

Applaud \*\*Encourage\*\* Applaud\*\*Encourage

Respect others

Show concern for others

Respect the rules

Be Ethical

Recognize and appreciate others

Take pride in your good actions



# Sportsmanship Manual



This SPORTSMANSHIP MANUAL provides the NSAA member schools with the Sportsmanship Bylaws along with interpretations and expectations. It serves as a behavior guide for all groups involved with NSAA activities, as well as a resource guide of materials for schools to use in the administration of quality and safe NSAA activities.

Promoting sportsmanship is a continual process that requires a whole school/community effort. Continue to set goals to decrease the number of unsportsmanlike incidents. Sportsmanship should be and must be a key part of activities participation. Make it a priority!

All administrators, athletic directors, coaches, and sponsors are urged to read this manual thoroughly and save for future reference. Use or adapt any of the resources in this manual as these resources are from the National Federation and other state associations such as, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Iowa, Illinois and Massachusetts.

## **NEBRASKA SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION**

### **Mission**

The public and non-public high schools of Nebraska voluntarily agreed to form the Nebraska School Activities Association for the following purposes:

- To formulate and make policies which will cultivate high ideals of citizenship, fair competition, sportsmanship, and teamwork, which will compliment the member schools' curriculum programs.
- To foster uniformity of standards in interscholastic activity competition.
- To organize, develop, direct, and regulate an interscholastic activity program, which is equitable, and will protect and promote the health and physical welfare of all participants.

Do you know of a coach, athlete, official, fan who has demonstrated good sportsmanship? Please let the NSAA know by emailing the story to [nsaa@nsaahome.org](mailto:nsaa@nsaahome.org).

*Photos courtesy of Callam Sports Photography*  
[www.callamsportsphoto.com](http://www.callamsportsphoto.com)

# Sportsmanship Bylaws & Approved Rulings

## 2.11 Penalties

2.11.3 Participant Ejections from Athletic Contests. Any participant ejected from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible for the next athletic contest at that level of competition and all other athletic contests at any level during the interim, in addition to the other penalties the NSAA or the school may assess.

**Approved Ruling 2.11.3** Any participant ejected a second time during a season from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible for the next two contests at that level of competition and all other athletic contests at any level during the interim, in addition to other penalties the NSAA or school may assess. Any participant ejected a third time shall be ineligible for the next three contests at that level of competition and all other athletic contests at any level during the interim, in addition to other penalties the NSAA or school may assess. When schools have students or coaches with multiple ejections, the school shall submit to the NSAA a written management plan on how they plan to remediate the problem.

2.11.4 Coach Ejections from Athletic Contests. Any coach ejected from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible to coach the next athletic contest at that level of competition and all other athletic contests at any level during the interim, in addition to the other penalties the NSAA or the school may assess.

**Approved Ruling 2.11.4** Coaches who are ejected will be required to successfully complete the NFHS Sportsmanship online course (Teaching & Modeling Behavior) within 10 days of the ejection at the coaches' expense. Failure by an ejected coach to successfully complete the NFHS Sportsmanship online course within 10 days of the ejection will result in the coach being suspended from coaching in any further competition in that activity for the remainder of the season, including all NSAA end-of-season play (subdistricts, districts, playoffs, and state competition.) In those situations in which the ejection of the coach occurs near the end of the season or during the NSAA end-of-season play, the coach will be required to successfully complete the NFHS Sportsmanship online course before being able to coach the following season or year. Coaches who are ejected a second time will be required to sit-out the next two contests at that level, plus all other contests at other levels during the interim and successfully complete the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching online course within 10 days of the ejection at the coaches' expense. Failure to successfully complete the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching online course within 10 days of the ejection will result in the coach being suspended from coaching in any further competition in that activity for the remainder of the season, including all NSAA end-of-season play (subdistricts, districts, playoffs, and state competition.) In those situations in which the ejection of the coach occurs near the end of the season or during the NSAA end-of-season play, the coach will be required to successfully complete the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching online course before being able to coach the following season or year.

### 3.3 General Regulations Governing Competition

3.3.11 Conduct and Sportsmanship. Member schools shall maintain proper crowd control and enforce the principles of good sportsmanship and ethics during all interscholastic contests. Failure to fulfill this obligation shall subject the school to penalties as provided in Article 2, Section 2.11, NSAA Bylaws Governing All Activities.

3.3.11.1 Conduct of Coaches and Athletes. Coaches and athletes shall conduct themselves in accordance with the playing rules of the sport contest and refrain from unsportsmanlike conduct during interscholastic competition. Failure to fulfill this obligation will subject the individual(s) to the penalties as provided in Article 2, Section 2.11, NSAA Bylaws Governing All Activities.

3.3.11.2 Definition of Unsportsmanlike Conduct. Unsportsmanlike conduct shall include the following: fighting, verbal abuse or dissent directed toward an official or opponent, racial or ethnic slurs, inappropriate comments or actions that may be construed as sexual harassment, profanity, obscene gestures, flagrant and violent fouls, taunting, trash talk, baiting, cheating, throwing or abusing equipment, inappropriate posters, physical intimidation or abuse of an official or opponent, and unauthorized leaving of a team bench area.



## Interpretations of the Sportsmanship Bylaws

Sportsmanship legislation was passed during the 2001 Representative Assembly. The basic intent of the membership was outlined in that legislation, but administrative guidelines are necessary for adequate and appropriate administration and enforcement of that intent.

