprised of Athletic Directors from high schools participating in VASRA rowing programs) in administering regattas according to the USRowing Rules of Rowing and as governed by the Crew Council and VASRA.

SoCo Crew Club is not funded by the high school but operates in close cooperation with South County High School (SCHS) throughout each year. South County Crew Club Boosters, Inc. is the nonprofit organization which supports, organizes and raises funding for the SoCo Crew Club. The Boosters support the Club through acquiring resources from membership dues and fundraising in order to procure crew shells and oars, land-based training equipment, equipment for crew shells, transportation(buses), trailers and storage, john boats, outboard motors, coaches' salaries, etc. Therefore, the team relies and operates solely on donations, rowers' dues and fees, and fundraisers, and all equipment is the property of and owned by South County Crew Club Boosters, Inc.

This Handbook was developed and is periodically updated by the Club Boosters Board of Directors and Coaches. The handbook's purpose is to provide all members of the Club and their parents/guardians information regarding the club and the sport of rowing. It provides a description of what the rowers can expect from their experience with the club and what is expected of them. Parents/guardians and student-athletes should use the handbook as reference when information is needed about the Club.

Nothing in this handbook is intended to preempt or conflict with Fairfax County Public Schools' (FCPS) or SCHS policies, rules, or regulations. Any such, unintended conflict is resolved by utilizing the higher document as the authoritative policy, rule, or regulation. The handbook is subject to change by approval of the Club Boosters Board of Directors in conjunction with the SCHS Director of Student Activities (DSA). The most recent version is available on the SoCo Crew Club website.

Welcome to South County Crew

Row SoCo Row!

1 Vasra.org

2 USrowing.org

Section 1: SoCo Crew Club Overview

The Club: Crew is a club sport in Fairfax County and, as such, is currently not funded by FCPS. Although SCHS does provide access to its facilities for practices (e.g., indoor practices during inclement weather and winter conditioning, onsite trailer storage, as well as support for team recognition and varsity letters), financial support for the program, (i.e., equipment, coaches, and operating costs) must come from parents/guardians and student-athletes through membership dues and fees, team fundraising activities, which require parent and athlete participation and support, and corporate donations. Our Club's program is sponsored, administered, and supported by the SoCo Crew Club Boosters, Inc., a Virginia Non-Stock Corporation, which is tax-exempt under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The Club Boosters raise funds through individual assessments (e.g., dues and fees) and fundraising activities.

The contributions of both the student-athletes and their families through both financial and volunteer work are the cornerstone of the program's success. As a member of the Club, student-athletes and their families shape the future of this team.

Mission: The SoCo Crew Club mission is to introduce students, of all backgrounds, to the sport of rowing, advance their skills, and afford them the opportunity to row in a competitive field, in an educational environment that nurtures the development of character, the strength of commitment, and a passion for excellence. The Club provides opportunities for physical training, camaraderie, teamwork, leadership, and excellence and education in rowing.

Vision: South County Crew is growing, thriving, and competitive!

Team Goals:

Coaching and Teamwork: Increased teamwork clearly provides a competitive advantage. Teamwork improves every aspect of the rowing experience, improving collaboration, focus, problem solving, clarity, unity, decisiveness, morale, and performance. When people focus on the good of the whole, they accomplish more in less time with greater precision. Harry S. Truman said it best when he said, "It's amazing what you can accomplish, if you do not care who gets the credit."

Coaching, Athlete Satisfaction, and Pride: A clear understanding of the objectives of the Club is provided and reinforced by open, consistent communication and mutual respect between coaches and team members.

Excellence in Coaching: The Coaches strive to provide every athlete clear, positive, and engaging training that continuously increases individual abilities, both in and out of the boat. Coaches identify and build on each athlete's strengths and identify weaknesses in a constructive manner. The Coaches encourage athletes to build team relationships that enhance team performance and camaraderie.

Team Objectives:

- To attract, motivate, and retain athletes, coaches, and parent/guardian volunteers.
- To provide opportunities for student-athletes to learn to row in a competitive environment.
- To encourage athletes to learn, contribute to the team, and to have fun.
- To acknowledge individual contributions to the team.
- To continue to compete at the highest level possible.

Organizational Structure:

SoCo Crew Club Booster Board of Directors: The Club Booster Board works with SCHS administration to support SoCo Crew Club. The board consists of parents/guardians of student-athletes, as well as the SCHS Principal, and the Director of Student Activities, as non-voting members of the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors oversees all activities of the club and is responsible for, but not limited to, fundraising, equipment procurement and maintenance, operations, and travel.

