

Walton Central School Sportsmanship Philosophy

Many groups and individuals share the responsibility for sportsmanship in our school district. Sportsmanship is a result of the philosophy and policy of the Board of Education, the regulations and procedures established by the administration, the directions and programs set by the athletic director, the expectations and teachings of the coach, the modeling and behavior of the athletes, and the reactions of the spectators. All of the people involved must continuously keep the development of sportsmanship in the forefront as a primary purpose for interscholastic athletic programs in our educational institution.

Visiting team members, students and adult spectators are guests to be accorded all the courtesy and consideration that a friendly, well-mannered, and well-intentioned host would normally give. The visitors in turn, are to act as invited guests, using the home school's facilities with care and respecting the rules and customs of the home school.

Officials are the proper authorities to make decisions regarding rules and their interpretation; these decisions should be accepted. Spectators, coaches and student-athletes must recognize that their conduct plays an important role in establishing the reputation of their school and that their positive actions can relate directly to the success of their teams. Remember that an athletic contest is only a game...not a matter of life and death for player, coach, school, official, parent(s), fan, or community.

Students learn immeasurable unique lessons through interscholastic sports participation. Educators universally agree, of all the goals established as outcomes for secondary students involved in school sports, sportsmanship is primary. Students, parents, coaches and spectators, who learn to value and practice sportsmanlike behavior are developing the characteristics of good citizenship. Honesty, generosity, self-discipline, concern for others, ethical behavior and a commitment to fair play are all demonstrated in sportsmanship.

Things you should know about sportsmanship:

1. Sportsmanship is accepting the rules of the game or a difficult situation.
2. Sportsmanship is cheering for your team, especially when they are losing.
3. Sportsmanship is smiling sincerely at the referee who just called a foul on you even though you didn't foul anyone.
4. Sportsmanship is a coach leading by example and displaying sportsmanlike behavior him/herself.
5. Sportsmanship is caring about your teammates more than yourself
6. Sportsmanship is going to practice every day and working as hard as you can every minute.

Things you should know about being a good sport:

The Coach: Coaches are in a position to have a positive influence on the youth in the community. The coach has an obligation to develop the best possible personality and character of each student-athlete. Since coaches are admired and imitated by young people, the examples set by a coach are of extreme importance. The character-building potential of athletic participation is directly related to the model.

Responsibilities:

1. Always set a good example for players and spectators
2. Teach the value of honest effort in conforming to the spirit as well as the letter of the rules.
3. Instruct players in their sportsmanship responsibilities.
4. Discipline players who display unsportsmanlike behavior. If necessary, forfeit their privilege to represent the school.
5. Be a perfect host to all opponents. Treat them as guests.
6. Respect the judgment of officials and interpretation of the rules.
7. Publicly shake hands with officials and opponents before and after each contest.

The Student-Athlete: A student-athlete is second only to the coach in accountability for sportsmanship. Because players are admired and respected, they exert a great deal of influence on the actions and behavior of the spectators.

Responsibilities:

1. Treat opponents with respect, as guests, and as fellow human beings.
2. Respect the judgment of officials and interpretation of the rules. Never argue or make gestures indicating dislike for a decision.
3. Accept both victory and defeat with pride and composure. Never be boastful or bitter. Exercise self-control at all times.
4. Congratulate opponents in a sincere manner following either victory or defeat.
5. Cooperate with coach and fellow players in trying to promote sportsmanship.
6. Accept the responsibility and privilege of representing the school and community.

The Spectator: Schools have a tremendous challenge to instill a pride in sportsmanlike behavior among spectators. The greatest peril to interscholastic athletics is the overzealous fan. School leaders should establish procedures for continuously communicating sportsmanship messages to spectators. Spectators should be put on notice that school officials will not tolerate improper behavior from any fans... students, recent graduates, parents or residents of the community. Spectators must be included as members of the team to promote sportsmanship.

Responsibilities:

1. Learn the rules of the game so that you may understand and appreciate why certain situations take place.
2. Remember that you are at a contest to support and cheer for your team and to enjoy the skill and competition; not to intimidate or ridicule the other team and its fans.
Respect the school property and authority of school officials.
3. Do not heckle, jeer or distract members of the opposing team.
4. Do not applaud errors by opponents or penalties inflicted upon them.
5. Avoid profane language, disrespectful gestures or obnoxious behavior.
6. Censure fellow spectators whose behavior is unbecoming.
7. Respect the judgment and strategy of the coach – refrain from being a second guesser.
8. Show respect for an injured player when he/she is removed from a contest.