

# CHERRY HILL SCHOOL DISTRICT

## CHARACTER EDUCATION IN SPORTS

### “The Community Team”

#### Acting Correctly When Others Do Not

## Education For Sportsmanship

### **Sportsmanship**

Good sportsmanship is defined by the National Federation Of High School Associations as commitment to fair play, ethical behavior and integrity. In perception and practice, sportsmanship is defined as those qualities that are characterized by care and real concern for others.

- Participate fairly, take loss without complaint, or victory without gloating
- Treat everyone as you wish to be treated.
- Respect others and one’s self.
- Practice self-control, always be courteous, and accept results of one’s actions.
- Always demonstrate ethical behavior by being good a good example (character) and doing the right thing (action).
- Demonstrate good citizenship.

### **Sportsmanship Education**

- Learning about good sportsmanship traits and their links to good behavior so they can be practiced in play.
- Learning about expectations of coaches, administrators, players, cheerleaders and fans during an athletic event.
- Believing that each individual can control choices concerning his/ her own behavior, and that such control is worthy of praise and respect.
- Utilizing co-curricular activities to promote understanding.
- Inspiring development of good sportsmanship traits among all student.

## Why Is Sportsmanship Education Important?

- It is part of the Cherry Hill Athletic Program.
- It is the very essence of each activity.
- It is needed to teach students the difference between middle and high school athletics and athletics at the professional level.
- It is the most important concept or value in sports. It is the foundation, or starting point. It promotes fair play, respect and the importance of following the rules.
- Sportsmanship education is the right thing to do, the ethical thing.

## Traits of Sportsmanship

### **Types of behaviors to be demonstrated by administrators, coaches, athletes, cheerleaders, spectator and parent.**

**Courage** is demonstrating the determination to do the correct thing even when others do not; the strength to exhibit fairness, to be courteous, to gracefully accept the result of the contest, to attempt difficult things that are worthwhile.

**Good Judgment** is choosing worthy goals; setting priorities in accordance with team, county, state and national rules; leading others to follow these rules.

**Integrity** is having the inner strength to be courteous and fair during athletic competitions, to play according to the rules, acting positively and honorably not only to your team, but to your opponent.

**Kindness** is being considerate, courteous, and generous in spirit to the opposing team; showing care, compassion and friendship in victory or defeat; treating others as you would like to be treated.

**Perseverance** is being persistent in pursuit of worthy objectives in spite of opposition, difficulty, injuries, handicaps or discouragement, and exhibiting patience and the fortitude to try again when confronted with mistakes or failure.

**Respect** is showing high regard for coaches, officials, opponents, fans, administration, self, team and the school you are representing.

**Responsibility** is being dependable in carrying out obligations and duties, showing reliability and consistency in words and conduct, and being accountable for your actions.

**Self-Discipline** is demonstrating hard work and commitment to purpose, regulating yourself for improvement and refraining from inappropriate behaviors, maintaining self-control at all times, and doing your best in all situations.

# SPORTSMANSHIP GOALS

## Everyone:

- **Demonstrate respect for your opponent at all times.** The opponent should be treated as a guest. Greeted cordially on arriving. Given the best accommodations and accorded the respect, honesty and generosity which all people deserve.
- **Demonstrate respect for the officials.** The officials should be recognized as important arbitrators who are trained to do their job and who can be expected to do it to the best of their ability. Sportsmanship implies the willingness to accept and abide by the decisions of the officials.
- **Know, understand and appreciate the rules of the contest.** A familiarity with the current rules of the game and the recognition of their necessity for a fair contest is essential. Good sportsmanship suggests the importance of conforming to the spirit as well as the letter of the rules.
- **Demonstrate self-control at all times.** A prerequisite of sportsmanship requires one to understand his own bias or prejudice and the ability to prevent the desire to win from overcoming rational behavior. A proper perspective must be maintained if the potential educational values of athletic competition are to be realized. Sportsmanship is concerned with the behavior of all involved in the game.
- **Appreciate and applaud skill in performance regardless of affiliation.** Recognition for a good performance of an opponent is a demonstration of generosity and good will. The capacity to appreciate excellence in performance and the willingness to acknowledge it without regard to team membership is one of the most highly commendable gestures of sportsmanship.