Coaching Staff: The number of coaching positions required is determined by the number of active athletes. The job of the coaches is to ensure maximum attention to and safety of the athletes. Coach biographies are located on the team website under Our Coaches. The Program Director/Head Coach's contact information is located under Contact Us. Coaches ensure that safety is the number one priority. They train athletes to improve their performance and develop into good citizen athletes. Coaches provide constructive feedback to athletes on their strengths and areas needing improvement. They make fair and consistent assessments to achieve the fastest boat lineup, and they communicate their criteria for selections. They communicate the need for any subsequent lineup/seating changes. Finally, they notify the parent or guardian of any athlete who does not show a good faith effort and discuss possible courses of action with the parents/guardians.

South County Athletic Staff: Like other sports programs, SoCo Crew Club operates within a school-approved structure. The Principal and DSA play key roles in supporting the sport. The DSA is a full-time FCPS/SCHS administrative position responsible for the athletic program and student activities at SCHS. In addition to managing the Virginia High School League (VHSL) athletic and activities program of SCHS, the DSA has instructional responsibilities, building managerial responsibilities, and other duties assigned by the school principal. The DSA designates a crew council liaison to maintain communications and coordination with all other schools against whom the Club competes.

Section 2: Requirements for Participation

Required Forms: Registration must be completed online and all required forms must be completed and submitted to the Membership Officer prior to participation in Club activities. Forms and associated deadlines and registration procedures can also be found on the team's website. In addition, there are different times throughout the year when the Club Membership Officer collects forms that are required prior to participation in specific events, including Fall Learn-to-Row, Fall-on-the-Water/Training, and Winter Conditioning, and Away Regattas (e.g., Nationals (SRAA) or Stotesbury Cup).

Dues and Fees (Annual): All dues and fees, including membership dues, must be paid to the Club Treasurer by the date announced by the Club Boosters Board before an athlete is permitted to participate in Club activities. All fundraising commitments must be met as well. Athletes whose fees are not paid on-time as established by the Club Boosters Board may not participate in the Club activities, including on-the-water training or regattas.

Volunteer Support: In order for all crew events to be successful, teams are required to provide parent volunteers at VASRA regattas in proportion to the number of their rowers at each specific regatta. Teams that fail to meet their volunteer obligations are penalized by VASRA.

Section 3: The Program

The Club has two sessions – one unofficial (off-season) Fall and Winter and one official (in-season) Spring. Please see the FCPS Out of Season Practice Policy for more information on the seasons and their specific dates.

Off-Season

Off-Season Rowing: The Club provides a off-season rowing opportunity in the Fall as allowed by SCHS and VHSL. In the Fall, there are Fall-On-the-Water (FOTW) Days after school for several weeks, where interested students, who are new to the sport or returning to the sport, can learn about rowing through active participation. Student-Athlete participation is strictly voluntary in accordance with FCPS Out-of-Season policy letter. FOTW Days are held weather permitting at Sandy Run. Athletes are responsible for watching for announcements that could cancel an event or alter the location of the event. Transportation to and from Sandy Run is not provided by the team. Individually arranged carpools are recommended.

There are other summer and fall programs, as well as rowing camps for athletes, available to all students of various abilities as advertised. These programs are not sponsored, funded, or specifically endorsed by SoCo Crew Club and are pursued on one's own and at one's own cost. Rowing camps can improve skills and technique through concentrated training over a week or more depending on the program. Information regarding summer and fall rowing opportunities may be communicated to rowers and their families, by the coaches, Club e-mail, and/or Club website as information becomes available.

Off-Season Conditioning: Winter Conditioning typically begins in late November or early December and is held at SCHS. All rowers and coxswains not involved in a winter sport, employment, education, or religious obligations are encouraged to participate. This is a very important aspect of the program and athlete development and preparation for the regular spring season. Workouts (running, weight training, circuit work, and ergometer work) are conducted at the school in the afternoon and early evenings starting in November/December and running through mid-February. Winter conditioning is open to all students at SCHS.

There are several indoor "erg races" in late January/early February that the athletes may participate in as a team and individually. There are nominal registration fees that are paid by individual participants. The Mid-Atlantic Erg Sprints is the largest indoor rowing event in the Washington D.C. area and is an official qualifying event for the World Indoor Rowing Championship (Crash B Sprints) in Boston, MA. There may be other locally sponsored Erg Sprint events where team members can compare their conditioning with other high school students on indoor rowing machines. Information about these events will also be communicated to the athletes and their families by the coaches via team email and/or the team's website.

In-Season

Crew In-Season officially begins the first day of SCHS scheduled Spring sports program in mid-February and for most athletes runs through the end of May. Athletes who are selected for follow on regattas (i.e., Nationals) will continue through June.