1. Enforcement of the “sit-out rule” for ejections from high school contests for unsportsmanlike conduct is a responsibility of the member school. Failure to properly enforce this rule could result in other sanctions by the NSAA.
2. Administrators will be expected to promptly file a report with the NSAA whenever a participant or coach from their school has been ejected from any high school contest. Such filing must be done online under the AD login section of the NSAA webpage.
3. A participant or coach ejected from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible for the next athletic contest at that level of competition and any other athletic contest at any level during the interim.
4. Enforcement of the “sit-out rule” is expected to begin immediately, regardless whether it is regular-season or tournament play.
5. Any participant ejected a second time during a season from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible for the next two contests at that level of competition and all other athletic contests at any level during the interim, in addition to other penalties the NSAA or school may assess.
6. Any participant ejected a third time during a season from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible for the next three contests at that level of competition and all other athletic contests at any level during the interim, in addition to other penalties the NSAA or school may assess.
7. During the time of their “sit-out” suspension, athletes who are ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct may not suit up or participate, but it is the school’s discretion whether such athlete is able to travel with the team or sit on the team bench.
8. Coaches who are ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct may not coach in any contest or be present at the contest site during the time of their “sit-out” suspension. Coaches who are ejected will also be required to successfully complete the NFHS Sportsmanship online course “Teaching and Modeling Behavior” within 10 days of the ejection. Failure to successfully complete the course will result in a suspension from coaching for the remainder of the season. In those situations in which the ejection of the coach occurs near the end of the season or during the NSAA end-of-season play, the coach will be required to successfully complete the NFHS Sportsmanship online course “Teaching and Modeling Behavior” before being able to coach the following season or year.
9. Coaches who are ejected a second time in a season will be required to sit-out the next two contests at that level, plus all other contests at other levels during the interim. Coaches may not be present at the contest site during the time of their “sit-out” suspension. Any coach ejected a second time will also be required to successfully complete the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching online course within 10 days of the ejection. Failure to successfully complete the course will result in a suspension from coaching for the remainder of the season. In those situations in which the ejection of the coach occurs near the end of the season or during the NSAA end-of-season play, the coach will be required to successfully complete the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching online course before being able to coach the following season or year.
10. If the ejection takes place in the final game of the season, the suspension will carry over to the following season.
11. When schools have students or coaches with multiple ejections, the school shall submit to the NSAA a written management plan on how they plan to remediate the problem.
12. Officials will be expected to file with the NSAA an ejection report for any ejection of a player or coach from a contest online. Any unusual situation that occurs prior to, during, or after a contest should also be reported.
13. Prompt reporting to the NSAA office by the official is necessary. Officials are asked to submit their electronic report or call the NSAA office the day following the ejection.
14. Officials are asked to be specific in listing the reason(s) for an ejection.
15. Affiliated officials (officials registered from contiguous states) will also be required to perform this reporting function.
16. There is no appeal process for ejections for unsportsmanlike conduct.
17. The Executive Director shall reserve the right to consider the length of suspensions when some levels of competition are scheduled on an irregular basis (e.g., three weeks between regularly scheduled non-varsity contests).

# Administering the NSAA Ejection Regulations

NSAA Sportsmanship legislation dictates that any participant or coach ejected from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible for the next athletic contest at that level of competition and any other athletic contest at any level during the interim, in addition to other penalties the NSAA or school may assess.

## **Responsibilities of the Contest Officials**

1. Officials will be expected to submit a report online to the NSAA for any ejection of a player or coach from a contest. Officials are also expected to report to the NSAA any unusual situation that occurs prior to, during, or after a contest.
2. Prompt reporting to the NSAA office is necessary. Officials are asked to submit the online ejection report or call the NSAA office the day following the ejection. Officials are asked to be specific in listing the reason(s) for an ejection.
3. Affiliated officials (officials registered from contiguous states) also will be required to perform this reporting function.

## **Responsibilities of the School Administration**

1. School administrators are asked to instruct coaches in expected and acceptable behaviors.
2. Sufficient and appropriate supervisory personnel should be provided for each contest.
3. Secure competent contest officials who are satisfactory to both teams.
4. Provide opportunities for informing students and adult spectators of behavior and sportsmanship guidelines.
5. Promptly notify the NSAA when there has been a high school participant or coach ejected from a contest, regardless of the level of that contest. In addition schools are required to fill out an ejection report online.
6. Assure that the participant or coach “sit-out” guidelines are enforced. **The School Administrator is expected to ensure that this penalty is properly enforced.**
7. Promptly notify the NSAA of any unusual situation that occurs prior to, during, or after a contest.

## **Responsibilities of the School Coach**

1. Set a good example for players and spectators to follow.
2. Instruct participants and spectators in proper sportsmanship responsibilities.
3. Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials.
4. Minimize coaching behaviors that could incite fans.
5. Enforce penalties for participants who do not abide by school and NSAA sportsmanship standards.

# What is Sportsmanship?



- ...playing fair
- ...following the rules of the game
- ...respecting the judgment of referees and officials
- ...treating opponents with respect

***"Success is peace of mind knowing you did your best."  
--John Wooden***

# The Fundamentals Of Sportsmanship

One thing needs to be remembered -- many people have not had *Good Sportsmanship* explained to them. Hopefully, the following will help everyone to understand their responsibilities at an athletic contest.

## **1. 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 officials, coaches, 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.

## **2. Exercise Representative Behavior at All Times.**

A prerequisite to *Good Sportsmanship* requires one to understand his/her own prejudices that may become factors in his/her behavior. The true value of interscholastic competition relies upon everyone exhibiting behavior that 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.

## **3. Recognize and Appreciate Skilled Performances 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 also reflects a true awareness of the game by recognizing and acknowledging quality.

## **4. 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 contests are a part of the game. We should not rationalize our own poor or unsuccessful performance or behavior by placing responsibility on an official. The rule of *Good Sportsmanship* is to accept and abide by the decision made. This value is critical for students to learn for later applications in life.

## **5. Display Openly a Respect for the Opponent at All Times.**

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

## **6. 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, athlete, coach, or official, this value is paramount since it suggests that you care about yourself and how others perceive you.



## Decision Making Tools

How do we make ethical decisions?

