

Polk County Schools Parent/Coach Communication Preseason Meeting



PARENT/COACH RELATIONSHIP

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefit to children. As parents, when your children become involved in our program, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program.

COMMUNICATION YOU SHOULD EXPECT FROM YOUR CHILD'S COACH

1. Philosophy of the coach.
2. Expectations the coach has for your child as well as the players on the squad.
3. Locations and times of all practices and contests.
4. Team requirements, i.e., fees, special equipment, off-season conditioning.
5. Procedure should your child be injured during participation.
6. Discipline that may result in the denial of your child's participation.

COMMUNICATION COACHES EXPECT FROM PARENTS

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach.
2. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.
3. Specific concern in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations.
4. Medical or physical limitations of your child.

As your children become involved in the athletic programs they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there are also may be times when things do not go the way you or your child wishes. At these times discussion with the coach is encouraged.

APPROPRIATE CONCERNS TO DISCUSS WITH COACHES

1. The treatment of your child, mentally and physically.
2. Ways to help your child improve.
3. Concerns about your child's behavior.

It is very difficult to accept your child's not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches are professionals. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be best for all students involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain things can be and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other things must be left to the discretion of the coach.

ISSUES NOT APPROPRIATE TO DISCUSS WITH COACHES

1. Playing time.
2. Team strategy.
3. Play calling.
4. Other student-athletes.

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. These are to be encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the others position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedure should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern.

IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN TO DISCUSS WITH A COACH, THIS IS THE PROCEDURE YOU SHOULD FOLLOW:

1. Call to set up an appointment.
2. If the coach cannot be reached, call the Athletic Director. He/she will set up the meeting for you.
3. Please **do not** attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution.

WHAT CAN A PARENT DO IF THE MEETING WITH THE COACH DOES NOT PROVIDE A SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION?

1. Call and set up an appointment with the Athletic Director or Principal to discuss the situation.
2. At this meeting the appropriate next step can be determined.
3. Every effort should be made to resolve the problem at the high school before addressing your concerns with the District Director of Athletics.

Since research indicates a student involved in extra-curricular activities has a greater chance for success during adulthood, these programs have been established. Many of the character traits required to be a successful participant are exactly those that will promote success after high school. We hope the information provided within this pamphlet makes both your child's and your experience with the Polk County Schools athletic programs less stressful and more enjoyable.

PRESEASON MEETING RATIONALE

The philosophy of the preseason meeting is to involve the parents and the school in a conscientious effort to be partners. Through such involvement, the opportunity for optimal growth and development of students is enhanced.

Preseason meetings provide a forum for students and their parents, school staff and other adult leaders to openly discuss a variety of issues, such as sportsmanship, school policy, risk of injury and healthy lifestyles, including the use of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs.

Preseason meetings represent an extraordinary opportunity to foster a dialogue among students, their parents and school staff – a dialogue that lays the groundwork for real collaboration towards healthier youth and strong communities.

PRESEASON MEETING GOALS

- Introduce student activity participants, their parents, coaches, athletic trainers and sponsors to each other in a relaxed, cooperative atmosphere.
- Provide information about activities, insurance, physicals, district policies, program philosophy, etc.
- Provide information on state high school athletic/activity association, school and team rules.
- Provide specific guidelines, rules and consequences of rule violations.
- Provide information concerning practice, game and tournament schedules.
- Warn student activity participants and their parents of the potential for physical injury.
- Promote importance of ongoing, honest communication.
- Create awareness about tobacco, alcohol and other drug-use issues, ethics and sportsmanship and how they relate to sports and other activities.
- Involve parents in tobacco, alcohol and other drug education and prevention efforts.
- Develop a bond of mutual respect, cooperation and shared responsibility.
- Involve parents in the development of student performers on and off the playing field.