In-season practices are held on-the-water after school, five days a week. Saturday practices during the first month are sometimes required to ensure the team is ready for the first regatta in March. Coaches will provide as much advance notification as possible when Saturday practices are necessary. Practices will include both on-the-water sessions in shells/boats and on land sessions including running and circuit

training. Coaches and/or parent/guardian volunteers, as required, will supervise the athletes on the land while coaches will supervise athletes on-the-water.

Practices are held at Sandy Run Regional Park located in Fairfax Station, VA. Transportation to and from practice is the individual athlete's responsibility. Individually arranged carpools are recommended. Practices on-the-water at Sandy Run are held weather permitting.

At times, it may not be possible to hold practice at on-the-water at Sandy Run due to weather conditions. For example, Sandy Run may be closed due low air temperatures or too much wind, or in some cases early in the season snow or ice. Therefore, it may be necessary to cancel practice or to move practice to another site, such as SCHS. In these situations, the Program Director will make a determination as early as possible and communicate the decision to athletes and parents/guardians via the Remind app. However, take note that rain alone is not a reason for practice to be canceled, so watch for announcements.

**It is the rower's responsibility on questionable weather practice days to determine the status of practice and be on time.*

Parking and Traffic Flow at Sandy Run on Practice Days: Club athletes and all those driving to and from Sandy Run on practice days must obey all posted signs inside the park and in the neighboring communities. This includes all speed limits and parking restrictions.

Many schools and clubs use Sandy Run Regional Park. There will be a lot of pedestrian and vehicle traffic including buses in the park. Patience is a must, and safety is our primary concern.

If you are dropping off or picking up your athlete, please drive to Lot C and follow the car-pool line or park in an individual parking space, and wait for your athlete to come to the parking lot when they are dismissed. Do not drive down to the lower lot. It violates VASRA rules and endangers students.

Athletes may park their vehicles in the designated student parking lot, in Lot D. Please observe and obey the rules of the road, as well as the rules for walking along the roads to and from the boathouse.

Section 4: Boat/Seat Assignments

Boat Assignment and Seat Assignments: There are a limited number of seats available in each shell/boat, as well as restrictions on how many and what kind of races the athletes can participate in at regattas. All team members and parents/guardians should understand that not every rower will race at every regatta.

Coaches will determine boat and seat assignments to create the fastest most competitive boats. They will effectively communicate these selections with athletes and parents/guardians (as appropriate). Evaluation criteria for boat selection is based on:

For Rowers: Attitude, attendance, ergometer scores, seat racing results, teamwork, and objective analysis of boat's moving ability.

For Coxswains: Attitude, attendance, leadership, motivation, teamwork, steering, and technical knowledge of racing.

***Evaluation Criteria Order of Importance:**

1. Ability to make the boat move the fastest, which includes coaches' objective assessment including the use of seat racing. The objective of seat racing is to directly compare 2 athletes to determine who makes a boat/crew row faster.
2. Attendance
3. Attitude/Teamwork
4. Erg scores

*A rower and his or her parent/guardian must accept the coach's decisions with respect to boat and seat assignments as well as whether the individual is best suited to be a rower or coxswain in his or her boat. An athlete or his/her parent/guardian shall not dictate to the coach a boat, seat assignment or a position. However, a coach will also provide constructive feedback to ensure that all understand the criteria used for such selections and decisions.

*All available seats and boats will be filled during on-the-water practices. The women's and men's coach(es) will collaborate to fill all seats available.

Note: Sandy Run regulations only permit coaches to supervise no more than two boats on the water while the water/air temperature is below a certain temperature. When temperatures warm to a specified degree, coaches may supervise up to three boats, but safety and ability to coach effectively always dictate if a coach takes two or three boats out at the same time.

*If there are more athletes than available seats, athletes may take turns riding in the launch with a coach. Coaches will make every effort, within the constraints of safety, to rotate athletes from the launch to boat seats. Athletes should not ride the launch for the entire duration of the practice, unless practice is ended early because of a weather-related safety issue.

Section 5: Regattas

Regatta Etiquette: Athletes and parents/guardians represent SCHS and the South County Crew Club Boosters, Inc. at all regattas. Athletes and parents/guardians are expected to behave appropriately, exhibit the highest standards of sportsmanship, and use appropriate language both on and off the water. Off the water includes parking lots, on buses, in the grandstands. Parents/guardians or athletes who demonstrate poor sportsmanship and/or inappropriate behavior (e.g., cursing) can disqualify a boat. Bottom-line, this kind of behavior reflects poorly on the entire team and SCHS.

