

Points of Emphasis

SPORTSMANSHIP

Before, During, & After a Contest

What is Sportsmanship?

- A commitment to fair play, ethical behavior, and integrity (NFHS).
- A commitment to maintain composure and respect towards opponents, officials, and staff in tense environments.
- A commitment to teaching and enforcing clear behavior expectations before, during and after contests.

Why is Sportsmanship important?

- Because it teaches life lessons of character, teamwork, and overcoming adversity.
- Because maintaining it - especially in challenging environments - sets the standard for how we all deserve to be treated.

How do I exhibit Sportsmanship?

Before a Contest	During a Contest	After a Contest
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coaches are expected to teach their team how to execute all aspects of participation in a contest - bus behaviors, arrival and departure procedures, team movement, interaction with others, etc.• Athletic department expectations for these areas will be communicated by school leadership and must be taught to teams by our coaches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be respectful of the opposing team and staff.• Cheer positively for your team.• Do not cheer/chant negatively.• Be respectful of the officials, understanding that everyone is human and makes mistakes, including you!• Stay with your team and be an active presence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Honor and respect the effort of all involved. <i>“Win or lose, act like you have been there before.”</i> -Lombardi, 1967• Manage/temper your competitive intensity when the final whistle blows.• Execute a respectful handshake line (coaches, ADs, event staff to monitor).• Wait to engage with fans until after the handshake and team gathering.• Do not invite fans on the playing surface.

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MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

Expectations

- Leaders in our program are asked to help **Lift the Stigma** associated with mental health struggles by talking to teams about mental health and modeling caring, supportive, and understanding behaviors.
- Athletic success must take a back seat to mental health and team morale.
- Be aware of mental health “red flags” from student-athletes and staff.

Excessive sleeping, Loss of interest in favorite activities, unexpected decline in academic performance, weight loss, loss of appetite, excessive worrying or fear, extreme mood changes, delusions / hallucinations, substance abuse, ideas of suicide, hyperactive behavior or routine lethargy, frequent temper tantrums, aggression or harm to self or others

How do I support mental health awareness?

As an athletic administrator	As a coach	As a student-athlete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage and expect teams to use purposefully some practice time for team bonding activities. • Providing resources and AACPS policies to coaches. Crisis Support & Reporting document found here - https://www.aacps.org/Page/1146 • Providing professional development and guidance to recognize needed mental health interventions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe student-athlete and staff behavior. • Understand that team morale and mental health are important aspects of your team's success. • Take time for team bonding activities. • Allow student-athletes and staff the opportunity to take a mental health break if needed. • Have purposeful mental health check-ins with student-athletes. • Communicate with your team the roles and responsibilities of each coach on staff. • Know that you do not have to be the expert if a situation arises that you are not comfortable with. Seek help from other school staff, such as school counselors. No one should feel alone, including those trying to provide support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know that you do have resources in the school system to help with mental health struggles. • Talk to coaches, team captains, athletic department, or school counselors if you are feeling down. • Be a good teammate, which includes notifying coaches if you see potential concerns with someone else.