

Highland School District #305 sponsors athletic teams, which compete with those of other schools. We urge our patrons to support these teams and to support those who coach them. The basic purpose of our school, however, is learning. We consider competitive athletics to be a learning experience, but we want it to interfere as little as possible with classroom learning. We want our athletes and their coaches to present themselves as good examples of both our school and our community. With these things in mind, we propose the following rules for athletic competition.

Coaches:

First, coaches will not hold “two a day” practices. These tire the student for classroom learning.

Second, coaches will not hold practices on Sunday. This day is reserved as a family day. If there is to be an “open gym” for recreational purposes, the coaches will refrain from formal drills and may never penalize athletes for failure to attend. The only purpose for an “open gym” is recreational, and both family members and students who are not on athletic teams should be encouraged to attend an “open gym”.

Third, athletes and coaches should avoid swearing or using vulgar language during practice time, during games, during halftime, and during pre game and post game conferences. Appropriate, but not excessive penalties should be set for such language. Both coaches and athletes should be subject to them. Among the things we hope athletics teaches is self-control in difficult situations.

Fourth, it is sometimes necessary to hold practices during holiday times, such as Thanksgiving vacation, Christmas vacation, and Spring Break. These practices should not be mandatory for those athletes who want to travel with parents. Students taking vacation time with relatives should notify their coaches, but they may not be penalized for missing practice when they give such notification. Vacation practices should be held to a minimum. No practices should ever be held on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, New Year’s Day or Easter. Practices before the school year begins are usually necessary to meet state athletic association rules. These practices are not considered holiday practices under this policy.

Fifth, coaches shall observe all safety regulations. Doors shall not be locked during coaching conferences with the team. Locked inside doors are forbidden by our fire code. If the coach wants privacy to discuss issues with the team, he can post a manager or assistant coach outside the door.

Patrons and Parents

Coaching is a difficult profession. No coach can please all his athletes, parents or patrons. All coaches, however, deserve protection. They are directors of a school

activity and must be guaranteed a safe workplace. Athletics deserve the same protection from outside criticism or abuse, as they would enjoy in a classroom.

First, parents who have some problem with a coach should contact that coach. They have a right to be heard. If they feel their comments have been ignored, they have the right to take their problems to the school principal, the superintendent, the ultimately, to the school board. Coaches have the right to decide what players to play and what drills, offenses, and defenses to use. Parents, however, have the right to disagree, providing no verbal or physical abuse is offered. When an athletic director or school administrator is present, he or she should keep exchanges between parents and coaches civil.

Second, physical violence has become a problem in some schools. We condemn such violence and the threat of such violence. When anyone threatens any member of our coaching staff or our teaching staff with physical violence, that staff member must report it to the superintendent of schools, who must, in turn, report it to the sheriff's office or to the other law enforcement officials. If a patron is threatened by a coach, the superintendent should be informed and he must contact law enforcement officials. The superintendent will also investigate the allegations to determine whether school district discipline is necessary for the coach or employee.

Third, abusive language toward a coach in the presence of his athletes is forbidden. Any person who attends a practice or enters the locker room and then abuses a coach or a player will be requested to leave and if he/she refuses will be reported to local law enforcement officials. Such conduct must be reported by the coach to the superintendent for referral to the police. Any parent or patron may enter the locker rooms after games if the coach gives permission.

Fourth, parents and patrons may not criticize or abuse team members during practice or in the locker room areas. Such criticism is the job of the coaches. Dissatisfied parents should contact coaches when team members are not present.

Fifth, anyone who is requested by coaches or school administrators to leave team practices or team locker room areas must do so. Should they feel that such dismissal is not called for, they may contact school administrators later.



LEGAL REFERENCE: Board Action

ADOPTED: 5/13/02

AMENDED: 6/13/05