Items for rowers to bring to the regatta: Athletes should bring, at a minimum, proper racing attire (i.e., uni-suit and compression shirt), rain gear, a change of clothes, extra socks, a small amount of money (if they want to purchase food or tee shirts, etc.), sunscreen, inhalers/required medicine, and a water bottle.

Local Regattas: The SoCo Crew Club participates in local regattas conducted by the VASRA and held on Saturdays on the Occoquan Reservoir at Sandy Run.

Regattas start as early as 8:00 a.m., if not earlier. Athletes, especially coxswains, may need to be there earlier than that in order to attend mandatory meetings and prepare boats for racing. The Coaches will provide athletes specific guidance on required arrival times. It is an absolute necessity that rowers be on time and ready to row at the time determined by the coaches. If athletes are late, their boat will not race.

Athletes must arrive in, or be ready to change into, the proper racing attire (i.e., unisuit and compression shirt) and be ready to launch their boat at the designated time. In addition, regattas often last until 4 or 5 pm and all team members are expected to stay for the duration of all races to watch, learn, and cheer on their teammates. Athletes will not be released until all equipment and boats are stowed, tents are down, and the team area is cleaned up.

GETTING TO AND FROM SANDY RUN and PARKING: Athletes are responsible for their own transportation to and from regattas. There is no on-site visitor parking at Sandy Run Regional Park for spectators. All spectator parking is at South County High School or the Route 123 Commuter Parking lot. There is a shuttle bus from the parking location to Sandy Run that will cost \$10 per person per trip. Please allow extra time for parking when using the commuter parking lot.

There is no fee for onsite parking for the following:

- Athlete Parking: Athletes will park in Loivale Lot.
- Coaches Parking: Coaches will park in the designated area of D Lot.
- Staff /LOC Parking: B Lot, second row from the back.
- Referee Parking: B Lot, back row.
- Volunteer Parking: D Lot.

Handicapped parking is in the “C” lot. Please send an e-mail to assisted.parking@vasra.org to coordinate in advance that assisted parking is required.

Rowers in Uniform can ride the off-site shuttle (both locations) for free.

There is a shuttle bus from the “C” lot (1st Gravel Lot on the Left after you pass the park gates) to the Finish Line (it is a short walk from there to the Grandstands approx. 5-10 mins). Cost is \$5.00 each way.

Plan for additional travel time, both from the offsite parking and within the park. Sandy Run is a superb rowing location, but not user friendly for large crowds.

All shuttles stop and load with the passenger door adjacent to the woods in the “C” lot. There are signs indicating where the buses stop. From Lot C, is approximately a 20-30 minute walk to the grandstand near the finish line.

WHERE TO GO ONCE INSIDE SANDY RUN: All SoCo Crew Club supporters are encouraged to cheer for the team at the spectator grandstands by the racecourse finish line. This is the best way to see your athlete race. Families are encouraged to stay for as much of the day as possible. Spectators are encouraged to wear good walking shoes because the trails in the park are not all paved. Also, bring blankets, chairs, sunscreen, bug spray, rain gear, etc. The grandstand is concrete seating and although it has a shade cover, it is not protected from the rain. Stadium style chairs and seating pads/blankets make the experience much better. There are concession stands available at both the grandstand and the boathouse. **Dogs are not permitted at Sandy Run Regattas**, with the exception of service animals.

VASRA Regatta Volunteers.

Instructions. Volunteers for all VASRA regatta jobs MUST sign in at the VASRA volunteer desk near headquarters one hour before the shift start time. An exception to early sign-in applies if the job begins at 6:00 a.m. or earlier. The second shift start time will be the break. The time of the break varies based on the number of entries and events. The break will be clearly marked on the heat sheets available on the

VASRA Web Site. On regatta days, changes to the schedule will only be broadcast on twitter. If you don't wish to open a twitter account, the VASRA twitter feeds are broadcast on the [VASRA website](#).

At the building past Regatta headquarters (¾ down the hill opposite the boathouses), on the right-hand side of the road, you will find the volunteer coordinator tent. There are large signs identifying the location. All volunteers are expected to sign the attendance sheet and insurance waiver. You will then be instructed as to where to report. **It is possible that you may be reassigned to another job.**

VASRA understands that you are there to watch your child row; you may ask to be temporarily released from your duties to watch your child race. Please work with the local organizing committee (LOC) lead at your position. Please do return to finish your shift.

The club will be penalized (fined, not allowed to participate in future regattas) if you don't fulfill your volunteer requirement.

