



Expect
GOOD Sportsmanship



Expect **Sportsmanship**

Good sportsmanship in interscholastic athletics should be a given – it should be expected. In an increasingly uncivil society, maintaining high levels of sportsmanship is inherent in the reason we have school sports to begin with – to help today’s young people become tomorrow’s community leaders.

Sportsmanship is a term not exclusive to athletics. It’s something that describes our attitudes and actions when we’re engaged in competition with each other; in sports, in business, in politics, in academics or the arts. It embodies the same traits no matter the setting – ethics, integrity, personal responsibility, and respect for the moment and those around us.

One need only look at their favorite content vehicle to see what’s going on around us. Unsportsmanlike acts spread faster and faster than acts of kindness, humility and grace. That is why it is more important than ever that school sports continue to teach good sporting behavior above everything else.

Schools need to be positive influences. Administrators must demand that sportsmanship be taught by teacher-coaches, and that students – and student-athletes – are expected to display good sportsmanship on their own campus during the school day; and after school in the pools, gymnasiums and playing fields, by attitudes toward opponents, officials and spectators. Positive behavior must also be instilled in the community at-large – especially parents.

Being successful at expecting and delivering good sportsmanship takes understanding, leadership and a great deal of commitment. It is very difficult to achieve perfection in the sportsmanship efforts at your school from year to year. However, if you strive for perfection, excellence will be the result.

This kit has been revamped to describe sportsmanship and everyone’s role in this most important game. The resources included and referenced will help you towards that goal of expecting good sportsmanship.

If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to call on us.



Mark Uyl
Executive Director
Michigan High School Athletic Association

WHAT IS SPORTSMANSHIP?

sports'man ship' (n.) *the practice of playing fair, of taking loss or defeat without complaint or victory without gloating, and treating opponents with fairness, generosity, courtesy, etc.*

- Sportsmanship is a demonstration of generosity and genuine concern for others. It is a concrete measure of the understanding and commitment to fair play, ethical behavior and integrity.
- Sportsmanship is a blending of cheers for "your team" and applause for the "opponents," observing the letter and spirit of the rules, and showing consideration for others.
- Sportsmanship is the "golden rule" of athletics - treating others as you wish to be treated.
- Sportsmanship is respect. Respect for the game, the moment, for others and for one's self.
- Sportsmanship is personal responsibility. Owning your behavior.
- Sportsmanship is all this and much more.
- For a coach, sportsmanship may be accepting a "questionable" call without protest. For an athlete, it may be extending a helping hand to an opponent who is down.
- For a general spectator, it may be cheering for his team when it loses, and applauding the opponent when it wins. For an official, it may be showing restraint when verbally assaulted by coaches, athletes and spectators.
- For parents, it may be avoiding living their lives through their children's sporting activities.
- Sportsmanship encompasses all that which is good in human nature. Sportsmanship is citizenship in action.
- Sportsmanship is a way of life.

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THE FUNDAMENTALS OF SPORTSMANSHIP

Every year the MHSAA has been emphasizing the importance of good sportsmanship. Many people have not had good sportsmanship explained to them. The following six steps will help those people to understand their responsibilities at an athletic contest.



- ***Gain an Understanding and Appreciation for the Rules of the Contest.***

The necessity to be well informed is essential. Know the rules. If you are uninformed, refrain from expressing opinions on the officials, coaches, players, or administrative decisions. The spirit of good sportsmanship depends on conformance to a rule's intent as well as to the letter of a given rule.

- ***Exercise Representative Behavior at All Times.***

Good sportsmanship requires one to understand his/her own prejudices that may become a factor in his/her behavior. The true value of interscholastic competition relies on everyone exhibiting behavior which is representative of a sound value base. A proper perspective must be maintained if the educational values are to be realized. Your behavior influences others whether you are aware of it or not.

- ***Recognize and Appreciate Skilled Performance Regardless of Affiliation.***

Applause for an opponent's good performance displays generosity and is a courtesy that should be regularly practiced. This not only represents good sportsmanship, but reflects a true awareness of the game by recognizing and acknowledging quality.

- ***Exhibit Respect for the Officials.***

The officials of any contest are impartial arbitrators who are trained and who perform to the best of their ability.

Mistakes by all those involved in the contest are a part of the game. We should not rationalize our own poor or unsuccessful performance or behavior by placing

responsibility on the officials. The rule of good sportsmanship is to accept and abide by the decision made. This value is critical for students to learn for later application in life.



- ***Display Openly a Respect for Opponents.***

Opponents are guests and should be treated cordially, with thoughtfulness, be provided with the best accommodations, and accorded tolerance at all times. Be a positive representative for your school, team and family. This fundamental is the Golden Rule in action.

- ***Display Pride in your Actions at Every Opportunity.***

Never allow your ego to interfere with good judgment and your responsibility as a school representative. Regardless of whether you are an adult, student, player, coach, or official, this value is paramount since it suggests that you care

about yourself and how others perceive you.

USE THIS WORKSHEET TO GET YOU GOING

1. Create Sportsmanship policies and codes of conduct consistent with the educational nature of school sports. A potential committee may include:

A School Board Member	Principal	Athletic Director
Student-Athletes	General Faculty/Staff	Booster Club Member

2. Create a school belief statement on sportsmanship program goals/expectations

3. Code of Conduct

Administration	Coaches	Players
Spectators/Parents	Cheerleaders/Bands	

4. Promotion strategies/Target Audiences

Student-Athletes	Athletic Administrators	Coaches
Fans		

5. Channels to communicate with target audiences

Email (athletes, coaches, administrators, donors)	Team meetings (athletes)
Websites (campus and athletics sites)	Social media (targeted to fans)
At competition venues (all audiences)	Parent/Booster Club meetings

6. Possible collateral materials

One-pager that includes sportsmanship policy, messaging and tips/best practices
Locker room signage
Game signage
Public Service Announcements
In-venue announcements (PA announcement scripts, recorded versions)
Videos – Power Point Presentations

7. Game management processes

Identify a game manager
Create incident management plan
Familiarize game staff with rules and procedures

8. List ways that your school will promote its Sportsmanship program

Rewards for Good Sporting Behavior
Consequences for Acts of Misconduct

9. Evaluation procedures

GOAL SETTING

OVERALL GOAL -- Responsible behavior by athletes, coaches, fans, cheerleaders and others connected with athletics as a result of clearly-stated goals placed into practice.

Mission Statement	The ideals of good sportsmanship, ethical behavior and integrity permeate our culture. The values of good citizenship and high behavioral standards apply equally to all activity disciplines. In perception and practice, good sportsmanship shall be defined as those qualities of behavior which are characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others. Further, an awareness is expected of the impact of an individual's influence on the behavior of others. Good sportsmanship is viewed by (name of your school) as a concrete measure of the understanding and commitment to fair play, ethical behavior and integrity.
Define	Are sportsmanship behaviors and unsportsmanlike behaviors clearly stated?
School Board Statement	Are the philosophy and goals of the interscholastic athletic program adopted by the board of education? Is sportsmanship emphasized as part of educational athletics?
Athletic Policy Manual	Is sportsmanship emphasized in the coaching manual and materials distributed to student-athletes?
Administrative Support	Do district administrators support and emphasize common sportsmanship goals?
Emphasis	Do league meetings emphasize the importance of educationally-sound athletic experiences?
Shape	Are desirable behaviors articulated and reinforced? Potential vehicles are through game programs, public address announcements, pass outs, tickets, pre-season meetings, assemblies, contests, triangle of coaches-athletes-parents.
Quantify	Are the goals measurable?
Rewards	Are positive behaviors acknowledged?
Contingency Plan	Does your district have a contingency plan to respond to critical contest situations?
Goal	Responsible behavior where youngsters play hard, play safe, respecting the opponent and game officials and accept the results of interscholastic competition. <i>Keep athletics in perspective!</i>

IMPLEMENTATION TIMETABLE

At the beginning of each season (Fall-Winter-Spring)

- Discuss the value of Sportsmanship with coaches and athletes
- Distribute letters to various groups
- Sponsor an evening assembly for fans of sports teams, using school team members, coaches and local officials, to emphasize rule interpretations and changes for the coming season, and showing Sportsmanship videos
- Talk with your event security staff and public address announcers about their role during games
- Begin playing audio and showing video Sportsmanship messages at all home athletic events

Weekly or Bi-Weekly

- Use social media to send out a brief message encouraging or congratulating teams and fans for a game performance and displaying good Sportsmanship

Monthly

- Use social media to call attention to an article discussing or demonstrating good Sportsmanship; distribute a photo of good Sportsmanship in action involving a team, coach or student-athlete.

August

- Convene a committee up made of school administrators, coaches, student-athletes, parents, etc., to discuss and monitor the Sportsmanship efforts in your school

September

- Display posters promoting Sportsmanship
- Utilize Sportsmanship ads in printed materials produced at school and the school website

October

- Discuss Sportsmanship, ethics and integrity being used as topics in the classroom with selected instructors
- Emphasis in school announcements and publications on good Sportsmanship as fall tournaments approach
- Plan an activity around National Be A Sport Day during High School Activities Week

November

- Develop an editorial for the school newsletter to the public, discussing positive Sportsmanship efforts

December-January

- Update posters around school and Sportsmanship ads in printed materials and on school website

February

- Emphasis in school announcements and publications on good Sportsmanship as winter tournaments approach

March

- Develop an editorial for the school newsletter to the public, discussing positive Sportsmanship efforts

April-May-June

- Update posters around school and Sportsmanship ads in printed materials and on school website
- Emphasis in school announcements and publications on good Sportsmanship as spring tournaments approach
- Reconvene your school Sportsmanship committee and begin planning the Sportsmanship program for the next school year

THE BIGGEST SPORTSMANSHIP CHALLENGE

Most high school athletic directors and administrators would agree that their greatest challenge in hosting an event is not getting the facilities ready for a competition or preparing for hundreds or even thousands of spectators, but dealing with behavior issues and lack of sportsmanship during the game.