1. **Stop and Think.** Important decisions take time and thought. We are more likely to choose inadvisable actions when we are under pressure, in a hurry, when we don't know all the facts or when we are tired. Calming down and counting to ten before taking an action can help – if some thought is put into the decision first.
2. **Gather the Facts.** In order to make a good decision, it's important to get the facts straight. Figure out what you know and what you need to know. Remember that gossip and hearsay are not the same as facts. Consider all perspectives.
3. **Consider the impact on all stakeholders.** Stakeholders are the people who will be affected by a decision. Determine who is likely to be helped or harmed. Avoid or reduce harm.
4. **Ethical principles** (trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship) are ground rules for life. Determine the core values that you are dealing with as you make your decision. Will the action violate being trustworthy, respectful, responsible, caring, fair, or a good citizen?
5. **Ask yourself** if you are willing to pay the price of making an unethical choice. Are you willing to sacrifice pride, integrity, reputation and honor by making an unethical choice? Think how you want to be thought of in the long run.
6. Use these personal warning systems:
  - a. Golden Rule. Are you treating others as you want to be treated?
  - b. Publicity. How would it look on the front page of the school newspaper?
  - c. Mom on Your Shoulder. What if your mom was watching you? Think of the most ethical people you know. Would you want them to know what you were saying or doing?

When two core ethical values conflict, go with the choice that will produce the most good for the most people. To make tough decisions, eliminate unethical choices, and then select the best ethical choice.

*“You’ll never get ahead of anyone as long as you try to get even with him.”*  
–Lou Holtz

*“An error is not a mistake until you refuse to correct it.”*  
– Fred Von Appen, Stanford University Football

Acceptable Behavior	Unacceptable Behavior
Applaud during introduction of players, coaches and officials	Yelling or chanting at opponents
Accept all decisions of the officials	Making derogatory yells, chants, songs or gestures
Shake hands with other student-athletes and coaches after the contest, regardless of the outcome	Booing or heckling an official's decision
Treat the contest as a game, not a war	Criticizing officials in any way; displaying temper with an official's call
Search out opposing players to recognize them for outstanding performance or coaching	Refusing to shake hands or to recognize a good performance
Applaud the performance of all participants after the contest	Blaming loss on game officials, coaches or players
Show concern for injured players, regardless of team affiliation	Laughing or name-calling to distract an opponent
Encourage surrounding people to display only sportsmanlike conduct.	Using profanity or displaying anger that draws attention away from the contest

***“Losing doesn’t make you a loser unless you think you’re a loser.”  
–Mike Krzyzewski, Duke University Men’s Basketball***

# Sport a Winning Attitude Checklist

As a coach, player, administrator or spectator, are you the learning the lifetime skills of integrity, honesty and respect that should be associated with high school athletics? These qualities will help you become a better person regardless of the final score.

See if you are Sporting a Winning Attitude by using this checklist:

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ Have the purposes of educational athletics and the values taught by such activities been discussed by coaches, players, other students, administrators and parents? Remember that interscholastic athletics and activities have a mission like classroom activities, and they all blend for the betterment of young people.

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ Have coaches, players, and parents discussed what each party wants from the experience? Studies have shown that most youngsters play for fun and would rather play for a losing team than sit on the bench of a winning one.

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ Are you aware of the effects of criticism and ridicule by coaches and unruly spectators that high school games can have on players? Overly harsh criticism or harassing of a player, especially a young one, can seriously damage their self-image and even turn them away from sports. You wouldn't think of yelling at a student in a classroom. Likewise, you should never yell criticism at a player, and instead should offer support.

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ Do you make an effort to keep up-to-date on the rules of your favorite sport and improve yourself as a student of the game? It's a fact that the more knowledgeable coach is a better teacher of the game; the more knowledgeable player and spectators appreciate the game more; and that creates an atmosphere for better sportsmanship.

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ Do you try to educate others about the game they are watching, the rules of the contest, and the value of sportsmanship? Many spectators who become unruly at events are generally not well-versed in the game itself, or the multitude of changes that have occurred since their "playing days." Likewise, they do not recognize the difference between athletic entertainment at the collegiate or professional levels, and educational athletics at the high school level, and how sportsmanship fits into the picture.

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ Do you treat your opponents and game officials with respect? Referees and other officials are trained to know and interpret the rules. Opponents provide the most important factor of a game competition.

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ Do you realize that a very small percentage of high school athletes earn college scholarships, and that an even smaller percentage play professionally? Often, the goal to win and attract a college scholarship overshadows the true purpose of interscholastic athletics. The pressure coaches and parents bring on athletes in this manner is unhealthy.

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ Are there established guidelines for team behavior and are they known by players and parents? Players and parents should know the penalties for breaking the rules, including acting in an unsportsmanlike manner.

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ Are players recognized and/or rewarded for achievements other than the scoring or earning of points? Sportsmanlike behavior, teamwork and improved performance are very important contributions to the team, and some of the long-term values learned in educational athletics.

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ Do you practice what you preach? All of these points are for naught if you don't shape proper behavior by setting a good example for others to follow. This includes, if you are a spectator, reminding those rude 'anonymous' individuals next to you at events, of the importance of good sportsmanship and the true purpose of the game.

Score one point for each "YES" answer.

9 to 10. Congratulations! You recognize the values taught in interscholastic athletic competition and work with those around you to better their understanding.

6 to 8. You're trying, but you could gain valuable experience by taking more time to learn about the true importance of high school athletics and about the game you're watching.

5 or less. You need to appreciate more fully that win-loss records, college scholarships and imitating the behavior of athletes, coaches and spectators seen on television at college and professional athletic entertainment events are not compatible with the mission of educational athletics. Spend some time with a knowledgeable person in your community to learn the same lessons students learn in the athletic classroom.

# A REPORT CARD

## How's Our Sportsmanship

Welcome to our school. We consider it our home and hope you will enjoy your visit here. We would appreciate it if you would rate the sportsmanlike behavior of our contestants, coaches, students and spectators.