VASRA Volunteer Dress. Most of the VASRA volunteer jobs are located outside. Anticipate inclement weather and wear layered clothing (the temperature can change as much as 20 degrees) and a hat. Gloves are also recommended. Please wear an outer layer of waterproof clothing if rain is in the forecast. Even the jobs in the HQ building and the Finish Line Building will expose you to the cold weather. Additional items may be listed for specific jobs.

You may wear school colors. If you have a Job that is on or near the water (including the Start Platform and the Finish Line), you are asked not to wear red. Red is used by the referees to indicate danger or that a race has stopped - wearing red on or near the water, may confuse the athletes and cause them to stop rowing.

VASRA Volunteer Parking. Volunteers are allowed to park at Sandy Run for free. It is advised that you review the schedule and note what days are using block scheduling, advance boats, and other restrictions and volunteer for the regattas and times your child will be rowing at.

Non-Local Regattas: Sometimes the team will travel to regattas outside the local area. Transportation to these regattas is typically by commercial charter bus) but at times, may require parent carpools. Information regarding these individual regattas will be provided with as much advanced notice to athletes and parents as possible. It is expected that athletes volunteer and actively participate in loading boats (shells and launches) and equipment onto the trailers before the trip, unloading and stowing boats and equipment upon return to Fairfax County.

Section 6: The Athlete's Role and Expectations

Academic Policies: Athletes are expected to maintain their eligibility for high school sports in accordance with the requirements set forth by FCPS, which includes but is not limited to maintaining the required minimum grade point average, and course workload and attendance requirements. Crew is a team sport and depends on the participation and effort of all members of the team. Individual effort and motivation is necessary to ensure athletes fulfill all academic requirements so they are able to support their teammates.

Also, athletes must keep things in a proper perspective. They are encouraged to manage their time so that both academics and athletics get the amount of time required. Athletes should always remember too that

family comes first, then school, then crew. Communication with the Coaches is critical. If athletes are having trouble keeping up, they should talk with their Coaches.

Athlete's Personal Equipment: It is each athlete's responsibility to come prepared to practice and regattas. The equipment necessary for practice is designated by the Coach and typically consists of running shoes, workout clothes, and a filled water bottle. Depending on the weather, suggested clothing includes: synthetic or spandex pants and/or shorts, long sleeve undergarment (training top or compression shirt), wool or fleece hat, running tights or exercise pants, wool socks, a polar fleece jacket, and a Gortex jacket/pants or suitable rain gear. Many rowers wear sweats over rowing clothes and take them off as necessary. A hat or visor and sunglasses for sunny days are suggested, even during cool temperatures.

Section 7: Club Policies and Rules

Practices: Spring season practice will be held each day after school. The practice schedule will be announced, but typically runs from 4pm to 6pm every day, Monday through Friday, until the Daylight Savings' time change. After that date, practices will continue until approximately 6:45/7:00pm. All attempts will be made to end practices no later than 6:45/7:00 pm; however, sometimes situations occur that may lead to later ending times, including weather delays or dock congestion. Parents should allow leeway in these situations.

There may be practices during spring break, this will be determined by the Program Director based on athlete and coach availability.

Practices will be planned to maximize boat/on-the-water time. When not assigned a team activity, athletes must show initiative and dedication to self-improvement. Aerobic conditioning is key for all athletes. As with all varsity sports, the most successful athletes who work the hardest to improve themselves, will see the most seat time on-the-water. Athletes are expected to be at practice the entire scheduled time.

Missing Practices and Regattas: To be successful, athletes must attend all in-season/spring practices and regattas. Athletes are encouraged to attend all off season/winter practices as well, unless they are participating in another sport, work, religious activities, or have other academic requirements. Absences during this time put a huge burden on coaches who must scramble to adjust boat seating/lineups. It is also unfair to other boats who may lose a rower that gets "pulled up" to fill a seat in another boat. Remember that boats are filled "from the top down" in some instances. Top-down means varsity boats filled first, then junior varsity and then novice boats. Other times, the boat missing a rower loses water time and ends up land training or worse does not race, which is not the optimum way to treat teammates. Athletes should be considerate and communicate with their coach with as much advanced notice as possible if they are going to miss a practice or a regatta.

Certainly, there are times when a rower might have to miss an in-season practice or regatta, but the rower **MUST** contact his/her coach **BEFORE** missing the event. Missing practice or a regatta without communication in advance and/or without a good reason, will have consequences that may result in loss of a seat in a particular boat, change of boat, suspension, or in extreme cases, being dropped from the team. Communication via email, phone call, text, or in person discussion with the Coach ahead of time will prevent such consequences.

In general, the consequences for unexcused absences in season are as follows:

- First - verbal warning to the athlete and parent contact via email or phone call.