When sportsmanship is mentioned, images of a rowdy student section or a disrespectful student-athlete may come to mind, but the issue is bigger than that. Unfortunately, the bad behavior on display is often perpetrated by adults – the coaches leading the teams and the parents who have come to watch their kids compete.

Handling student issues is admittedly an easier task for school personnel than addressing those issues caused by adults. Whether it is players on the team or fans in the bleachers, all student issues can be addressed by individuals – teachers and administrators – who know the students well and are enforcing a code of conduct that students are required to follow.

Coaches can positively influence their players' behavior by making their expectations or team rules clear at the beginning of the season and holding student-athletes accountable. Consequences for misbehavior might include benching for part or all of a game, suspension from team activities or removal from the team.

Likewise, athletic directors and administrators positively influence fan behavior by addressing expectations with students before they even arrive at the stadium or the gym. Knowing where the line is and what the consequences are for crossing it certainly helps students to be fans and not fanatics. If students know the rules but don't adhere to the standards that have been set, the consequences that are imposed at least seem fair since they received ample warning.

Dealing with behavior and sportsmanship issues with coaches and parents can be a bit more difficult, but it is essential to ensure that a culture of sportsmanship exists in your school. When confronted by an administrator, a student shouldn't be able to say "what about Joey's dad? He said the same thing I did and nothing's happening to him." Or an athlete who gets ejected for arguing with officials complains to the coach that "she didn't do anything that the coach also didn't do."

If student-athletes on a team misbehave and demonstrate poor sportsmanship, it is most likely because their coach allows it and potentially engages in the same behavior himself or herself. Coaches have to recognize that the young men and women they work with take their lead from them. If they want their players to show good sportsmanship, they have to model it for them.

Coaches must demonstrate through their words and their actions that they respect the other team. It's easy to talk badly about a team that isn't very talented, to tell players that "they should mop the floor with these guys" or use other insulting phrases. No matter what a team's record is, it deserves respect. This respect begins with how the coach talks about the other team, but also extends to outward displays of sportsmanship such as shaking hands and post-game interviews with the media.

Modeling good sportsmanship also includes respecting the officials. Student-athletes think it's acceptable to argue a call with a referee if they see their coach also doing it. While it is sometimes necessary to get clarification about a penalty or a foul, it ends there. Getting into a shouting match with an official never helps a situation and it sends a message to student-athletes that such behavior is acceptable. In addition, an arguing coach is sure to fire up that rowdy student section.

Although it is more challenging to deal with coaches than students, they must be held accountable for their actions if they do not represent the school in a positive light. If athletic directors and administrators stand idly by when a coach engages in inappropriate behavior, they are tacitly acknowledging that it is acceptable to behave in that manner.

Parent spectators can be the most difficult group to work with in an attempt to promote good sportsmanship, but it helps if schools and school personnel receive adequate support at the district level. Districts need to create a handbook for athletics or some other document that delineates the role of parents – what that role should be and should not be. Having the expectations spelled out very clearly helps reduce the questions about what may be allowed at a sporting event.

At the school level, promoting good sportsmanship with parents begins much like it does with students, that being sharing expectations at the beginning of each season. Athletic directors and administrators should not be afraid to address the issue directly and let parents know that poor sportsmanship ruins the experience for their kids and the rest of the spectators.

Athletic directors and other school administrators can take advantage of the great resources that are available to help present the situation in an entertaining, but educational format. Perhaps the most current useful information on this subject is the NFHS Sportsmanship Course, which is available online at www.NFHSLearn.com. School leaders can even engage booster clubs or parent teacher organizations to help take a stand against their overzealous friends.

Unfortunately, the parents who are likely to cause problems at a sporting event probably aren't checking out the website for tips about sportsmanship and they may not respond well to friendly reminders from other parents to act appropriately. It is important for athletic directors and administrators to remember that they can and should address any inappropriate behavior by parents and remove them from the event if necessary.

To create a culture where good sportsmanship is valued and celebrated, athletic directors and administrators must address the behavior of not just the students, but coaches and parents as well. High school athletic directors and school administrators may not be able to influence the behavior that students see at college or professional sporting events, but they can control their own high school stadiums and fields, and that's a good start.

Adapted from an article by Nicholas Novak, principal of River Hill High School in Clarksville, Maryland. Reprinted from the NFHS Website.

SAMPLE LETTERS

NOTE -- These letters should be sent along with the list of expectations or codes or conduct for each group. These Guidelines for Behavior and Codes of Conduct can be found in the next section of this kit

Letter From Principal/Athletic Director To Coaches

Many things have changed in schools and school sports over time, but one that hasn't changed and should never change is the need for good sporting behavior to be taught and modeled by our teacher-coaches.

Sportsmanship must prevail over everything. Over wins and losses. Over any statistics. How you conduct yourself in the athletic classroom – in practice during the week, and on the sideline on game day – sends a powerful message to your student-athletes and their parents, our student body, and the community at-large.

When the pressure is on, all eyes follow your lead. You can stay calm and classy and your kids and our fans will act accordingly.

Please take a few moments to review the attached guidelines for behavior, stating the example we expect our coaches to display as leaders in our school district. Embrace those standards and communicate them daily to everyone around you.

The end result will be what we expect – good sportsmanship.

Letter To Student-Athletes

The privilege you have to be able to participate in educational athletics comes with opportunity and responsibility. The opportunity to play school sports will help you grow as a person, building lifetime relationships and learning lifetime values.

As a representative of our school – wearing the uniform and being at center stage – you also bear a great responsibility to show respect. Respect for your sport, for teammates, coaches, fans, opponents and officials. The respect you show will be remembered long after your playing days are over.

Sportsmanship is more important than winning or losing; than any individual play you will make all year. How you react when you win (with humility) and when you lose (with grace) is what will define you. All of your hard work can be undone in one moment of poor sportsmanship.

Please take a few moments to review the attached guidelines for behavior, stating the example we expect our student-athletes to display as leaders in our school district. Embrace those standards and communicate them daily to everyone around you – classmates, neighbors and parents.

The end result will be what we expect – good sportsmanship.

A Letter To Parents

The opportunity your children have to participate in educational athletics is unique. At no other level of sports can our young people learn so much while being with their friends and getting to play their games in front of the family and neighbors.

Nowhere else will the lifetime relationships be built or the lifetime values instilled in our kids than in the classroom of educational athletics. And the most important of those values they will learn, and which you must support accordingly is sportsmanship.

Our coaches are the first line of teaching and modeling good sporting behavior in practice and at games. Our adults must reinforce that message by positive sports parenting, which includes appropriate behavior at our athletic events.

Let the coaches coach. Let the officials officiate. Most importantly, let the children play. Nothing you do in the stands short of encouragement is acceptable.

Please take a few moments to review the attached guidelines for behavior, stating the example we expect our parents to display as representatives of our school district. Embrace those standards and communicate them daily to everyone around you – including during the game.

The end result will be what we expect – good sportsmanship.

Open Letter On Treating Officials With Respect

When we speak of the need for sportsmanship in school sports, we often boil it down to showing respect for everyone involved in the game – the coaches, players and spectators of both teams – and the officials.

Never in the history of our games have we needed to show the officials the respect they deserve for being involved.

It seems that whenever a call doesn't go our way – it's open season on the officials. The ad nauseum replays we get watching games on TV makes all of us think we're all as good – or better – than the men and women who give of their time to make these games possible. News outlets across the country widely report the abuse being heaped on referees.

As hard as everyone tries, there has never been a perfectly played – of perfectly called – game. Yet coaches, players, parents and other fans take it all out on one party. It can't go on any longer. We've been on the brink of a widespread officials shortage for some time, and WE are making it worse.

Coaches must set the first example by treating officials properly and by coaching athletes to play within the rules and not to see how much they can stretch them. Players must treat each other with respect and officials as teachers helping in the classroom. Fans must limit themselves to encouraging the players and coaches.

If we don't take these steps – and take them now - we're all likely to show up for a game some day that won't take place because we've driven the officials away. And we will have no one to blame but ourselves.

We must expect good sportsmanship towards officials.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

OF THE LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD...

- Adopt policies (upon recommendation of the administration) which reflect that community's educational objectives and that promote the ideals of good sportsmanship, ethics and integrity.
- Remain a policy-making body and allow the administration to do its job. The Board's role is to develop policies which are interpreted and administered by other school officials.
- Establish standards for athletic participation which reinforce that activities are a privilege, not a right.
- Attend and enjoy school activities, serving as a positive role model and expecting the same from parents, fans, participants, coaches and other school personnel.
- Support and reward participants, coaches, school administrators and fans who display good sportsmanship.
- Recognize the value of school activities as a vital part of education.

OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS...

- Develop a program for teaching and promoting the ideals and fundamentals of good sportsmanship within the school and the league/conference. This program should stress that disrespectful behavior, especially taunting, trash talking and intimidation – especially towards game officials, will not be tolerated.
- Provide appropriate supervisory personnel for each interscholastic event.
- Support participants, coaches and fans who teach and display good sportsmanship.
- Recognize exemplary behavior and actively discourage undesirable conduct by participants, coaches and fans.
- Attend events whenever possible and function as a model of good sportsmanship. This includes communicating with spectators during an event what is acceptable and unacceptable behavior.
- Include sportsmanlike conduct in coach's evaluations.
- Be sure the parents understand what the school expects of its players and of them.

OF THE COACH...

- Exemplify the highest moral character, behavior and leadership, adhering to strong ethical and integrity standards. Practicing good citizenship is practicing good sportsmanship!
- Respect the integrity and personality of the individual athlete.
- Abide by and teach the rules of the game in letter and in spirit.
- Describe and define respectful and disrespectful behavior. Stress that disrespectful behavior, especially taunting, trash talking and intimidation – especially towards game officials, will not be tolerated.
- Set a good example for players and spectators to follow--please refrain from arguments in front of players and spectators; no gestures which indicate an official or opposing coach does not know what he or she is doing or talking about; no throwing of any object in disgust. Shake hands with the officials and the opposing coaches before and after the contest in full view of the public. Demand the same of your players.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. The officials are doing their best to help promote athletics and the student/athlete. Treating them with respect, even if you disagree with their judgment, will only make a positive impression of you and your team in the eyes of all people at the event.
- Display modesty in victory and graciousness in defeat in public and in meeting/talking with the media. Please confine your remarks to game statistics and to the performance of your team.
- Instruct participants and spectators in proper sportsmanship responsibilities and demand that they make sportsmanship the No. 1 priority.
- Develop a program that rewards participants and spectators for displaying proper sportsmanship and enforces penalties on those who do not abide by sportsmanship standards.
- Be no party to the use of profanity or obscene language, or improper actions.