We're proud of making sportsmanship one of our top educational priorities and hope you will assist us in reaching that goal.

Please return this form at the door/gate as you leave. Thank you!

*Please rate the following on a 1 to 10 basis, with 10 being the best score and 1 being the poorest.*

The coach's positive control of his/her emotions and behavior toward the team, opponents and officials. \_\_\_\_\_

The contestants' positive control of their emotions and behavior. \_\_\_\_\_

The cheerleaders' role in encouraging positive enthusiasm. \_\_\_\_\_

The general response and actions of the spectators. \_\_\_\_\_

*"Leaders are like eagles - they don't flock. You find them one at a time."  
-Knute Rockne, Notre Dame Football*

The sportsmanlike conduct/attitude of the team/fans at the conclusion of the contest. \_\_\_\_\_

The school administration's active role in promoting

# Coaches' Code of Ethical Conduct and Expectations

*This code of conduct is for coaches to keep and/or post in the office for easy reference.*

It is important that every coach be an exemplary role model and maintains the highest standard of conduct at all times. Coaches represent the community, school and activity. Many people observe their conduct closely. The coach must recognize that the purpose of cocurricular activities is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social and emotional well-being of participants.

## EXPECTATIONS

As a coach at (name of organization) I will:

- Emphasize academics as our number one priority
- Encourage students to participate in a variety of activities to the best of their abilities.
- Treat students, officials and others with dignity and respect.
- Supervise and control students at all times.
- Maintain a physically and emotionally safe environment.
- Not tolerate abuse of officials, faculty or students.
- Establish and model fair play, sportsmanship and appropriate conduct.
- Establish student safety and welfare as a high priority.
- Use discretion when criticizing or reprimanding students.
- Be consistent in requiring students to follow rules and standards of the school and activity
- Not recruit students from other schools.
- Not allow the use of illegal drugs, alcohol or tobacco.
- Educate students about the dangers of illegal drugs, alcohol and tobacco.
- Not use profanity, nor allow the use of profanity.

## COMMUNICATION

As a coach at (name of organization) I will:

- Maintain open and ongoing communication with advisors, coaches, students and parents.
- Hold a parent meeting to review:
  - Basic policies, procedures and expectations.
  - The Student Code of Ethics and Parent Pledge.
  - (Name of organization)'s voluntary drug testing/zero tolerance policy.
  - Academic requirements and expectations at (name of organization).
  - Anticipated schedule.
  - Procedures to resolve conflict with other activities.

## PARTICIPATION

As a coach at (name of organization) I will:

- Recruit as many students as possible to try out for a team or group.
- Keep as many students as possible on the team or group.
- Allow as many students as possible to compete or perform without compromising the quality of effort or performance.

## The Coach's Code of Ethics

The function of a coach is to educate students through participation in interscholastic competition. An interscholastic program should be designed to enhance academic achievement and should never interfere with opportunities for academic success. Each student-athlete should be treated as though he or she were the coach's own, and his or her welfare should be uppermost at all times.

*The coach* shall be aware that he or she has a tremendous influence, for either good or ill, on the education of the student-athlete, and thus shall never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest ideals of character.

*The coach* shall uphold the honor and dignity of the profession. In all personal contact with student-athletes, officials, athletic directors, school administrators, the state high school activities association, the media, and the public, the coach shall strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct.

*The coach* shall take an active role in the prevention of drug, alcohol, and tobacco abuse.

*The coach* shall avoid the use of alcohol and tobacco products when in contact with the players.

*The coach* shall respect and support contest officials. The coach shall not indulge in conduct which would incite players or spectators against the officials. Public criticism of officials or players is unethical.

Before and after contests, *coaches* for the competing teams should meet and exchange cordial greetings to set the correct tone for the event.

*A coach* shall not exert pressure on faculty members to give student-athletes special consideration.

*A coach* shall not scout opponents by any means other than those adopted by the conference and/or state high school activities association.

*The coach* shall promote the entire interscholastic program of the school and direct his or her program in harmony with the total school program.

*The coach* shall master the contest rules and shall teach them to his or her team members. The coach shall not seek an advantage by circumvention of the spirit or letter of the rules.

*The coach* shall exert his or her influence to enhance sportsmanship by spectators, both directly and by working closely with cheerleaders, pep club sponsors, booster clubs, and administrators.



## Coach's Fair Play Code

1. I will be reasonable when scheduling games and practices, remembering that young people have other interests and obligations.
2. I will teach my athletes to play fairly and to respect the rules, officials, and opponents.
3. I will ensure that all athletes get equal instruction, support, and opportunities.
4. I will not ridicule my athletes for making mistakes or performing poorly. I will remember that young people play to have fun and must be encouraged to have confidence in themselves.
5. I will remember that young people need a coach they can respect. I will be generous with praise and set a good example.
6. I will make sure that equipment and facilities are safe and match the athletes' ages and abilities.

I will obtain proper training and continue to upgrade my coaching skills.

## The Athlete's Code of Conduct

I recognize that being a member of the community carries with it responsibilities and rewards, and that as an athlete in the community, I must not only embrace those responsibilities, but also conduct myself both on and off the playing field in a way which exhibits respect for myself and for others.

I therefore resolve to:

- conduct myself with dignity as an athlete and as a citizen of the community, recognizing and accepting that I must accept accountability for my behavior and its outcomes.
- honor my obligations and promises.
- exercise self-control.
- be willing to be fair with others in my dealings on and off the playing field.
- take pride in myself and my accomplishments, but never at the expense of demeaning another person or group.
- respect the efforts of others.
- respect authority.
- play by the spirit, not just the letter, of the rules of the game and the rules of life.
- strive to make my community—whether that be the team on which I play or the community in which I live—better because of my contributions as a member and as a citizen.