## Coaches:

- Set a good example for participants and fans to follow, exemplifying the highest moral and ethical behavior.
- Teach good sportsmanship and establish high standards for the athletes, parents, and fans
- Develop and enforce penalties for participants who do not abide by sportsmanship standards.
- Treat opposing coaches, participants and fans with respect. Shake hands with officials and opposing coaches.
- Teach the value of honest effort in conforming to the spirit as well as the letter of the rules.

### **Student/ Athletes:**

- Accept seriously the responsibility and privilege of representing your school and community; display positive public action at all times.
- Treat opponents with the respect that is due them as guests and fellow athletes.
- Exercise self-control at all times, accepting decisions and abiding by them.
- Accept both victory and defeat with pride and compassion, never being boastful or bitter.
- Live up to the high standard of sportsmanship established by your coaches and help fellow athletes and fans maintain these standards.

### **Students, Parents, and Fans:**

- Understand that attendance at a contest is a privilege. This enables the individual to observe a contest and support middle/ high school and community activities, not a license to verbally assault others.
- Be an exemplary role model by positively supporting teams in every manner possible, including content of cheers and signs.
- Acknowledge and recognize good performances by an athlete on either team.
- Demonstrate support to those participating in, conducting, and / or officiating the athletic event.
- Respect the strategy and judgment of the coach.

### **Cheerleaders:**

- Endeavor to develop a reputation of good sportsmanship for your team, school and community.
- Help create desired crowd response using only positive cheers, signs and praise without antagonizing or demeaning opponents.
- Welcome visiting cheerleaders and fans with respect.
- Give encouragement to your team and recognize outstanding performances, regardless of team affiliation.
- Maintain enthusiasm and composure, serving as a role model in all situations.

### **School Administrators:**

- Plan for teaching and promoting the ideals and fundamentals of good sportsmanship within the school.
- Hire appropriate supervisory personnel for each athletic event.;
- Be sure parents thoroughly understand what the school expects of its athletes.
- Recognize exemplary behavior and actively discourage undesirable behavior by participants, coaches and fans.
- Recommend to the school board the employment of athletic coaches who are concerned with educational objectives and the well being of students.

### **Acceptable Behavior:**

- Applaud during introduction of players, coaches and officials and at the end of a contest for the performance of the participants.
- Shake hands with participants and coaches at the end of the contest, regardless of outcome.
- Accept all decisions of officials.
- Engage in positive school yells in a respectful manner.
- Encourage surrounding people to display only sportsman like conduct.

### **Unacceptable Behavior:**

- Yelling during the opponent's free throw attempt, in a disrespectful manner, or to antagonize opponents.
- Booing or heckling an official, coach, player or cheerleader.
- Refusing to shake hands or give recognition for good performances.
- Blaming the loss of a game on officials, coaches or participants.
- Using profanity or displacing anger that draws attention away from the game.

## **PROMOTING SPORTSMANSHIP**

1. Develop a sportsmanship awards program and honor those individuals who exhibit outstanding sportsmanship, ethics and integrity. This can be done at the school and conference level.
2. Hold pre-season meetings and assemblies before contests to encourage students to exhibit appropriate behavior.
3. Become involved in a Character/ Sportsmanship Education week or day.
4. Display messages on good sportsmanship during home room or other part of the day. Post expectations in gym/ fields and class-rooms.
5. Discuss Sportsmanship Education during home room or other part of the school day.
6. Meet with coaching staff to discuss positive approach to sportsmanship.
7. Use physical education classes to promote and practice sportsmanship.
8. Promote good sportsmanship before and throughout contests with PA announcements.
9. Welcome opponents to your school with posters and banners.
10. Give certificates to individuals or groups of individuals that display sportsmanship at athletic events.

# **PARENTAL EXPECTATIONS**

At all community sports events it is imperative that we constantly reemphasize the guiding principles of caring, honesty, respect, responsibility and being a good loser and a gracious winner. All adults need to “walk the talk” of what we tell our athletes.

## **Parents should:**

- Let the coach do the coaching and support him or her.
- Congratulate all players on the team regardless of the outcome.
- Do not antagonize fans of the opponent.
- Do not boo, jeer or ridicule the other team or the officials. There would be no games played without officials.
- Do not make excuses to your child or blame others for a loss or poor performance.
- Help control problem parents by sitting with them or reminding them that their behavior could adversely affect the team.
- Be a fan, not a fanatic.