OF THE STUDENT-ATHLETE...

- Accept and understand the seriousness of your responsibility, and the privilege of representing your school and community.
- Live up to the standards of sportsmanship established by the school administration and the coaching staff.
- Learn the rules of the game thoroughly and discuss them with parents, fans, fellow students and elementary students. This will assist both them and you in the achievement of a better understanding and appreciation of the game.
- Treat opponents the way you would like to be treated, as a guest or friend. Who better than yourselves can understand all the hard work and team effort that is required of your sport?
- Refrain from taunting, trashing talking or making any kind of derogatory remarks to your opponents during the game, especially comments of ethnic, racial or sexual nature. Refrain from intimidating behavior.
- Wish opponents good luck before the game and congratulate them in a sincere manner that you would like to be greeted following either victory or defeat.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. The officials are doing their best to help promote you and your sport. Treating them with respect, even if you disagree with their judgment, will only make a positive impression of you and your team in the eyes of the officials and all people at the event.
- Remember that's there's a difference between gamesmanship and sportsmanship. Sportsmanship demands that we not try to push the limits of the rules to gain an advantage in competition.
- Win with humility; lose with grace. Do both with dignity. Avoid **excessive** celebrating after a play or end of a game.

OF OTHER STUDENT GROUPS (CHEERLEADERS, SPIRIT GROUPS, PEP BAND, ETC.)...

- Establish themselves as leaders in their conduct before, during and after contests and events. Always provide positive support for your team, rather than intimidating or ridiculing the other team.
- Assist cheerleaders with yells, chants, etc., and be a working part of pep assemblies, with preparation, organization, and involvement.
- Treat opposing players, coaches, spectators and support groups with respect and enthusiasm.
- Refrain from taunting or making any kind of derogatory remarks to your opponents during the game, especially comments of ethnic, racial or sexual nature.
- Conduct themselves in an exemplary manner. Remember, you represent your school both home and away.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. Treating them with respect, even if you disagree with their judgment, will only make a positive impression of your group, your team and community, in the eyes of all people at the event.
- Be an exemplary role model by positively supporting teams in every manner possible, including content of cheers and signs.

OF SPECTATORS IN GENERAL...

- Remember that you are at a contest to support and yell for your team and to enjoy the skill and competition; not to intimidate or ridicule the other team and its fans.
- Remember that school athletics are learning experiences for students and that mistakes are sometimes made. Praise student-athletes in their attempt to improve themselves as students, as athletes and as people as you would praise a student working in the classroom.
- Remember that a ticket to a school athletic event is a privilege to observe the contest, not a license to verbally assault others and be generally obnoxious.
- Learn the rules of the game, so that you may understand and appreciate why certain situations take place.
- Show respect for the opposing players, coaches, spectators and support groups. Treat them as you would treat a guest in your own home.
- Refrain from taunting or making any kind of derogatory remarks to your opponents during the game, especially comments of ethnic, racial or sexual nature.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. Understand that they are doing their best to help promote the student-athlete, and admire their willingness to participate in full view of the public.
- If the officials make a call you disagree with – show respect for the game – BE SILENT!
- Recognize and show appreciation for an outstanding play by either team.
- Refrain from the use of any controlled substances (alcohol, drugs, etc.) before and during games, and afterwards on or near the site of the event (i.e. tailgating).
- Use only those cheers that support and uplift the teams involved.
- Recognize and compliment the efforts of school and league administrators for their efforts in emphasizing the benefits of educational athletics and the role of good sportsmanship to that end.
- Be a positive behavior role model through your own actions and by censuring those around you at events whose behavior is unbecoming.

OF PARENTS IN PARTICULAR...

- Understand the purpose of educational athletics. School sports are about kids learning and having fun. They're not about attempting to earn college athletic scholarships.
- Understand that you are possibly the biggest role model in your child's life. Carrying on wildly in the stands at games, challenging the authority of coaches and officials does little to model positive behavior in your child's presence.
- Don't live your life through your child's athletic activities. This is their time. This is their place. Let them play.
- Recognize that school coaches and administrators; and game officials are now in charge of your child's athletic activities. Don't undermine their authority – openly or behind the scenes.
- Make your cheers during games those of support of your child – not instructions as to how to play.

ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR...

- Applause during introduction of players, coaches and officials.
- Shaking hands with an opponent who fouls out while both sets of fans recognize the performance with applause.
- Accept all decisions of officials.
- Cheerleaders lead fans in positive yells in positive manner.
- Handshakes between participants and coaches and end of contest, regardless of outcome.
- Treat competition as a game, not a war.
- Coaches/players search out opposing participants to recognize them for outstanding performance or coaching.
- Applause at end of contest for performances of all participants.
- Everyone showing concern for an injured player, regardless of team.
- Encourage surrounding people to display only sportsmanlike conduct.

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR...

- Taunting, trash talk and other intimidating actions.
- Not admonishing those sitting around you who engage in practice of poor sportsmanship
- Yelling or waving arms during opponent's free throw attempt.
- Disrespectful or derogatory yells, chants, songs or gestures.
- Booing or heckling an official's decision.
- Criticizing officials in any way; displays of temper with an official's call.
- Yells that antagonize opponents.
- Refusing to shake hands or give recognition for good performances.
- Blaming loss of game on officials, coaches or participants.
- Laughing or name-calling to distract an opponent.
- Use of profanity or displays of anger that draw attention away from the game.
- Doing own yells instead of following lead of cheerleaders.
- Wearing extreme/unusual clothing or excessive face or body painting which detracts from the action on the playing surface.

SAMPLE CODES OF CONDUCT

For The Student-Athlete

(Name of High School) believes that sportsmanship is a core value and its promotion and practice are essential. Student participants have a duty to assure that their teams promote the development of good character. This code of conduct applies to all student participants involved in interscholastic athletics and activities.

- Student participants will support the value of academics and the educational process.
- Student participants will advocate, model, and promote the development of good character to include:
 - Trustworthiness
 - Respect
 - Responsibility
 - Fairness
 - Caring
 - Citizenship
- Student participants will respect peers, coaches, officials, opponents and other associated with the event.
- Student participants will promote fair play and uphold the spirit of the rules in the activity.
- Student participants will model appropriate behavior at all times.
- Student participants will engage in a healthy lifestyle.

I have read and understand the requirements of this Code of Conduct and acknowledge that I may be disciplined or removed from a team if I violate any of its provisions.

Signature

Date

For Coaches

(Name of High School) believes that sportsmanship is a core value and its promotion and practice are essential. Coaches have a duty to assure that their teams promote the development of good character. This code of conduct applies to all coaches involved in interscholastic athletics and activities.

- The coach will promote academics and the educational process.
- The coach will teach, enforce, advocate, model, and promote the development of good character to include:
 - Trustworthiness
 - Respect
 - Responsibility
 - Fairness
 - Caring
 - Citizenship
- The coach will respect participants, officials, opponents, parents, and all other involved.
- The coach will promote fair play and uphold the spirit of the rules in the activity.
- The coach will model appropriate behavior at all times.

I have read and understand the requirements of this Code of Conduct and acknowledge that I may be disciplined if I violate any of its provisions.

Signature

Date

For Parents & Other Spectators

(Name of High School) believes that sportsmanship is a core value and its promotion and practice are essential. This code of conduct applies to all parents/fans involved in interscholastic athletics and activities.

- Parents/Spectators will promote academic, emotional, physical and moral well being above desires and pressure to win.
- Parents/Spectators will teach, enforce, advocate, model, and promote the development of good character to include:
 - Trustworthiness
 - Respect
 - Responsibility
 - Fairness
 - Caring
 - Citizenship
- Parents/Spectators will respect participants, officials, opponents, and all others involved.
- Parents/Spectators will promote fair play and uphold the spirit of the rules in the activity.
- Parents/Spectators will model appropriate behavior at all times.

I have read and understand the requirements of this Code of Conduct and acknowledge that I may be forbidden from attending games or practices if I violate any of its provisions.

Signature

Date

The School Administrator Should:

- Encourage and promote friendly relationships and good sportsmanship throughout the school by requiring courtesy and proper decorum at all times, by acquainting students and others in the community with ideals of good sportsmanship and by so publicizing these concepts and attitudes that all members of the school community will understand and appreciate their meaning.
- Encourage all to judge the success of the athletic program on the basis of the attitude of the participants and spectators, rather than on the basis of the number of games won or lost.
- Insist that the school cheerleaders exemplify the highest standard of good sportsmanship as a means of encouraging desirable spectator attitudes.
- Review with staff the Sportsmanship Rules.

The Spectator Should:

- Realize that he/she represents the school just as definitely as does the member of a team and, therefore, has an obligation to be a true sportsman, encouraging through this behavior the practice of good sportsmanship by others.
- Recognize that good sportsmanship is more important than victory by approving and applauding good team play, individual skill and outstanding examples of sportsmanship and fair play exhibited by either team.
- Treat visiting teams and officials as guests, extending to them every courtesy.
- Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.
- Respect the judgment and integrity of officials, realizing that their decisions are based upon game conditions as they observe them.

The Athlete Should:

- Be courteous to opposing teams and event officials.
- Play hard and to the limit of his/her ability, regardless of discouragement. The true athlete does not give up nor does he/she quarrel, cheat, or grandstand.
- Retain his/her composure at all times and never leave the bench or enter the playing field/court for any reason other than to participate in the normal functions of the game.
- Be modest when successful and be gracious in defeat. A true sportsman does not offer excuses for failures.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of officials and accept their decisions without questions.
- Respect the facilities of host schools and the trust entailed in being a guest.