## *Athlete's Fair Play Code*

1. I will participate because I want to, not just because my parents or coaches want me to.
2. I will play by the rules and in the spirit of the game.
3. I will control my temper since fighting and disrespect can spoil the activity for everyone.
4. I will respect my opponents.
5. I will do my best to try to be a true team player.
6. I will remember that winning isn't everything. Having fun, improving my skills, making friends and doing my best are also important.
7. I will acknowledge all good plays or performances by both my teammates and my opponents.
8. I will remember that coaches and officials are there to help me. I will accept their decisions, show them respect, and understand they have given their time to be with me.

## *Fan's Fair Play Code*

1. I will remember that young people play sports for THEIR enjoyment, not to entertain me.
2. I will not have unrealistic expectations and will understand that doing one's best is as important as winning. I understand that ridiculing an athlete for making a mistake is not acceptable behavior.
3. I will respect the official's decisions and will encourage all participants to do the same.
4. I will respect and show appreciation for the coaches and understand that they have given their time to provide activities for our young people.
5. I will encourage athletes and coaches to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
6. I will show respect for my team's opponents because I realize there would be no game without them.
7. I will not use bad language and will not harass athletes, coaches, officials, or other spectators.
8. I will always show good sportsmanship since young people learn best by example.



## A CODE OF ETHICS FOR ATHLETIC OFFICIALS

National Federation Officials Association (NFOA)

Officials at an interscholastic athletic event are participants in the educational development of high school students. As such, they must exercise a high level of self-discipline, independence and responsibility. The purpose of this Code is to establish guidelines for ethical standards of conduct for all interscholastic officials.

- **Officials** shall master both the rules of the game and the mechanics necessary to enforce the rules, and shall exercise authority in an impartial, firm, and controlled manner.
- **Officials** shall work with each other and their state associations in a constructive and cooperative manner.
- **Officials** shall uphold the honor and dignity of the profession in all interaction with student-athletes, coaches, athletic directors, school administrators, colleagues, and the public.
- **Officials** shall prepare themselves both physically and mentally, shall dress neatly and appropriately, and shall comport themselves in a manner consistent with the high standards of the profession.
- **Officials** shall be punctual and professional in the fulfillment of all contractual obligations.
- **Officials** shall remain mindful that their conduct influences the respect that student-athletes, coaches, and the public hold for the profession.
- **Officials** shall, while enforcing the rules of play, remain aware of the inherent risk of injury that competition poses to student-athletes. Where appropriate, they shall inform event management of conditions or situations that appear unreasonably hazardous.
- **Officials** shall take reasonable steps to educate themselves in the recognition of emergency conditions that might arise during the course of competition.

# Parent's Role in Interscholastic Athletics

## Communicating with your children

- Make sure that your children know that win or lose, scared or heroic, you love them, appreciate their efforts and are not disappointed in them. This will allow them to do their best without fear of failure. Be the person in their life they can look to for constant positive reinforcement.
- Try your best to be completely honest about your child's athletic ability, competitive attitude, sportsmanship and actual skill level.
- Be helpful but don't coach them. It's tough not to, but it is a lot tougher for the child to be flooded with advice and critical instruction.
- Teach them to enjoy the thrill of competition, to be "out there trying," to be working to improve their skills and attitudes. Help them develop the feeling for competing, for trying hard, for having fun.
- Try not to relive your athletic life through your child in a way that creates pressure. If they are comfortable with you win or lose, then they are on their way to maximum enjoyment.
- Don't compete with the coach. If your child is receiving mixed messages from two different authority figures, he or she will likely become disenchanted.
- Don't compare the skill, courage, or attitude of your child with other members of the team.
- Get to know the coach(es). Then you can be assured that his or her philosophy, attitudes, ethics, and knowledge are such that you are happy to have your child under his or her leadership.
- Always remember that children tend to exaggerate, both when praised and when criticized. Temper your reaction and investigate before overreacting.

## Communicating with the coach

- Communication you should expect from your child's coach includes:
  - Philosophy of the coach
  - Expectations the coach has for your child
  - Locations and times of all practices and contests
  - Team requirements
  - Procedure should your child be injured
  - Discipline that results in the denial of your child's participation
- Communication coaches expect from parents
  - Concerns expressed directly to the coach
  - Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance
  - Specific concerns in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations
- Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches
  - The treatment of your child, mentally, and physically
  - Ways to help your child improve
  - Concerns about your child's behavior
- Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches
  - Playing time
  - Team strategy
  - Play calling
  - Other student-athletes
- Appropriate procedures for discussing concerns with the coaches
  - Call to set up an appointment with the coach
  - Do not confront a coach before or after a contest or practice (these can be emotional times for all parties involved and do not promote resolution)

## **Crowd Control Planning**

The NSAA is aware of the need for preventative measures to overcome crowd control behavior problems. 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 considerations are some guidelines that may assist those responsible for planning adequate crowd control. Although there are no magical secrets to crowd control, the following important suggestions need emphasis by administrators and event managers in crowd control.

1. Establish written behavioral standards and expectations for coaches, players, students, cheerleaders, spectators, and management personnel. Communicate with them in a variety of ways, expect them to be followed, and do something when they aren't.
2. 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.
3. Identify supervisors and ushers by use of jackets, armbands, or badges, and expect them to be active and visible to discourage problems quickly identified.
4. 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.
5. Be consistent in applying policies and rules; be supportive of your management and supervisory personnel.
6. Avoid seating bands or spectators near the visiting team bench and the visiting team spectator seating area.
7. When someone is behaving in an undesirable way, or violating rules of good citizenship, 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.
8. Have admission, 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 areas.
9. Supervise the rest rooms.
10. Establish precise job descriptions, expectations, and authority of all working personnel and inform them of all rules, regulations, and emergency procedures.
11. Assist and accommodate all persons with special needs.