Note: This communication must be documented through either a verified phone conversation log or an email exchange in which the parent acknowledges both the situation and the resulting consequence.

- Second - another warning and another parent contact via email or phone call.

Note: This communication must be documented through either a verified phone conversation log or an email exchange in which the parent acknowledges both the situation and the resulting consequence.

- Third - the athlete will be suspended for 2 weeks.

- Fourth - removal from the team.

Unexcused absences are defined as absences where there has been no communication between the athlete and the Coach with sufficient time before the activity to allow the Coach to adjust his/her plan. Sufficient time typically means at least 48 hours prior to the activity. The coaches understand that sometimes a teacher may ask an athlete to stay the day they have their class. If an athlete suspects that they might have to stay after school, they should see their teachers in the morning to discuss if they need to stay after. If the athlete finds out he/she does have to stay after, they are required to inform the coaching staff by 9:00 am. As much advanced notice as possible is required because boat assignments are planned up to a week in advance. Whether an absence is excused or unexcused is determined on a case-by-case basis by the coaches. Athletes and parents/guardians should take the time to plan ahead based on the rowing season schedule, which is published in advance. This will help prevent problematic conflicts.

If there's an emergency and advanced notice to the Coach is not possible, the athlete must inform the Coach at the earliest opportunity.

Athletes should never automatically assume that their absences will be excused. Absences related to mandatory academic events will be excused, but advance notification to the coach is still required by the athlete or the absence will be marked as unexcused. Optional trips with the band, theater, etc. may not be considered excused absences.

Vacation Policy: Athletes must notify the Head Coach in advance of their vacations, preferably no less than a week prior to the vacation.

Parent Volunteer Requirements: The SoCo Crew Club is very reliant on volunteer support. The club is required to fulfill assigned VASRA volunteer positions based on the team's participation in each regatta. Additionally, the club has a number of internal club requirements. Each volunteer position will be assigned a point value, usually 2-3 points; **each family is required to complete a designated number of points, usually 6-9 points.** Volunteer work includes:

- Serving as a SoCo Crew Board member
- Volunteering at fund raiser events
- VASRA workdays
- VASRA regatta volunteer positions assigned to the club
- In-season weekly team pasta dinners
- Chaperoning away regattas

An athlete will not be allowed to continue to participate in practices or regattas if a volunteer commitment has not been made or completed by the first regular season regatta. Families may opt-out of the volunteer requirement by making a \$500 donation to the SoCo Crew Club.

Drugs and Performance Enhancing Substances Policy: SoCo Crew Club complies with the FCPS Student Participation Policy. For questions on what's acceptable and not acceptable, please refer to this policy.

Personal Property: Athletes are solely responsible for their own valuables and are discouraged from bringing valuables to practice or to regattas. Any damage to or loss of personal property is not the responsibility of the SoCo Crew Club, its coaches, chaperones, or the Club Boosters Board of Directors.

Behavior at Club events and activities:

- Crew members are expected to exhibit mature behavior at all times.
- Athletes should not touch, move, or handle things that do not belong to them. This includes teammates' personal items or other teams' equipment/personal items.
- Athletes should not open another athlete's bag or borrow their equipment/clothing without their permission.
- A coach must always be at the boathouse with the athletes. If athletes arrive early, they will wait outside the boathouse until a coach arrives.
- When land training, athletes will stay in groups and complete the assigned workout in the designated area only.

Safety Rules (including, but not limited to the following):

- Safety is everyone's responsibility.
- All boats will be accompanied by a coaching launch after moving out of the designated launching and docking area. It is the coxswain's responsibility to ensure a coach is in sight at all times.
- Athletes should never row if a coach is not in sight.
- If a boat swamps or turns over, athletes should stay with the boat if possible. It will keep afloat until the athlete can be picked up by the coach's launch. **ATHLETES SHOULD NEVER LEAVE THE BOAT.** Life Jackets/vests are available in every launch.
- When the boat is being moved on land or is in the water, athletes should follow the directions of the coxswain and the coach. When moving or rowing a boat, only the coxswain talks, unless an athlete observes a safety issue that no one has seen yet.
- If the athlete or someone else is injured, they should notify the coxswain or Team Captain, as appropriate, who will, in turn, notify the Coach immediately. If the coxswain or Team Captain is not available, then immediately notify a Coach.