The Coach Should:

- Exemplify behavior that is representative of the educational staff of the school and a credit to the teaching profession.
- Demonstrate high ideals, good habits and desirable attitudes in personal behavior and demand the same standards of the players.
- Emphasize to his/her players and bench personnel the importance of proper sideline behavior and the necessity of restraining from entering the playing field/court to engage in a fight.
- Recognize that the purpose of competition is to promote the physical, mental, social and emotional well-being of the individual players and that the most important values of competition are derived from playing the game fairly.
- Be a modest winner and a gracious loser.
- Maintain self-control at all times, accepting adverse decisions without public display of emotion or of dissatisfaction with the officials.
- Never doing anything to incite negative fan behavior, including showing up opponents or officials.
- Pay close attention to the physical condition and well-being of players, refusing to jeopardize the health of an individual for the sake of improving his team's chances to win.
- Teach athletes that it is better to lose fairly than win unfairly.
- Discourage profanity, abusive language and similar violations of the true sportsman's code.
- Refuse to disparage an opponent, an official or others associated with sports activities and discourage gossip and questionable rumors concerning them.

PARENT/GUARDIAN/SPECTATOR SPECIFIC CODE OF CONDUCT SAMPLE

The essential elements of character-building and ethics in interscholastic athletics are embodied in the concept of seven core principles: sportsmanship, discipline, leadership, teamwork, responsibility, dedication, and respect. As a parent/guardian of a (Name of High School) student-athlete and/or spectator at an event, your actions reflect not only upon you, but your child, his/her team, and the school community. Students, parents, and coaches developed this code cooperatively with the aim of making athletics a positive experience for all involved.

As a parent/guardian and/or spectator:

- I will promote positive sportsmanship.
- I will understand the role my child plays on the team. I will encourage my athlete to perform that role to the best of his/her ability.
- I will demonstrate sportsmanlike and respectful conduct toward officials, coaches, players, and parents/guardians and serve as a positive role model through my own actions for those around me. I will refrain from the use of profanity and/or vulgar language in my conduct towards officials, coaches, players, and parents/guardians.
- I will resist coaching my child or other players during games and/or practices. I understand that I am the parent/guardian or spectator and will leave the coaching to those who have been entrusted with the position.
- I will remember that interscholastic athletics are a learning experience for students and that mistakes are sometimes made. I will give my child and other student-athletes space and time after games, except for encouragement and praise.
- I will promise to help my child enjoy the sport experience by doing whatever I can, such as attending as many games as possible and being a supportive, respectable parent/guardian and/or spectator.
- I will not be under the influence of, or in possession of, drugs, alcohol, tobacco products, or weapons of any kind at practices, contests, or other school events.
- I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my child ahead of my personal desire to win. I will inform the coach of any physical disability, illness or injury that may affect the safety of my child or the safety of others.

Conduct at events which is illegal, disruptive, unsafe, disrespectful, or unsportsmanlike may result in action that may include, but is not limited to, any of the following:

- Verbal warning by a contest official, head coach, and/or school official.
- Written warning issued by a school official.
- Immediate ejection from the contest.
- Suspension from High School athletic contests for a period between one contest to a permanent ban.

We believe a strong teamwork and community pride can be fostered when parents/guardians/spectators follow these guidelines, coaches adhere to the expectations defined in the School District Employee Handbook, and students' behaviors conform to the Co-Curricular Code of Conduct.

(From Baraboo, WI High School)

SAMPLE SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES RELATED TO CONDUCT AT INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC EVENTS

The following policy samples were developed by the Illinois Association of School Boards

Please review these samples with your local school board attorney before adoption

AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE

Student:

Sport or Activity:

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE STUDENT-PARTICIPANT:

In consideration of the (name of school district) permitting me to participate in the above sport or activity, I agree as follows:

- I will abide by all conduct rules and will behave in a sportsmanlike manner.
- I will follow the coach/sponsor's instructions, playing techniques, training schedule and safety rules for the above sport or activity.
- I will acknowledge that I am aware that participation in the above sport or activity may involve **MANY RISKS OF INJURY**. A serious injury may result in physical impairment or even death. I hereby assume all the risks associated with participation and agree to hold the _____ School district, its employees, agents, coaches, School Board members, and volunteers harmless from any and all liability, actions, causes of action, debts, claims, or demands of any kind and nature whatsoever which may arise by or in connection with my participation in the above activity or sport. The terms hereof shall serve as a release and assumption of risk for my heirs, estate, executor, administrator, assignees, and for all members of my family. ¹

Signature

Date

1 Schools should fully inform and warn of risks inherent in a sport and should assist the student-participants in understanding and appreciating these risks. The student-plaintiff in a well-known case involving the Seattle Public School District suffered a catastrophic injury by using his football helmet improperly as he was being tackled. He received a \$6.4 million award based on the jury's belief that the student had not been warned of the possibility of serious and permanent injury if he used his football helmet in an improper manner.

This sample form is loosely based on a form developed by the Seattle Public School District after the decision in that case. The form's waiver of liability and hold harmless language are most likely meaningless, but serve to alert the student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) to the seriousness of potential injuries and may discourage lawsuits.

SPECTATOR CONDUCT AND SPORTSMANSHIP FOR ATHLETIC AND EXTRACURRICULAR EVENTS

Any person, including adults, who behaves in an unsportsmanlike manner during an athletic or extracurricular event may be ejected from the event the person is attending and/or denied admission to school events for up to a year after a School Board hearing. Examples of unsportsmanlike conduct include:

- Using vulgar or obscene language;
- Possessing or being under the influence of any alcoholic beverage or illegal substance; possessing a weapon;
- Fighting or otherwise striking or threatening another person;
- Failing to obey the instructions of a security officer or school district employee; and engaging in any activity which is illegal or disruptive.

The Superintendent may seek to deny future admission to any person by delivering or mailing a notice, sent by certified mail with return receipt requested, at least 10 days before the School Board hearing date², containing:

- The date/time and place of a Board hearing;
 - A description of the unsportsmanlike conduct;
 - The proposed time period that admission to school events will be denied;
 - Instructions on how to waive a hearing. ³
1. Boards may make and enforce reasonable rules of conduct and sportsmanship for school events and deny future admission to school events to violators for up to one year provided a notice and hearing is given (105 ILCS 5/24-24).
 2. Id. If a violator is a student, the hearing should be held in a closed meeting (5 ILCS 120/2). If, however, the violator is a non-student, the hearing must be held in an open session.
 3. The hearing requirement is for the violator's benefit and, consequently, the violator should be able to waive it.

STUDENTS: CONDUCT CODE FOR PARTICIPANTS IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Recognizing that participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege, the District requires that the conduct of student participants be exemplary at all times. Participants are representatives of the District and their school and must conduct themselves appropriately at all times both while in school and out of school. Student participants who violate this policy are subject to being removed from the activity at the discretion of the coach, sponsor or Building Principal, in addition to any other applicable punishment.

The Building Principal shall require that all coaches and sponsors of extracurricular activities have Rules or a Conduct Code for their participants consistent with this policy and the rules adopted by the **(name of state high school athletic association)**. These rules should contain a notice to participants that failure to abide by them could result in removal from the activity. The Rules or Conduct Code shall be reviewed by the Building Principal periodically at his or her discretion and presented to the School Board. [see alternative paragraph below]

All coaches and sponsors of extracurricular activities shall annually review the Rules of Conduct with participants and provide participants with a copy.

[ALTERNATIVE PARAGRAPH]

The Building Principal [or Athletic Director], using input from coaches and sponsors of extracurricular activities, shall develop uniform Rules or Conduct Codes for all participants consistent with this policy and the rules adopted by the Illinois High School Association. These rules should contain a notice to participants that failure to abide by them could result in removal from the activity. The Rules or Conduct Code shall be reviewed by the Building Principal periodically at his or her discretion and presented to the School Board.

(While a Conduct Code is not specifically required by state or federal law, the existence and dissemination of one is critical to the successful removal of a student from an activity.)

NOTICE OF VIOLATION - FORM

[School District Lettehead]

Date

Dear: _____

You are hereby notified that you are charged with violating the District’s policy on Rules of Conduct and Sportsmanship for Athletic and Extracurricular Events. The policy states in part as follows:

Students who behave in an)	This paragraph only with Policy __
unsportsmanlike manner may be)	
denied admission to school events)	
for up to a year in addition to any)	
other penalty prescribed by the)	
student conduct code.)	

Any fan, including adult fans,)	This paragraph only with Policy __
who behaves in an)	
unsportsmanlike manner during)	
athletic of extracurricular events)	
may be denied admission to)	
school events for up to a year)	
after a Board hearing.)	

The School Board will meet in open session [closed session if addressed to a student] on _____, 20____, _____p.m., at_____to consider denying you admission to all school events beginning on ___and continuing through___.

Please notify me if you wish to waive this hearing. If you decide to waive the hearing, however, you will be denied admission to school events during the period of time described above.

You are charged with committing the following unsportsmanlike conduct: [insert time, place, and a description of the conduct]

Superintendent

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

RULES OF CONDUCT & SPORTSMANSHIP FOR ATHLETIC/EXTRACURRICULAR EVENTS - REGULATIONS

The process for denying a person admission for violation of the School Board policy on Rules on Conduct and Sportsmanship for Athletic and Extracurricular Events as follows:

- Any person who disrupts a school event or otherwise violates the School Board policy on Rules of Conduct and Sportsmanship for Athletic and Extracurricular Events will be asked to leave. If the person refuses to leave, security personnel or law enforcement will be summoned.
- Any person charged with violating the School Board policy on Rules of Conduct and Sportsmanship for Athletic and Extracurricular Events will be notified in writing. The notification will be given at least 10 days before the Board hearing and will describe the unsportsmanlike conduct.