## Responsibilities of the Host School

1. Develop a pre-contest checklist listing items and work requiring completion prior to the event.
2. Provide a well-ordered, carefully maintained facility.
3. Notify opponents in writing of all necessary details such as time, location, dressing facilities, pre-contest procedures, and specific information that applies to a particular sport.
4. Appoint a "greeting committee" to meet the opponents and serve as their host/hostess through their stay at your school.
5. Select supportive personnel (ticket takers/sellers, supervisors, etc.) carefully, and discuss their assignments thoroughly prior to the contest.
6. Select objective experienced scorers, timers, and public address system personnel, and see that they are properly informed.
7. Provide security for officials, and see that they are equipped with a dressing room located away from spectators and player dressing areas. Officials should be paid before the contest. Provide officials with a reserved parking space.
8. 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.
9. Start the event on time.
10. Ban artificial noisemakers, confetti, etc. from the facility.
11. Designate specific seating locations for visiting and host schools.
12. Make sure cheerleaders and pep groups have adequate seating.
13. Provide adequate space and organization of concession areas to prevent overcrowding and possible pushing and jostling.
14. Limit re-entry and have gates supervised throughout entire contest.
15. Pay special attention to people who do not come to a contest to watch it.
16. Discourage attendance of elementary students unless accompanied by an adult.
17. Keep playing area clear of spectators.
18. Use ropes to set aside areas.
19. Continual surveillance should be maintained at all facilities pertaining to crowd convenience such as concession areas, drinking fountains, first aid station, rest rooms, and aisle ways.
20. Before leaving the facility, check with supervisors and/or police to determine whether any unforeseen incidents transpired.
21. Establish good communications with all connected to the event.

## Responsibilities of the Visiting School

1. An administrator and adequate faculty or adult supervisors should be present at each contest in order to supervise their own students and adult fans. School administrators should introduce themselves to the host administrator to let them know whom to contact if a problem arises.
2. Supervise students and fans to prevent unsportsmanlike behavior prior to, during, and after the contest.
3. See that all bus drivers and delegated drivers are informed of any special parking locations and instructions provided by the host school.
4. Inform all student spectators and the team of proper entrance and exit locations.
5. See that supervision is available prior to the arrival of your spectators and continues until all groups have dispersed.
6. Report any unusual incidents to the host school administration immediately.
7. Give complete cooperation and assistance to the host school when it is necessary to file charges against any individual causing a disturbance.

## Responsibilities of the Public Address Announcer

The announcer is a key figure and carries a great responsibility. What is said and the way it is said will influence the crowd. The following may assist:

- Be organized and prepared.
- Check that all equipment operates properly.
- Be professional and unbiased. Be impartial. Announce the contest with no show of favoritism. Do not draw attention away from the athletic contest.
- Speak slowly, clearly, and distinctly. Use proper language at all times. Not only does the announcer need to be heard, he or she also must be easily understood.
- Be enthusiastic but calm. Say only what is necessary. Talking all the time and speaking constantly into the microphone—especially with unnecessary comments—turns people off and makes them not want to listen. People who “turn off” the announcer may miss out on important, valuable, or emergency announcements.
- Do not editorialize about or comment on any aspect of the game. Do not anticipate or second-guess calls by the officials or criticize officials' decisions, directly or indirectly.
- Be involved with the teams and the competition, not with yourself. Enjoy the competitive atmosphere of the game, meet, or match and become excited about the young people who are performing. Do not become wrapped up in yourself and excited to hear yourself talk.

- The announcer is not the entertainment. The spectators came to watch the game and the players perform, to support the cheerleaders, to enjoy the band, to see their neighbor's child, to observe halftime activities—not to listen to the announcer.
- Be aware of the entire venue so that calm directions can be given in an emergency. Serious situations can often be avoided if the announcer will caution the crowd against coming onto the field/court, throwing things, cutting down nets, taking down goal posts, etc.
- Permit no one to use the microphone, except those in charge of the event. The announcer is responsible for whatever is said over the public address system.
- Announce convenient routes for leaving the playing area/field/court, and caution the crowd to drive carefully.
- Request the crowd remain for the school song if this is a part of the program.
- Introduce the officials after the lineups.
- Public address announcers should be aware that good sportsmanship is a very important part of interscholastic activities. They can play an important role in its encouragement. The following is presented as a possible pre-contest announcement for any interscholastic contest:

***Sample pre-contest announcements:***

1. Welcome to tonight's contest! As you enter this facility, please keep this in mind: SPORTSMANSHIP is pride in your school, your community, your team, and yourself. SPORTSMANSHIP is respect for the sport and those who compete and officiate. Take personal responsibility for keeping this contest at a high level of fair, clean, and wholesome competition.
2. 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 judgement calls – by officials, coaches, 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.
3. When \_\_\_\_\_ High School sponsors an athletic event, it considers that happening to be an extension of the classroom, with the lessons learned as important as those coming out of a textbook. Perhaps the most important lesson is good sportsmanship, a course that will serve everyone well in the game of life. Remember, sportsmanship creates winners for life.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ High School welcomes you to tonight's game. Sportsmanship is not just a necessary part of high school sports, it's the reason school sports exist. Sportsmanship is a way of life!
5. "Good evening (afternoon, morning) ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to \_\_\_\_\_ High School, home of the (mascot). A special welcome to our guests from \_\_\_\_\_ High School. \_\_\_\_\_ High School and the Nebraska School Activities Association promote good sportsmanship by students, athletes, coaches, and spectators. We request your cooperation by supporting the participants and officials in a positive manner. Profanity, ethnic, sexist, or other intimidating comments or actions directed at officials, students, athletes, coaches, or

team representatives will not be tolerated and are grounds for removal from the facility. Thank you for your cooperation! Good luck to both teams!"