Equipment Rules (including, but not limited to the following):

- Rowing equipment is very expensive and must be handled with care. Boats and oars are very long. Athletes should watch their swing while moving them. Athletes should follow all directions regarding the handling of equipment.
- Unnecessary talking and horseplay are not permitted when handling equipment. Athletes should always focus on the task at hand.
- All rowers/coxswains must participate in routine cleaning and maintenance of equipment.
- Athletes should report any equipment problems to a Coach who will report the issue to the Boat House Manager and Maintenance Officer, as appropriate.

Varsity Letter Policy: Athletes who meet the following criteria may be eligible for an SCHS Varsity letter:

- Athlete satisfies or exceeds school minimum grade and attendance requirements
- Athlete observes all FCPS, SCHS, SoCo Crew Club, Sandy Run, and all other regatta/facility regulations
- Athletes have no more than one unexcused absence from the Club's spring season (see Attendance Policy)
- Athletes participate in at least 4 races at the varsity level (1st or 2nd eight, 1st or 2nd four, or lightweight eight or four).

Note: Coaches have the right to waive requirements under unusual or exceptional circumstances. However, when such a waiver is invoked, the Program Director/Head Coach will notify the Club Booster Board President of the unusual or exceptional circumstances leading to the waiver. The spirit of such is not intended to bind the authority of the Coaches, but rather ensure the transparency of the decision and the criteria for the decision.

Section 8: Membership Information and Costs

Membership: The SoCo Crew Club is a varsity club sport sanctioned by VHSL, FCPS, SCHS, VASRA, and US Rowing. Costs are borne by the participating students and member families. The Club's operating costs and capital spending plan are accomplished through the combination of annual membership fees, fundraising commitments, donations, and assistance by athletes (via service hours) and their parents/guardians (via their volunteer obligations) and commitment to fundraising completion and submission of ALL required forms and ALL payment of membership dues and other fees on schedule. Please see the Club Registration Packet for pricing details for the current season.

Financial Assistance: SoCo Crew Club strives to make the sport available to all athletes regardless of financial situation. Because this is a club sport, as previously described, there is considerable expense associated with participation in terms of dues, fees, and other costs including the costs of trips to away regattas or any other special events. If any member family finds itself in a financial situation requiring a modified payment plan or other accommodations, the parent/guardian is encouraged to contact the Club Boosters' Board President at the earliest opportunity to discuss their situation. The Club Boosters' Board of Directors may also require documentation of the family need to support its decision.

Membership Fees and Financial Goals for the Club: The fee schedule and financial goals are established each year during the summer by the Club Boosters Board. The fees and financial goals are based on the next season's budget, and take into account changes in significant year-to-year factors such as:

- Anticipated number of rowers
- Required capital purchases (e.g. shells, launches, motors, boat trailer, oars)
- Anticipated maintenance

Registration Calendar and Membership Fee Schedule: The registration period is generally open from the fall through February or as otherwise advertised in the Club Registration Packet. Parents/guardians and athletes should see the registration packet for all the details.

Purpose of Fundraising: The dues requirement set for each athlete's family helps the Club maintain a financially healthy organization and promote its legacy for current and future years. However, the fees alone do not meet the Club's annual expenses. Therefore, fundraising is an absolute necessity. If the Club does no fundraising at all, dues could be more than \$2000 per year just to meet the Club's operating expenses. The Club Boosters must raise money to supplement the membership dues collected from each member to meet the operating budget and to maintain an acceptable membership fee that is within reach of our families. The Club Boosters' Board of Directors works hard to provide a variety of activities throughout the year to enable athletes, with assistance from their families, plenty of opportunities to meet and exceed fundraising requirements. Extra funds will allow the organization to purchase new equipment and offset team travel expenses.

Fundraising Opportunities to Help Offset the Cost of Dues: Through the various programs that the Club sponsors and runs throughout the year, opportunities are provided to raise money to help offset individual dues.

Fundraising Opportunities That Also Count Towards Athlete Service Hour Commitments: Various events that the Club sponsors throughout the year provide an opportunity to meet the Athlete's service hour commitments in addition to raising money for the club's general expenses. An example is hours worked at the team's car wash fundraiser.

Team fundraising Opportunities: There are fundraising events and opportunities to raise money that is applied to the Club's general fund for team expenses. Examples of team fundraising opportunities are:

- Corporate Sponsorship Campaign
- Letter Writing Campaign – Each athlete addresses letters for family, friends, businesses that they frequent to request donations.
- Team Car Washes
- Bake Sales

The Letter Writing Campaign is mandatory and requires active participation of the athlete/parent. An athlete may opt-out by making a \$500 donation to the SoCo Crew Club.