The School Board President or his or her designee will begin the hearing with the introductory comments. He or she may read the Notice of Violation. The hearing will proceed as follows:

- Superintendent presents the evidence which supports the penalty sought in the Notice of Violation.
- The person charged with the violation presents evidence and/or explanation as well as any other pertinent information.
- The School Board discusses the charges and make a determination.
- The School Board hearing will be held on an informal basis with the rules of evidence not strictly followed.

STUDENT CONDUCT & SPORTSMANSHIP DURING ATHLETIC/EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The School Board encouraged student activity participants and student fans to support the District's athletic teams and extracurricular events by attending games and cheering, clapping and otherwise encouraging participants. Support, however, must be exhibited in a sportsmanlike manner.

Students who behave in an unsportsmanlike manner may be denied admission to school events for up to one year after a School Board hearing in addition to any other penalty prescribed by the student conduct code. Examples of unsportsmanlike conduct include:

- Using vulgar or obscene language;
- Possessing or being under the influence of any alcoholic beverage or illegal substance;
- Possessing a weapon;
- Fighting or otherwise striking or threatening another person;
- Failing to obey the instructions of a security officer or school district employee; and
- Engaging in any activity which is illegal or disruptive.

The Superintendent or designee may charge a student with unsportsmanlike conduct by delivering or mailing a notice, sent by certified mail with return receipt requested, of the violation at least 10 days before the School Board hearing date. The notice shall inform the fan:

- The date, time, and place of a hearing before the school board
- A description of the unsportsmanlike conduct;
- The proposed length of time admission to school events will be denied;
- How to inform the Superintendent of a desire to waive a hearing.

RE: RULES OF CONDUCT AND SPORTSMANSHIP FOR ATHLETIC AND EXTRACURRICULAR SCHOOL EVENTS - POLICY - FORM - GUIDELINES - Policy and .

In addition to adherence to accepted crowd control measures, school districts should require fans to behave in a sportsmanship manner. Fans who display unsportsmanlike behavior may disrupt or even endanger participants and other fans.

The sample policy will assist school administrators in fulfilling the district's duty to protect participants and patrons from reasonably foreseeable acts of third parties. It contains a provision based on an Illinois statute which would deny admission for up to a year for unsportsmanlike behavior. The policy's provision for a School Board hearing before imposing this penalty is required by the same Illinois statute.

The sample form should be delivered in person or by certified mail with return receipt requested to a fan who violated the district's policy on Rules of Conduct and Sportsmanship for Athletic and Extracurricular School Events. If the violator is a student, the hearing should be held in a closed meeting. If, however, the violator is someone other than a student, the hearing must be held in an open session of the board. The hearing requirement is for the violator's benefit and, consequently, the violator should be able to waive it. The sample form gives the violator the opportunity to submit to the penalty without a hearing.

RE: CONDUCT CODE FOR PARTICIPANTS IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES- Policy .

Providing for the discipline of student athletes and participants in extracurricular activities is a necessary part of a district's extracurricular program. The school district must ensure that participant conduct during the athletic activity is appropriate. Additionally, participant conduct outside the activity time and even outside the school day, reflects upon his or her school. Consequently, coaches generally have rules or conduct codes to regulate participant conduct both in and out of school.

The most severe form of punishment is removal from the athletic activity. In the majority of judicial decisions involving a student's challenge to having been removed from a team, courts have rules that participation in extracurricular athletic programs is a privilege rather than a right. The "privilege" status of participation in athletics is significant because the deprivation of a privilege does not trigger the due process provision of the Constitution. Consequently, unlike school attendance, students generally have no Constitutional right to participate in extra-curricular athletic programs.

Even absent a Constitutional right to participate in extracurricular programs, there are still frequent challenges to a school's attempt to remove a student from an athletic team. A school district can minimize its vulnerability to having its action judicially overturned by doing the following:

- Have a reasonable written Rules or Conduct Code for its student-participants.
- Make the Rules or Conduct Code for each team fairly uniform, avoiding wide differences in punishments for particular misbehavior.
- Disseminate the Rules or Conduct Code to the participants and their parent(s)/guardian(s). Require each participant acknowledge in writing having received the rules. Have each coach explain the rules to participants at the beginning of the sport season and periodically remind participants of the rules. The same process applies to all extracurricular activities.
- Allow participants who violate the Rules or Conduct Code to give an explanation before removing them from the activity. Whenever a student's "good name, reputation, honor or integrity is at stake," offer a more formal due process proceeding to the participant before removing him or her from the activity.

The attached policy will ensure that each athletic activity has written rules for student-participant conduct which will be given to participants. Additionally, it provides for periodic review by an administrator and the School Board.

(Illinois High School Association)

TIPS FOR TEACHING SPORTSMANSHIP

While youngsters participate in sports they develop behavioral attitudes that they will carry with them for the rest of their lives. Coaches have a responsibility to emphasize the importance of good sportsmanship and fair play to all their players.

The following are some tips on teaching sportsmanship:

- Hold parent meetings to reinforce the importance of fun, sportsmanship, teamwork and cooperation with others.
- Encourage student-athletes, coaches and fans to review online sportsmanship education programs and videos
- Take the time to point out examples of both good and poor sportsmanship by professional athletes and discuss their behavior with the team.
- Reward ethical behavior and good sportsmanship. Make this an important reward and not just a consolation prize. Develop a system of points to be accumulated by your players where awards are received for demonstrating fair play and good sportsmanship.
- Teach athletes to be responsible for their own behavior.
- Support officials and field directors in their efforts to control the games.
- Educate your players about the rules and "the spirit" of the rules.
- Stress fair play, civility, and common decency toward opponents and officials.
- Control problems early and let fans and players know that there are consequences for unacceptable behavior.
- Let your athletes know that there will be mistakes made and that losing as well as winning is a part of the game.
- Define winning as doing your best and trying your hardest in practice as well as games.
- Teach your team the importance of being gracious in both victory and defeat.
- Never allow yourself or anyone else to discriminate against or make fun of athletes based on their race, gender, body type, ability, disability, nationality, religion, accent, ethnic origin, appearance, economic level or parental affiliations.

Remember that the essence of competition is the mutual quest for excellence through challenge and the playing field must be even for both teams.

(Adapted from Youth Sports Journal, the publication of the National Alliance for Youth Sports)

BEST PRACTICES

Ideas That Teach

- Parents/Players Orientations
- Players/Parents “Pledge Card”
- Expectations letters sent home
- Captains Lunches (Fall, Winter, Spring)
- Leadership Class
- Captains Conference
- Region Sportsmanship Summit
- Code of Ethics Posted
- Fan Expectation Card
- School & District Web Site
- School Newspaper Sportsmanship messages
- Audio-Video Public Service Announcements
- Captains read sportsmanship message before games
- Lessons for advisory class
- Faculty/Staff Professional Training
- NFHS On-Line Sportsmanship Course

Ideas That Model

- Mentoring program with elementary students
- Invite honorary youth team to come free
- Captains lunch, being role models
- Create a positive plus cheer squad
- Talk about acceptance of 2nd place trophy
- Have to get coaches & staff on board

Ideas That Enforce

- Post Code of Ethics & Expectations
- Fan Expectation Cards
- Sportsmanship Statement in Programs
- Yellow Card & Red Card Program
- Administrator/AD present at all games
- AD works closely with officials & coaches
- Security arrangements made if necessary
- Talk with leaders of heckler groups
- Unruly fans warned and then ask to leave
- Parents called
- 1 on 1 conferences

Ideas That Reward

- Newspaper column on deserving kids
- Promote the positive on website, papers
- Student of the Month
- Spirit of Sport Candidates
- Doing Great Things Bulletin Board
- Sportsmanship awards presented by Week-Month-Season-Occurrence
- Essay, poster, slogan, media contest

THE PUBLIC ADDRESS ANNOUNCER & SPORTSMANSHIP

In high school sports, the public address announcer sets the tone for the event by being a source of information – which is different from at other levels of spectator sports where they are literally a part of the entertainment.

The best public address announcers come to the event with scripts for everything. What is said, when it is said and how it is said is already planned for. Names difficult to pronounce have been checked out and practiced in advance.

In general, the following is expected of the Public Address Announcer:

- Be enthusiastic but calm.
- Be impartial. Announce the contest with no show of favoritism.
- Do not attempt to “talk over the crowd.”
- Do not anticipate or second guess calls by the officials or criticize official’s decisions, directly or indirectly.
- Permit no one to use the microphone (especially coaches during the game), except those in charge of the event and/or by design of those in charge of the event. The announcer is responsible for whatever is said over the p.a.system.
- Be aware of the entire venue so that calm directions can be given in an emergency. Serious situations can be avoided if the announcer will caution the crowd against coming onto the playing surface, throwing things and the like.
- Be aware that good sportsmanship is a very important part of interscholastic activities; reading a sportsmanship statement prior to the beginning of an event, and at key times during breaks in the action contributes to a positive, educational atmosphere.

Here are some sport specific expectations of the Public Address announcer:

ALL SPORTS – Never talk while play is going on.

Never speculate on injuries when a player is down on the field

Basketball – Quickly announcing who scored a basket is OK, but no elaboration.

Cease talking when the ball has been given to a player for a free throw or to in-bounds the ball.

Do not announce the time remaining.

Do not announce official’s calls (i.e., Traveling, 3-Seconds).

Do not announce change of possession on out of bounds plays (i.e. Panthers Basketball!).

OK to announce possession on held balls (i.e. Held Ball. On alternate possession, the ball goes to Homer).

Football – Cease talking as offensive team comes up to the line.

Limit your play announcement to the ball carrier, the tackler, the gain/loss, the down-distance-yard line for the next play without editorializing.

Do not emphasize a particular down (i.e., It’s THIRD DOOOWWWNNNN!!!!).

NASPAA PA Announcing Code of Conduct

The Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) is a proud member of the National Association of Sports Public Address Announcers ([NASPAA](#)) and promotes the its value to its membership, which includes the MHSAA.