6. Welcome to today's/tonight's competition. Your paid or complimentary admission to this event entitles you to enjoy an exhibition of skills developed by the students in an educational setting. Please give these students your positive encouragement and support. Booing, taunting or intimidating the officials or opponents is unfriendly and unacceptable.
7. This game is being played according to the rules of the Nebraska School Activities Association. These rules provide for fair competition among players. Fans also help promote good sportsmanship by observing the rules of fair play and taking personal responsibility for keeping this game at a high level of good sportsmanship.
8. (School) would like to welcome you to this evening's (contest). This year as in other years the Nebraska School Activities Association is interested in promoting good sportsmanship on the part of the coaches, players, cheerleaders and spectators at the various games. As an NSAA member school, we firmly feel that the outcome of the game should be determined by the quality of play on the (competition surface) and by the positive support of the spectators. To that end, the use of derogatory banners, balloons, signs, are prohibited. Noise-makers, sirens, whistles and similar items are also prohibited. We have the potential of a great game. Let's make it happen with your positive support. Good luck to (team names). At this time would you please stand for the playing of our national anthem.
9. Welcome to (your school name here)...Regardless of the outcome of today's game/match/event, we ask that all the spectators consider the time and effort that each of these young participants have put forth to represent his/her school. The purpose of this activity is to provide positive learning experiences and opportunities for personal growth for the participants. Cheerleaders, officials and spectators can—and are expected to assist in the promotion and achievement of good sportsmanship ideals by taking personal responsibility for keeping this contest at a high level of fair, clean and wholesome competition...Good luck to both teams!
10. Sportsmanship is pride in your school, your team and yourself...Sportsmanship is respect for the game of (name of sport) and for those who play it...Sportsmanship means taking personal responsibility for keeping this game at a high level of fair play...Sportsmanship is appreciation of all performances and the graceful acceptance of results. We welcome you to (name of school).
11. (Name of school) is committed to the sportsmanship goals of the Nebraska School Activities Association. Participants, cheerleaders, officials and spectators can and are expected to—assist in the promotion and achievement of good sportsmanship ideals by taking personal responsibility for keeping this contest at a high level of fair, clean and wholesome competition. We ask that you remember that the purpose of this activity is to provide positive learning experiences and opportunities for personal growth for the participants.

***Introduce the Officials after lineups:***

The officials for tonight's contest are \_\_\_\_\_. These individuals are members of the NSAA. Their experience and integrity qualify them to administer 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.

***To be read during breaks in the action:***

1. Your ticket to an interscholastic athletic event is a privilege, a privilege to watch youngsters learn on the playing field. One of those lessons taught to players is one spectators can follow as well--that of good sportsmanship. Unruly behavior is unacceptable in the classroom, and the athletic field is a classroom.
2. Finishing first does not always mean you won. In fact, an attitude where you feel you have to win at all costs and show disrespect for your opponent, officials, and the rules of the game in the process makes you a loser. The Nebraska School Activities Association and \_\_\_\_\_ High School remind you that sportsmanship creates winners for life!
3. While the scoreboard reveals the winner of a high school athletic event, the real winners are those who display good sportsmanship. The Nebraska School Activities Association and the \_\_\_\_\_ High School remind you that good sports are winners because they treat competition as a game, and not a war...they show genuine concern for an injured player, and they accept and respect the decisions of the officials.
4. An educational environment is critical to the success of high school athletics and activity programs. An important part of that environment is perspective. Without proper perspective, the lessons learned lose their value. The ability to show that a feeling of self-worth is more important than the outcome of any game is a vital lesson.
5. Admission to educational athletic events is a privilege to watch youngsters compete on the playing field, and with that privilege comes the responsibility to conduct yourself in a responsible manner, where the game is enjoyable for other fans and participants. Unruly behavior is unacceptable in the classroom, and the athletic arena is an extension of the classroom. The Nebraska School Activities Association and \_\_\_\_\_ High School remind you that sportsmanship creates winners for life!
6. Ethics, integrity, and respect are values important in our daily lives. All of these important values are learned by participation in interscholastic activity programs. Coaches should set a good example for players and fans. Participants should treat opponents with respect. Respect should be extended to officials and judges.
7. Participation in high school co-curricular activities offers a plentiful supply of solid real-life examples of the positive values that we place such an emphasis on later in life. Most of us learned to play by the rules through high school activities. The importance of teamwork often was learned on a football field, or in a band, or during a concert or play. The need to respect authority is a vital part of the interscholastic experience as is the value of commitment.
8. Where do high school students learn about competition, free enterprise, morals, values, and how to succeed in our society? In uniquely staged high school activity programs. You can be a part of this valuable learning experience by supporting your local high school by your attendance at music, speech, and athletic competitions. Join your friends at the main event...meet them at \_\_\_\_\_ High School!



## Responsibilities of the Band Director

- Encourage and stimulate good feeling by playing visitor's school fight songs and other appropriate music.
- Help in crowd control with music at appropriate times.
- Prior to the season, the guest band director should make a courtesy call to the host band director and exchange information concerning:
  - Whether or not the guests are planning to attend
  - The length of the halftime performance
  - Number and location of seating
  - Whether or not there are any special events planned
- Host band student leaders should meet with the guest student leaders sometime during the contest for the purpose of promoting goodwill.
- Provide faculty supervision for all pep or marching bands at all athletic contest.



## Responsibilities of the Spectator

1. Show interest in the contest by enthusiastically cheering and applauding the performance of both teams.
2. Show proper respect for opening ceremonies by standing at attention and remaining silent when the National Anthem is played.
3. Understand that a ticket is a privilege to observe the contest, not a license to verbally attack others, or to be obnoxious. Maintain self-control.
4. Do no "boo," stamp feet or make disrespectful remarks toward players or officials.
5. Learn the rules of the game, so that you may understand and appreciate why certain situations take place.
6. Know that noisemakers of any kind are not proper for indoor events.
7. Obey and respect officials and faculty supervisors who are responsible for keeping order. Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials.
8. Stay off the playing area at all times.
9. Do not disturb others by throwing material onto the playing area.
10. Show respect for officials, coaches, cheerleaders and student-athletes.
11. Pay attention to the half-time program and do not disturb those who are watching.
12. Respect public property by not damaging the equipment or the facility.
13. Know that the school officials reserve the right to refuse attendance of individuals whose conduct is not proper.
14. Refrain from the use of alcohol and drugs on the site of the contest.