General Discussion About Tax Implications: The SoCo Crew Club is a 501(c)(3) – Non-profit VA corporation. This allows the club to raise money for operations without being penalized by excessive tax obligations. It also offers those who contribute to the organization the possibility of declaring their contribution to a charitable organization on their annual income tax returns. Please note, any money given to the team as a part of the membership fee, regardless of how the money is received, is NOT tax deductible. Service hours are also not tax deductible. This paragraph is not intended to provide tax advice and members should refer to and seek advice from a qualified tax professional with respect to your personal tax situation.

Refund Policy: It is always difficult to accommodate for the unexpected. As a parent/guardian and athlete, there are situations that occur that may prevent the athlete from participating on the team after commitments have been made. At the same time, the Club Booster Board of Directors has a fiduciary responsibility to ensure the financial health of the corporation, not only for the current year's operations, but for the future of the team sport that's provided to the SCHS community.

As a standard policy, written requests from a parent or guardian for refunds of dues and fees paid will be addressed in accordance with the following refund schedule:

- On or before the first day of the spring season, which is the first scheduled on-the-water practice day in February, 100% refund will be considered.
- After the first day of the spring season through March 1st, 50% refund will be considered.
- After March 1st no refunds allowed, with the exception that a refund of 50% of the dues and fees paid to date may be refunded after March 1st for withdrawal from crew due to relocation, illness, or other similar extenuating circumstance with appropriate documentation. For example, appropriate documentation includes military or work transfer/relocation orders or a physician's written assessment that an athlete may not continue due to a medical condition that was not known prior to registration.
- Exceptions to the above schedule will be considered by the Club Booster Board of Directors on a case-by-case basis upon receipt of a request for refund stating the mitigating circumstances and accompanied by appropriate supporting documentation.

Requests for refunds must be submitted to the Club Booster Board President via sococrewpresident@gmail.com with "Refund Request" in the Subject line. Requests for refunds will be considered by the Club Booster Board of Directors at the next regularly scheduled meeting. Refund requests will be discussed in Executive Session of the SoCo Crew Club Booster Board of Directors, which is not open to the public.

Section 9: Code of Conduct

COACHING STAFF

South County Crew Club Coaches set examples for student athletes. Their conduct influences every aspect of the crew team and is vital to team's continued success.

Academic Achievement: Coaches will prioritize academic achievement over athletic activities, making appropriate accommodations for athletes.

Character: Coaches will demonstrate good character and ethical behavior. Coaches will also encourage the development of these traits in athletes.

Respect: Coaches will respect regatta officials and staff, fellow crew club coaches, board members, team parents and athletes. Rumors and negative comments are corrosive to team morale and will be avoided.

Safety: Coaches will maintain a high level of safety awareness, use equipment safely and ensure the same from athletes. Coaches will provide accommodation for the recovery of sick and injured athletes, coordinating with healthcare professionals as needed.

Sportsmanship: Coaches shall ensure athletes follow the rules of the sport, play fairly, and demonstrate exemplary sportsmanship on and off the water.

Teamwork: Coaches will strive to ensure clear communication between all coaches, athletes, board members and parents. When interpersonal conflicts arise, coaches will work together to help resolve issues.

Training: Coaches will regularly collaborate to effectively manage the training of athletes.

ATHLETES

Rowers and coxswains are Student Ambassadors for the SOCO Crew Club program and shall behave accordingly at all times on and off the water. Poor behavior from one athlete damages the entire team.

Academic Achievement: Rowers and coxswains are *student* athletes. Academic achievement takes precedence over all athletic activities. Athletes will advocate for their academic needs in a timely manner.

Character: Athletes will demonstrate good character encourage the same in their teammates. Cheating, drug and alcohol use, illegal and dangerous behaviors will not be tolerated.

Respect: Athletes will respect all regatta officials and support staff, crew club coaches, board members, and parents and fellow athletes. Abusive language, gestures, swearing, ridicule and intimidation will not be tolerated.

Safety: Athletes will maintain a high level of safety awareness and use equipment safely and appropriately. Athletes are encouraged to notify coaching staff if they notice unsafe situations or behavior. The sick and injured athletes are responsible for clearly communicating their needs and concerns to coaching staff.

Sportsmanship: Athletes shall follow the rules of the sport, play fairly, and demonstrate exemplary sportsmanship in the classroom and both on and off the water. Athletes will encourage each other to achieve personal bests in training and in racing. Athletes cheer fellow South County teammates during regattas.

Teamwork: Athletes form a unified team in crew. Rumors and negative comments are corrosive to team morale and will be avoided. When interpersonal conflicts arise, athletes will work together resolve issues. If conflict resolution proves challenging, athletes will seek assistance from coaching staff.

Training: Athletes will endeavor to adhere to skill-level instruction and training to the very best of their ability.