



Parents Role in Interscholastic Athletics

COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR STUDENT-ATHLETE:

- Make sure your Student-Athlete knows 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 Student-Athlete'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 Student-Athlete 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 Student-Athlete in a way that creates pressure. You were frightened, backed off at times and were not always heroic. Student-Athletes need their parents, so do not withdraw. There is a thinking, feeling, sensitive, free spirit in that uniform who needs a lot of understanding, especially when their world turns bad. If they are comfortable with you win or lose, then they are on their way to maximum enjoyment.
- Don't compete with the coach(es). If your Student-Athlete 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 Student-Athlete 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 Student-Athlete under his or her leadership.
- Always remember that high school student-athletes can exaggerate, both when praised and when criticized. Temper your reaction and investigate before overreacting.

COMMUNICATING WITH THE COACH:

COMMUNICATION YOU SHOULD EXPECT FROM YOUR STUDENT-ATHLETE'S COACH

- Philosophy of the coach
- Expectations the coach has for your Student Athlete as well as all players on the team
- Locations and times of all practices and contests
- Team requirements (fees, special equipment, off-season conditioning)
- Procedure should your Student-Athlete be injured
- Discipline that results in the denial of your Student-Athlete's participation

COMMUNICATION COACHES EXPECT FROM PARENTS

- Concerns expressed directly to the coach
- Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance
- Specific concerns regarding a coach's philosophy and/or expectations

APPROPRIATE CONCERNS TO DISCUSS WITH COACHES

- The treatment of your Student-Athlete, mentally and physically
- Ways to help your Student-Athlete improve
- Concerns about your Student-Athlete's behavior

ISSUES NOT APPROPRIATE TO DISCUSS WITH COACHES

- Playing time
- Team strategy
- Play calling
- Other student-athletes

APPROPRIATE PROCEDURES FOR DISCUSSING CONCERNS WITH COACHES

- Call to set up an appointment with the coach (contact the athletic director to set up the meeting if unable to reach the head 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)

IF THE MEETING WITH THE COACH DID NOT PROVIDE A SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION

- Call to set up an appointment with the athletic director
- Determine the appropriate next step at this meeting