## **Code for Community Leagues Spectators should emphasize:**

- That children play organized sports for their own fun. They are not there to entertain you, and they are not pro athletes.
- That best behavior be demonstrated. Do not use profanity or harass players, coaches or officials.
- That one should applaud good play by both your team and the opponent.
- Respect for your team’s opponents. Without them, there would be no game .
- Never ridiculing or scolding a child for making a mistake during a competition.
- That violence of any nature is unacceptable.
- That the official’s decision be always respected.
- That players be always be encouraged to play according to the rules.

## **Parents Communicating With Children:**

- Make sure your child knows that win or lose, scared or heroic, you love them and 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 child’s athletic ability, competitive attitude, sportsmanship and actual skill level.
- Be helpful but don’t coach the team. It is tough not to, but it is a lot tougher for the children 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, trying hard, for having fun.
- Try not to relive your athletic life through your child in a way that creates

pressure. You were frightened, backed off at times and were not always heroic. Athletic children 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.

- Do not compete with the coach. If your child is receiving mixed messages from different authority figures, he or she will likely become disenchanted.
- Do not compare the skill, courage or attitude of your child with other members of the team.
- Get to know the coach(s). Then you can be assured that his or her philosophy, attitudes, ethics, knowledge are such that you are happy to have your child under his or her leadership.
- Always remember that children tend to exaggerate, both when praised and when criticized. Temper your reaction and investigate before overreacting.
- Make a point of understanding courage and the fact that it is relative. Some climb mountains and are afraid to fly. Some of us will fly but turn to jelly if a bee approaches. Everyone is frightened in certain ways. Explain that courage is an absence of fear, but means a doing something in spite of fear and discomfort.

## References

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- Florida High School Athletic Association, “Thumbs Up to Sportsmanship”
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- Indiana High School Athletic Association, “Sportsmanship: the Winning Edge.”
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- National Federation Of State High School Associations, “The Case For Sportsmanship, Ethics and Integrity in High School Activities.”
- Ohio State Athletic Association, “Sportsmanship is Everyone’s Responsibility.”
- Ruster Foundation, “Winning Isn’t Everything...But Sportsmanship Is.”
- Wake County Public Schools, “A Guide To Sportsmanship In Your School.”

## **SPORTSMANSHIP THOUGHTS**

1. Role models are more important than ever in today's society. You can serve as a role model for others the next time you display good sportsmanship at a high school athletic event. Good sports are winners, so the next time you attend a sporting event, remember to be a good sport and act in a proper manner. Everyone appreciates the good values portrayed by acts of good sportsmanship.
2. In our society, winning has come to mean everything. However, if winning comes at the expense of good sportsmanship, everyone is a loser. Nothing is gained in the long run. Good sportsmanship is the result of a disciplined effort to respect yourself, your opponents, and game officials. Remember, good sports are winners, so be a sport and practice good sportsmanship.
3. Winning – the No. 1 syndrome – is the number one problem in interscholastic athletics. High school athletic programs are truly educational by nature, and among the values learned are those associated with good sportsmanship. Being number 1 in sportsmanship is educationally more important than being number 1 on the playing field. Take pride in your team by displaying good sportsmanship.
4. The score of any athletic event is generally forgotten over time, but the actions of players, coaches, and spectators are remembered. The next time you attend a high school game, think of how history will remember you. Choose the side of good sportsmanship the next time you attend a game.
5. An educational environment is critical to the success of high school athletics. An important part of that environment is planning for good sportsmanship. Without good sportsmanship, the lessons learned lose their values. Remember, the next time you attend a high school game, you are really inside a classroom where good sports receive the highest grade.
6. Yelling or waving arms during an opponent's free throw attempt, as well as booing or heckling and official's decision, are examples of unacceptable behavior at a high school sporting event. Good sports respect the opponents and officials at all times. The next time you attend a game, remember to applaud for the performance of all participants.
7. Remember that a ticket is a privilege to observe a contest and support high school athletics, not a license to verbally assault others. There is no place in interscholastic athletics for name-calling to distract an opponent or the use of profanity from the stands. Sportsmanship is the number 1 priority at the high school level, so be a sport the next time you watch a game.



8. A coach once wrote: "When we lose without excuses and we acknowledge the better team, we place winning and losing in their proper perspective. That's when we find out if we can be good sports." Sportsmanship is a goal to strive for at all times, in athletics and in our daily lives.
  
9. Good sportsmanship is learned, practiced, and executed. Respect for the opponent, spectators, coaches, and officials is a must at all levels of athletics. At interscholastic contests, behavior on the part of everyone should be characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others. Display good sportsmanship the next time you attend a high school event.