

PARENTAL SUPPORT: THE KEY TO ATHLETIC SUCCESS AND ENJOYMENT

The role parents play in the life of a high school athlete has a tremendous impact on their athletic experience – not only for their own child(ren), but potentially for the entire team. The following ideas are intended to provide some thoughts for you, the parent, to consider as we approach the upcoming season. Our hope is that this will help us work together to provide the best possible experience for all our student-athletes.

- 1. LET THE COACHES COACH:** You can help your own child and the team best by leaving the coaching to the coaches. This includes motivating, after game critiquing, requiring additional training, etc. You have entrusted the care of your child to these coaches, and they need to be free to do their job. If a player has too many coaches, it is confusing and can lead to a decline in performance and an unsettling atmosphere for the player, coaches and team.
- 2. SUPPORT THE PROGRAM:** Get involved! Volunteer, help with fundraisers, Boosters, anything you have time to do. It will ultimately benefit your child and his/her friends.
- 3. BE YOUR CHILD’S BEST FAN:** Support your child unconditionally. Do not let an athletic performance affect how much love you show your child.
- 4. SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE ALL PLAYERS ON THE TEAM:** Foster teamwork. Your child’s teammates are not the enemy, even if they are competing for a position. When another child is playing better than yours, it is a wonderful opportunity to learn and help the team.
- 5. ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO TALK TO THE COACHES:** If your child is having any problems or concerns with sports, encourage him/her to speak directly to the coaches. This “responsibility-taking” is an important part of growing up.
- 6. UNDERSTAND AND DISPLAY APPROPRIATE GAME BEHAVIOR: GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP IS MANDATORY!** For the sake of your child and the team, please behave appropriately at games. Yelling at officials, blaming coaches, negative gossip in the stands, negative comments to opposing players or fans, gloating after a win, etc. do not help anyone! Remain positive at all times while attending games. Represent your child, school and community with humility and class.
- 7. MONITOR YOUR CHILD’S STRESS AND EATING AND SLEEPING HABITS AT HOME:** Help your child to maximize performance and enjoyment by helping them to maintain a healthy lifestyle. If you perceive any problem in this area, communicate with the coach immediately. We are all here to help.

- 8. HELP YOUR CHILD KEEP HIS/HER PRIORITIES STRAIGHT:** We will strive to maintain a consistent focus on the priority of academics, but we need your help. Encourage your child to understand the importance of schoolwork, family relationships and the other things in life that are more important than sports. Promote consistent effort and good behavior in school, and encourage good study habits. Coaches will be as supportive as possible when there are conflicts.
- 9. COMMITMENT:** Playing a high school sport is a serious commitment. Help your child to understand and honor this commitment by being on time to games and practices, bringing all necessary uniforms and equipment, and abiding by all team and school rules and policies. The importance of commitment is one of the most valuable lessons your child can learn from athletic participation.
- 10. FOCUS ON THE PROCESS, NOT THE RESULTS:** If the team loses, but your child has done his/her best, help him/her to see it as a win. Fun and satisfaction should be derived from striving to win and by working as hard as possible, the result of the contest is secondary. Similarly, if the team is winning and your child is not putting forth his/her best effort, remind him/her what is most important.
- 11. KEEP SPORTS IN PERSPECTIVE:** We all want to win championships and individual awards, and they are a real part of high school sports. However, help us to keep sports in perspective by reminding your child that winning is not everything. The experience, the lessons, the friendships are what matter most. Also, if your child's contests produce strong emotions in you, suppress them. Remember that your relationship with your child will continue long after his/her athletic career is over. Keep your goals and needs separate from your child's experience.
- 12. HAVE FUN!** This is ultimately what we are all in this for, so let's all keep it as a central focus. We will try to challenge your child to improve as an athlete and a person, and there may be times when it is difficult, but we will always try to create an atmosphere that is fun, yet challenging. Help your child to work hard and enjoy the rewards of his/her athletic experience.

We look forward to working with you so that we all can have a wonderful season.