The MHSAA promotes the NASPAA's Code of Conduct and its ten expectations for use at all MHSAA events:

1. Announcers shall understand that their role is to provide pertinent information in a timely manner and to do so professionally and not attempt to be bigger than the game or event by doing play-by-play or by providing commentary in an effort to entertain or to draw attention to himself or herself.
2. Announcers shall understand that because they have a tremendous influence on the crowd and that cheerleading or antics designed to incite the crowd for the purpose of gaining an advantage for their team is inappropriate.
3. Announcers shall promote good sportsmanship and a positive environment by what they say and how they act.
4. Announcers shall treat the opponents and their fans as guests, not the enemy.
5. Announcers shall respect the individuals who are responsible for the conduct and administration of athletic games and events, such as coaches, officials and administrators, and avoid making any comments that reflect positively or negatively on them.
6. Announcers shall respect the participants of all teams and remain neutral when introducing the starting participants, announcing substitutions and the outcome of plays or performances of the participants.
7. Announcers shall be competent. This means following approved announcing guidelines, expectations and policies, such as emergency procedures, provided by the administration or the host facility.
8. Announcers shall be prepared, such as being familiar with the correct pronunciations of the participants' names, knowing the rules of the sport, the officials' signals and how the game is played.
9. Announcers shall exhibit professional behavior and represent their school, organization or association with respect and dignity at all times by what they say, how they act and how they appear.
10. Announcers shall avoid using alcohol and tobacco products at the venue.



PUBLIC ADDRESS ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR USE AT HOME ATHLETIC EVENTS

Pre-Game Announcements

Welcome to today's contest between ___ and ___. As member schools of the Michigan High School Athletic Association, they remind you that sportsmanship and the objectives of educational athletics are what set this event apart of other levels of competition. Your cooperation and support of the values promoted by these two schools is appreciated.

The schools participating in this event are members of the Michigan High School Athletic Association which have adopted the rules under which the games are conducted. A strong commitment to excellence, fair play, and sportsmanship are all vital to this activity's success. _____ and _____ high schools appreciate your recognition of the values being taught at this educational event.

We are pleased to welcome you today to _____ High School. Good sportsmanship is one of the primary purposes of educational athletics. Our student-athletes recognize that judgment calls -- by coaches, officials and themselves -- are made in good faith and should be respected. Spectators can support both of these teams by refraining from derogatory or demeaning comments and cheers today. We hope that you will enjoy the game and support the students in a positive and sportsmanlike manner.

Welcomes - Prior to Player Introductions

Good _____. (Name of School) High School welcomes you to today's game. These games depend on an educational atmosphere. Everyone can do their part by respecting the game, each other, and the officials. Nothing beats good sportsmanship.

Good _____. (Name of School) High School welcomes you to today's game. The start of another game is a call for people to treat opponents and officials with the sort of sportsmanship we expect in school sports. Nothing beats good sportsmanship.

Good _____. (Name of School) High School welcomes you to today's game. No matter what takes place today – stay calm...stay classy...and stay respectful. Nothing beats good sportsmanship.

Good _____. (Name of School) High School welcomes you to today's game. We wouldn't be here today without a love for the game. And if you love the game...really love the game...you've got to show good sportsmanship. Nothing beats good sportsmanship.

Good _____. (Name of School) High School welcomes you to today's game. Our expectations in school sports should not be to employ gamesmanship, but rather to display honesty and sportsmanship to respect the game and everyone around us. Nothing beats good sportsmanship.

Good _____. (Name of School) High School welcomes you to today's game. Is there anything wrong with good sportsmanship? Of course not. Nothing beats good sportsmanship.

Good _____. (Name of School) High School welcomes you to today's game. The key to the game today is sportsmanship. You can't be successful without it. Remember, nothing beats good sportsmanship.

Good _____. (Name of School) High School welcomes you to today's game. Who wins the big game today? Everyone who gives us their best sporting behavior. Nothing beats good sportsmanship.

Good _____. (Name of School) High School welcomes you to today's game. Today you represent your school and community. Please represent with respect. Nothing beats good sportsmanship.

Good _____. (Name of School) High School welcomes you to today's game. While the scoreboard defines the length of the game...the real final score is determined by the sportsmanship we display...because nothing beats good sportsmanship.

After Lineups Are Introduced -- Introduce Officials

Your officials for today's game are _____ and _____. These officials are registered by the Michigan High School Athletic Association and are hired by **(Name of your school) (or assigned by) (Name of league/conference)** to help the athletes learn on the playing field. These individuals have worked hard to learn the rules and apply them fairly. We request you respect their honest efforts in administering this contest.

Your officials for today's game are _____ and _____. These officials are registered by the Michigan High School Athletic Association. They are hired by **(Name of your school) (or assigned by) (Name of league/conference)** with the mutual agreement of schools participating in this event. Their experience and integrity qualify them to administrate the rules of the game. An attitude of good sportsmanship should be upheld by all spectators, players and coaches, no matter what their personal feelings or loyalties may be in this contest.

National Anthem Introduction

Ladies and gentlemen: The privilege of this event was made possible by those who have fought – and continue to fight for – the freedoms we enjoy. Let us now honor and respect their efforts and our country. Civilian gentlemen, please remove your hats. All veterans - we encourage you to render the appropriate salute, and everyone able - please stand at attention, placing your hand over your heart, as we proudly sing our National Anthem.

To Be Read During Breaks In The Action

Sportsmanship is winning without gloating – losing without complaining – and treating your opponent and the officials with respect. It's one of the biggest reasons these games exist. To learn more about sportsmanship, visit the MHSAA Website. Remember, nothing beats good sportsmanship.

Remembering how to be a good sport is simple. If you win – don't rub it in. If you lose, don't make excuses. And always represent your school with respect. To learn more about sportsmanship, visit the MHSAA Website. Remember, nothing beats good sportsmanship.

How you play the game still matters. You won't be remembered for that great pass, but you will be for the class you display. You'll be remembered for being a great teammate, for your respect of the game and of others. You'll be remembered for all the right things. Not the final score. Nothing beats good sportsmanship.

We'd like to thank our officiating crew tonight. Thank you for putting player safety first. For putting up with the repercussions of a tough call. For giving your time, energy and patience to help kids learn. We often take for granted what it really takes to officiate a game, because without them, there would be no games to play.

Imagine a game played without good sportsmanship. It wouldn't look like school sports...that's for sure. Sportsmanship gives our games educational value that sets them apart and above all others; and teach values that last for a lifetime. Nothing beats good sportsmanship.

Is there anything wrong with being a good sport? Helping an opponent up after knocking them down? Sincerely congratulating the other team after the game – win or lose? Showing respect for the referees? It how we should act every day at every game because nothing beats good sportsmanship.

A great game in sports is when your team puts it all together, but it's not just how you executed as an athlete – it's how executed as a person. It's showing good reflexes and respect. It's showing confidence and character. It's showing skillfulness and sportsmanship. Now that's a great game. Nothing beats good sportsmanship.

You can make the winning play, you can take home the gold, but it doesn't mean a thing without good sportsmanship. These games don't exist without the foundation of good sportsmanship to teach lifetime lessons. So remember, nothing beats good sportsmanship.

Wins and losses aren't the real measuring stick in school sports. It's teaching our kids the importance of ethics, integrity, respect – elements of life that are summed up in the word sportsmanship. It's the good sport who is the real champion – whether they're undefeated or winless. Remember, nothing beats good sportsmanship.

In a twisted sports world where being elite seems to be everything, school sports begin by being firmly grounded in lifetime values like sportsmanship. Programs and participants grounded by sportsmanship are the true elite performers. Remember, absolutely nothing beats good sportsmanship.

Fans, the best way to support your team is with respect – respect for your team, the opposing team, the coaches and the officials. It sends a message that sets a positive tone for this educational event. So do your part today and remember, when the game is on the line, it's all about sportsmanship.

Little eyes are watching. How many times have you heard that before? But isn't it true? The young players between the lines are watching how their coaches and their parents treat the other team and the officials. The younger kids in the stands are watching the players, coaches and the parents as well. What kind of lesson are you teaching them? Remember, when the game is on the line, it's all about sportsmanship.

It's getting harder to recruit and retain game officials for high school sports because of abuse from players, coaches and fans. Abusive behavior has no place in schools – or school sports – and referees railed on won't stick around very long – even if they're good. So give 'em a break and respect the fact that they're out there trying to help and you're not. Remember, when the game is on the line, it's all about sportsmanship.

We know that not everyone can officiate. But everyone can help officials. No, not by sharing your two cents from the stands, but by understanding that officials prepare every week for these games just like the coaches and athletes, and that they're human, just like the coaches and athletes and worthy of your respect for taking on a tough job. Remember, nothing beats good sportsmanship.

(For sub varsity games only)

These games depend on an educational atmosphere, which includes respect for the officials. Just as the players and many coaches are honing their skills, so are our newer officials. So we need everyone – players, coaches and parent in the stands to treat our game officials with the respect they deserve for being out there.



SOCIAL MEDIA & SPORTSMANSHIP



It is a privilege to participate in interscholastic athletics and with that privilege comes certain responsibilities. As an advocate for technology, our school also recognizes the role social media plays in communication and outreach. It is the expectation that our student-athletes will use social media platforms in a positive and respectful manner to engage with family, friends, and the community at large. Disrespectful, insulting, abusive, and/or threatening content—be it original or "re-tweeted" or "liked"—has no place in our school and will not be tolerated. Student-athletes who post content offensive commentary aimed at opponents, officials, team members, and/or coaches will be subject to disciplinary action which may include suspension from all team activities. Remember: it is a privilege to represent our school in interscholastic competition and we hold our student-athletes to the highest standards for integrity and ethical decisions.

Social Media Tips/Reminders

- *Nothing is really private!* Even though you may utilize privacy tools, everything you post is public information.
- *Your content is your thumbprint!* Once you post it, it is forever and it is you.
- *Your audience is global!* Consider the appropriateness as your audience is young, old, and everywhere. And they are watching!
- *Who is watching?* Just a reminder that college coaches and prospective employers often review social media sites to gauge the character of the student.