## Responsibilities of the Coach

1. Accept and understand the seriousness of your responsibility, and the privilege of representing your school, community, parents, and athletes.
2. Respect the integrity and personality of the individual athlete.
3. Describe and define respectful and disrespectful behavior. Stress that disrespectful behavior, such as taunting, trash talking and intimidation, will not be tolerated.
4. Abide by the rules of the game in letter and spirit.
5. Exemplify professional behavior and leadership with strong ethical standards.
6. Display modesty in victory and graciousness in defeat.
7. Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. Treating them with respect will enhance a positive impression of you and your team in the eyes of the people at the event.
8. Set a good example for players and spectators to follow. Do not use profanity or obscene language, or improper actions.
9. Treat your opponent with respect and honor. 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.
10. Develop a program that rewards participants and spectators for displaying proper sportsmanship and enforces penalties on those who do not abide by sportsmanship standards.

"To be a successful coach you should be and look prepared. You must be a man of integrity. Never break your word. Don't have two sets of standards. Remember you don't handle players--you handle pets. You *deal* with players. Stand up for your players. Show them you care--on and off the court. Very important--it's not 'how' or 'what' you say but what they absorb."

--Red Auerbach

### *How to be a Supportive Coach*

- Know your players as individuals. Be sensitive to their needs in sports and their personal lives.
- Be free with praise and give constructive criticism. Players get frustrated, too. A tense atmosphere is not conducive to learning.
- Be fair. Players depend on a coach to make fair decisions.
- Be consistent. Do not give preferential treatment to the superstar. Discipline and team rules apply equally to all team members.
- Never use a player to further your own interests. Looking at a player as your "ticket" is not coaching. There is no place for a self-serving coach in any sport.
- Never break a player's self-confidence. Always give specifics when making changes or giving constructive criticism.
- Know how to motivate your players. Each individual has a unique motivating factor. Find out what it is.
- Set realistic goals for your players as individuals and for the team as a whole. Help athletes progress from potential to reality. Use short-term and long-term goal setting.
- Vary practice routines and make the workouts fun. Most athletes consider fun the top motivating factor for participating in sports.
- Keep the team functioning as a TEAM. This should happen as a result of good coaching. Being aware of players' individual differences will help prevent personality conflicts. Demonstrating qualities such as fairness, patience, consistency and leadership will lead to good morale. The team is a direct reflection of the coach.

## Responsibility of Team Captains

Typically, each season coaches and/or teammates choose a team captain. The title of team captain requires more than just participating in the pre-game coin toss. Captains are usually selected because they exhibit characteristics their teammates recognize as being important. Most teammates will take their cue from the team captain regarding behavior. Therefore, using the influence and leadership of the team captain is a way to promote and maintain good sportsmanship.

Coaches should meet with the team captain(s) regularly to discuss:

- team expectations
- strategies to deal with poor sportsmanship of other teammates
- taking a stand against stealing and cheating
- confronting a teammate who isn't following team expectations
- being a role model and how they can influence their teammates negatively or positively
- communicating with the coaching staff
- classroom expectations and behaviors

*Consider the captain at a track championship who had won the long jump and was the leader in the triple jump when he reported to the start of the 100-meter dash. Upon his arrival, he discovered another runner from a rival school had forgotten his spikes. This young man was the only person in the league with a chance to defeat him. Without hesitating, he gave the boy his backup pair of spikes. The young man with the borrowed spikes won in the final while setting a league record in the event. The same scenario played itself out in the finals of the 200-meter dash. The boy who lent the spikes indicated, "It never occurred to me to do anything else." Source: NFHS National High School Activities Week supplement*

## Sportsmanship Quiz

- 1. Are you a role model? How so?**
- 2. Are you a leader and active proponent of the interscholastic objective?**
- 3. What is the interscholastic objective?**
- 4. Is sportsmanship an integral part of your board policy, athletic activity policy? Is it prevalent at all venue locations regardless of your activity?**
- 5. What would you do if a student participant used profanity?**
- 6. What would you do if a student participant cheats? Examine this scenario in your own mind, if an official or judge does not witness the cheating.**
- 7. What would you do if an adult (coach, official, administrator, booster member) violates a rule or regulation on the NSAA?**
- 8. Would you report an incident regardless of its impact on the win/loss record or upon the other student participants involved at your school.**

*"Emotion gets in the way of performance. "*

*-Tom Landry, Dallas Cowboys*

## TEN STEPS OF DECENCY TOWARD OFFICIALS

1. Greet officials personally, if you are the host school. Do what you can to make them feel at home.
2. Introduce officials to the players and staff and, through the P.A. system, to fans. Add biographical details—such as “Bill Davis is a veteran referee with 13 years experience and was League Referee of the Year in 2001”—to humanize them for fans.
3. Cooperate with the officials throughout the game.
4. Avoid confrontations. During a game, only request information. Never argue or become emotional with officials.
5. Don't complain about missed calls in front of your athletes.
6. Never let your players see you blame an official for a loss.
7. Be appreciative and pleasant after the game. Thank officials and make sure they have easy access to their lockers.
8. If you are unhappy about an official's performance, wait two or three days to cool off, then see if your league has an evaluation form to fill out.
9. Know the rules as well as the officials do.
10. Attend meetings of local and state officials. There they discuss the rules and how to interpret them, and you will see the game through their perspective.

Adapted from “Respecting the Ref,” by Keith Mano, in *Athletic Management*, Aug/Sept 2002, p. 26.