(From Seneca Valley School District)

Dos & Don'ts For Athletes

Excerpts from Michael Gaio's blog on social media dos and don'ts for student-athletes:

- **Nothing is truly private ... ever.** While many kids think they can delete a tweet or delete their Facebook profile if need be, many don't realize that content posted on the Internet can last forever. Content can be captured in screenshots or saved by other users.
- **If you retweet it (or share it), you own it.** "Freedom of speech does not equal freedom from consequences," says David Petroff, director of athletic communications at Edgewood (Wis.) College.
- **Personal branding.** Every tweet reflects who you are. How are student-athletes choosing to represent themselves?
- **Say thank you.** Teach student-athletes to take time to thank those who support them. Fans, teammates and family, for example.
- **Support others.** Student-athletes can provide a positive example for other students by sending positive messages about their peers in other sports or activities at school.

(Athletic Business)



TWITTER POSTING SUGGESTIONS FOR COACHES



Here are some simple guidelines in regards to your twitter feeds. This is not all-inclusive, but may help you do the right thing and use social media as effectively as possible.

Twitter and social media in general can be a “friend” and a “foe”. Please make sure you use it wisely and appropriately. Remember, do what the “DISTRICT” believes is right, not what you may believe is right.

1. Use consistent “avatars” (see some samples below) and titles that identify your twitter feed so it is consistent with other HPS athletic programs. See athletic office for help in this area.



2. YOU (or a coaching staff member) should be the ONLY individuals that have access to this account. NEVER students!

3. Once you have your own program twitter feed, send the address to the athletic office. Your site will be linked to **@HowellAthletics**, the official twitter feed of Howell varsity athletics, which is also followed by **@HowellMISchools**, the official twitter feed of Howell Public Schools. I say this as a reminder that everything posted, including “retweets” MUST be appropriate, as they will be seen by ALL including our Central Office staff.

4. When posting information keep it SIMPLE (professional and informational). Post event times, locations, opponents, results, etc.

If using student names, it is recommended not to use full names. Typically a last name is all you need, unless it is a common name, or the athlete has a sibling, then a first initial with the last name is useful.

5. The best hashtag (#) is **#HighlanderNation**. This basically puts most of our tweets into the same “file”.

Avoid using hashtags that may cause issues, or that you may think are funny or clever. They may be perceived in a negative way, which reflects poorly on your program, our district and our community.

6. Do NOT degrade or humiliate the opposing team, players or school.

Poor Example: “Howell kills Huntsville 80 – 00. #BloodBath”

Good Example: “Howell tops Huntsville 80 – 00. #HighlanderNation”

7. Do NOT call out an athlete (home or visitor) for a mistake or bad play.

Poor Example: “Jones fumbles again! 3rd time this Q. #Butterfingers”

Good Example: “Howell turnover. Hunstville ball on own 35. #HighlanderNation”

8. Use caution posting pictures. Verify that none of your student-athletes have restrictions on using their image. Check with the athletic office if you are not sure. This information is supplied to you in the “comments” section of your eligibility list.

9. Team or program twitter feeds should be a “one way” street. Don’t talk back and forth. Private conversations do NOT need to take place in public. This is informational ONLY.

10. Do NOT follow “individuals” or set automatic re-tweets to “personal” or “individual” feeds. **If you re-tweet it, you own it.**

When it comes down to it, remind yourself & students about the dangers and ramifications of social media as well. THINK before hitting “send”. Imagine standing alone on a stage in the front of an auditorium with thousands of people in the audience (*of different genders, races, ages, etc*). Reflect, and think if we would “say” to the audience what we are about to “send”.

“Never let a 140 character tweet cost you a \$140,000 scholarship” Brandon Chambers

Some Sample Tweets (appropriate) to give you an idea:

- Basketball: Howell vs Huntsville tonight @ Howell (7PM). #HighlanderNation
- Cheer: Howell drops Huntsville 632.9 to 553.88 in opening night dual! #HighlanderNation
- Football: 4 yd TD by J. Jones! Howell 7 – Huntsville 0. 1:07 left in Q1. #HighlanderNation
- Golf: Howell 180 – Huntsville 200. Low scores: J. Smith (94), L. Wilson (96), H. Brown (98). #HighlanderNation
- Hockey: Jones lights the lamp. 2-0 Howell. 1:67 left in the 3rd. #HighlanderNation
- Softball: Bottom of 6, Howell leads 4-0. Top of the order coming up. #HighlanderNation
- Track & Field: Smith goes 15’5” in PV to win the state title! #HighlanderNation
- Wrestling: Howell 33 – Huntsville 10. Pins by Smith (103), Jones (189) & Brown (HWT). #HighlanderNation

Here are some good links to share with students and staff:

- One bad tweet can be costly to a student athlete
<http://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/sports/high-school/2014/09/11/social-media-student-athletes-twitter/15473399/>
- Twitter Best Practices: 11+ Tips for Tweeting Well
<http://denovati.com/2013/12/twitter-best-practices>



SUGGESTIONS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS



Use your athletic department's Twitter and Facebook accounts to communicate with your coaches and your community. Here's some examples.

For AD's to send to coaches via Twitter (The following are all 140 characters or less):

Occasionally, I will send you a Tweet about the importance of sportsmanship & your need to embrace it & communicate it. Expect sportsmanship!

SPORTSMANSHIP-Playing fair, taking defeat without complaint or victory without gloating & treating opponents with respect. Tell your kids.

Don't allow your athletes to taunt others. No actions or comments that bait, anger, embarrass or attacks others personally. Tell your kids.

Use every practice as an opportunity to demonstrate the characteristics of good sportsmanship – the kind of behavior we expect of our kids.

Remind your athletes to walk away from altercations. Walk to an official or the bench. It's a tough choice-but the right choice.

When spontaneous acts of sportsmanship occur, praise the player at your first opportunity.

Make it a team goal to have no technical fouls, or unsportsmanlike conduct fouls or ejections for the entire season.

Discuss sportsmanship with your captains. They are your representatives to the team, & need to be in step with you regarding sportsmanship.

Remind your athletes that - Sportsmanship is more important than wins or losses, it reflects very accurately the depth and quality of character.

Coaches: Set the tone for the importance of sportsmanship with your athletes.

Coaches: Set the standard for sportsmanship behavior by what you say and do and by establishing expectations of your athletes.

Coaches: You are the pivotal, most influential figure in heightening the code of sportsmanship among your athletes.

Coaches have the necessary tools, time with the athletes and the inherent authority of their role to set a gold standard of sportsmanship.



FOR AD'S TO SEND ON FACEBOOK TO THE COMMUNITY



Sportsmanship is the practice of playing fair, of taking loss or defeat without complaint or victory without gloating, and treating opponents with respect. We expect sportsmanship of our coaches, student-athletes, student body and fans at every event under every circumstance.

One man practicing sportsmanship is far better than a hundred teaching it. - *Knut Rockne*

Victories are remembered for a short time; but acts of good sportsmanship are remembered for a lifetime.

Every game, you have so many people watching you. You can show good sportsmanship by helping other players up, and not talking back to coaches and referees. – *Kelly Fry*

For when the One Great Scorer comes To mark against your name, He writes - not that you won or lost - But HOW you played the Game. - *Grantland Rice*

A lot of young players don't really know much about the history of the game and a lot of them are missing out on what the game is all about, especially the whole concept of sportsmanship and teamwork. - *Kareem Abdul-Jabbar*

If character is what you do when no one is watching, then sportsmanship is that conduct with everybody watching. - *Bob Ley*

Be more concerned with your character than your reputation, because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are. - *John Wooden*

If you win through bad sportsmanship that's no real victory. - *Babe Didrikson Zaharias*

Children learn self-control by watching you display self-control. Like a coach who remains calm and under control in tough situations, parents who exhibit good sideline behavior provide young athletes with an appropriate role model for handling the emotional ups and downs of competition. - *Brooke de Lench*

Parents Please Remember:

1. These are kids
2. These are only games
3. Coaches are teachers
4. Officials – like coaches & players – are human
5. No college scholarships will be awarded today

#sportsmanship needs to win the day and #athleticism needs to determine the winner. – *Andrew Locker*

It's not whether you win or lose, it's how you treat others that counts. – *Solomon Alexander, The Sportsmanship Guy*

Winning is the object of the game, but it is not the object of playing the game. – *Stuart Walker*

You haven't won the race if in winning the race you have lost the respect of your competitors. – *Paul Elvstrom*

CROWD CONTROL GUIDELINES

Crowd control is often thought of in a negative way. However, good crowd control is preventative in nature and nurtures a positive atmosphere for an educational athletic event. Here's a couple of examples:

CROWD CONTROL PLANNING

Although there are no magical secrets to crowd control, the following ten important suggestions need emphasis by administrators and event managers in crowd control.

Establish written behavioral standards and expectations for coaches, players, students, song and cheerleaders, spectators, and management personnel. Communicate them in a variety of ways, expect them to be followed, and do something when they aren't.

Establish/communicate policies and emergency procedures regarding: a) fire; b) drinking and possession of alcoholic beverages; c) possession, use, or sale of drugs; d) medical emergencies; e) lost and found articles; f) bringing foods, beverages, radios and tape decks into the gym or stadium; g) bomb threats; h) alternatives in case of score clocks, light, or other facility failures; and i) transportation problems.

Written emergency procedures should be clearly understood by the public address announcer.

Identify supervisors and ushers by use of jackets, arm bands, or badges, and expect them to be active and visible to discourage problems quickly identified.

Expect/encourage management personnel, supervisors, and security people to avoid becoming too involved in watching the event and to be observant, active, and consistent in applying rules and procedures.

Be consistent in applying policies and rules; be supportive of your management and supervisory personnel.

Avoid seating bands or spectators near the visiting team bench and the visiting team spectator seating area.

When someone is behaving in an undesirable way, or violating rules of good citizenship, sportsmanship do something about it. Actions speak louder than words. Inaction allows the establishment of undesirable examples and habits that can mushroom, lead to more serious problems, and result in negative learning.

Have admissions, ticket sales, and parking lot personnel observe and screen people for possession of alcoholic beverages, intoxication, and abnormal or suspicious behavior. Alert crowd control supervisors to observe behavior and whereabouts of potential problem people.

Supervise the rest rooms.

Establish precise job descriptions, expectations, and authority of all working personnel and inform them of all rules, regulations, and emergency procedures.

(Seattle Public Schools)

CROWD CONTROL CHECKLIST

Good crowd control consists of sound preventative planning and organization long before problems arise. While most interscholastic contests are conducted without incident, it is necessary to plan for all contests in advance and to explore every possible avenue.

Listed for your consideration are some guidelines which may assist those responsible for planning adequate crowd control:

- Develop a pre-contest checklist listing items and work requiring completion prior to the event.
- Provide a well-ordered, carefully maintained facility.
- Notify opponent in writing of all necessary details such as time, location, dressing facilities, pre-contest procedures and specific information that applies to a particular sport.
- Appoint a "greeting committee" to meet the opponents and serve as their host/hostess throughout their stay at your school.
- Select supportive personnel (ticket takers/sellers, supervisors, etc.) carefully, and discuss their assignments thoroughly prior to the contest.
- Select experienced scorers, timers and public address system personnel, and see that they are properly informed.
- Provide security for officials, and see that they are equipped with a dressing room located away from spectator and player dressing areas. Officials should be paid before the contest.
- Hire off-duty police and/or seek the help of state or local police as contest conditions warrant in controlling the crowd during the contest and the flow of traffic to and from the contest.
- Start the event on time.
- Ban artificial noisemakers, confetti, etc., from the facility.
- Avoid overcrowding seating accommodations. In cases where seating is at a premium, reserve in advance an adequate number of seats for the visiting school.
- Make sure cheerleaders and pep groups have adequate seating.
- Provide adequate space and organization of concession areas to prevent overcrowding and possible pushing and jostling.
- Prohibit free entry to contests.
- Limit re-entry and have gates supervised throughout the entire contest.
- Pay special attention to people who do not come to a contest to watch it.
- Discourage attendance of elementary students unless accompanied by an adult.
- Keep playing area clear of spectators.
- Use ropes to set aside areas.
- Provide surveillance before, during and after the contest for spectators arriving by bus.
- Continual surveillance should be maintained at all facilities pertaining to crowd convenience such as concession areas, drinking fountains, first-aid stations, rest rooms and aisleways.
- Before leaving the facility, check with the police to determine whether any unforeseen incidents transpired.
- Establish good communications with all connected to the event.

(Florida High School Activities Association)

REWARDING GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP

Identifying and honoring good sportsmanship is pretty simple.

Whether a team or an individual, you want to reward behavior that exemplifies the ideals of sportsmanship on the playing surface with ethical behavior, fair play, integrity and respect. This is not done for doing the minimum – you don't honor the necessarily best behaved – you award for exceeding – for raising the bar on sportsmanship.

To that end, you have a number of options:

- Rewarding a specific act of sportsmanship shortly after it happens. While folks are still talking about and praising that player who tied the opponent's shoes, or stayed with them when they fell on the track-giving up the lead – have some kind of an award you can present immediately.
- You can acknowledge sportsmanship with a weekly or monthly award; and, of course, one at the end of the season. You can do this on a team or an individual basis.
- Don't stop with just players. Do something for an adult spectator or a coach – and find a way to do in front of a large audience so it will make an impact. A spectator could be done just prior to or at halftime of a game. A coach could be done at a pep assembly.
- Find a way to reward a team for going through a season without having any kind of unsportsmanlike penalties assessed against it. No red/yellow cards for poor sportsmanship in soccer, volleyball and lacrosse. No unsportsmanlike conduct penalties in football. No unsportsmanlike technical fouls in basketball. No unsportsmanlike penalty deductions in wrestling. No ejections in any sports.

Start by doing something locally before engaging in conference-wide programs.

GET MORE – SPORTSMANSHIP RESOURCES

Free Related Courses at [NFHSLEARN.COM/COURSES](https://www.nfhslearn.com/courses)

- Positive Sports Parenting
- Social Media (Administrators/Coaches)
- Social Media For Students
- Sportsmanship
- Captains Course

Download from the Sportsmanship page of the MHSAA Website

- Prerecorded audio for playing at events (30 seconds or less)
 - Sportsmanship messages
 - Be The Referee messages
- Prerecorded video for showing at events (30 seconds or less)
- Print advertisements
- Web banners

GRAPHICS AVAILABLE ON SPORTSMANSHIP PAGE OF MHSAA.COM

Always Help Your Opponent Up Program Ad/Poster



Don't Be That Parent
Program Ad/Poster



And Mean It Program Ad/Poster



Endangered Species — Show Respect Now Ad/Poster



Expect Good Sportsmanship Banner Template (48x24 — Customizable)



CREATING A POSITIVE STUDENT CHEERING SECTION

Sportsmanship is an important part of educational athletics, and student cheering sections can be a key factor in creating a festive high school event. The MHSAA [Student Advisory Council](#) has taken a leadership role in helping school student sections contribute to a fun and positive experience.

The Student Advisory Council wants to see enthusiasm and togetherness within cheering sections. To witness cheers that pump up the atmosphere without disrespecting all involved in the sporting event. To see a mixture of school spirit and positivity within student cheering squads.

Here are five simple guidelines the Student Advisory Council has developed to get your students get started:

- 1. Work WITH your athletic director.** Your AD wants you to have a great time at games, so schedule meetings and set student section expectations with him or her. By working WITH your AD you may be able to do more than you ever thought possible.
- 2. Focus on your school.** Encourage and direct comments to your team only. Don't target individuals on the opposing team. Be loud, and be your team's "6th man."
- 3. Promote a positive atmosphere.** Cheers should uplift the crowd and get everyone involved. Be aware that children and parents are there, too.
- 4. Get organized.** Select a group of leaders. Promote the togetherness of the entire student body. Use social media. Organize theme nights. Develop your own original cheers.
- 5. HAVE FUN!**

THE BATTLE OF THE FANS

Each winter since 2012, the MHSAA Student Advisory Council has conducted a Battle of The Fans competition to determine the best student cheering section in the state.

Any MHSAA member school – large or small – may enter. The process begins in early January when a school posts a video online consisting of two segments. First, it must include at least 30 seconds of a student (or students) explaining how your student section embodies the elements listed in the judging criteria and why your school should be named as the top student section in the state. Second, you must include at least 60 seconds of your student section in action. Show us how loud, organized, positive, and original you can be. And don't forget, sportsmanship is a key component to having one of the top student groups in Michigan.

The Student Advisory Council will select five finalists – one of which will be a Class C or D school. Members of the Student Advisory Council and MHSAA staff will visit all Finalists on a home game night; and will shoot and edit its own video to document its experience at your school. They will also meet with the school's student leaders and write stories about the experiences to post online.

The MHSAA Student Advisory Council will determine a winner based on the judging criteria listed below, and the results of online voting via social media:

Positive Sportsmanship (10%)	Student Body Participation (10%)
School Spirit (10%)	Originality of Cheers (10%)
Organization of the Group (10%)	Student Section Leadership (10%)
Overall Impression / FUN (40%)	

The winning school and all other finalists are honored during the MHSAA Basketball Finals in March.

More details about the Battle of The Fans can be found on this page of the MHSAA Website - <https://www.mhsaa.com/Schools/Students/Battle-of-the-Fans>

STUDENT CHEERING SECTION THEME NIGHT IDEAS

Over the years, the best student sections have developed Theme Nights to build their efforts around while supporting their team. The only limit is your imagination. Here's a list:

50'S	ESPN Night	Prom
60'S	Farm Animals	Purple/Pink Out
70'S	Farmers Night	Rags To Riches
80'S	Fashion Disaster	Rainbow
90'S	Fatheads (Of Players)	Red Carpet
Animals	Fiesta Night	Red Out
Aquatic	Flannel Night	Ref Night
Baby Theme	Frat/Sorority	Rival Night
Banana Costume	Fun In The Sun	Rock & Roll
Beach Time	Galaxy Universe	Safari (Animal Print)
Black Out	Glow Out	School Colors
Black To Neon Out	Gold Out	School Spirit
Black To White Out	Greek Gods/Goddesses	Silent Night
Black/White Out	Greek/Roman (Toga)	(Silent Until Team Gets ? Points Then Just Go Crazy)
Board Game Night	Grey Out	Snowsuit
Bow Tie Night	Halloween Costumes	Space Night
Breast Cancer Awareness	Hats/Wigs	St. Patrick's Day
Business Professional	Hawaiian	Star Wars
Camo	Hillbilly Day	Super Hero
Cancer Awareness Night	Holiday Night	Team Color Nights
Carnival	Hunting/Camo	Thanksgiving
Cars Night (Cardboard Boxes)	Jungle	The Walking Dead
Celebrities/ Someone Famous	Lake Theme	Thriller Night
Christmas Morning	Lumber Jack	Throwback (Retro)
Classy/Sassy	Mascots	Ties And Dress Coats
College	Mask Out	Togas
Color Night	Military Appreciation	Tourist
Color Out	Mime	Tropical Vacation
Construction Workers	Mix And Match	Twin
Convict Suits	Mom & Dad	Tie-Dye/Hippie
Cops	Movie Characters	Ugly Sweaters
Cops/Robbers	Movie Night	Ugly X-Mas Sweaters
Costume Night	Music/Bands	Under The Sea
Country	Nations	Valentines
Country Club Day	Neons (Bright & Tight)	Western
Cowboys/Cowgirls	Nerds	Winter Night
Crazy Hats	New Year's Party	Wounded Warrior
Denim Night	Occupations	Zombie
Different Helmets	Opposite Day	Zoo
Disco	Overalls	
Disney	Pajama Night/Blanket	
Dress Like A Teacher	Party Out	
Dress Up	Pattern Out	
Duct Tape	Pirate	
Dynamic Duo	Plaid	
Elderly/Old People	Prep	



1661 Ramblewood Drive

East Lansing, MI 48823

517.332.5046

MHSAA.com