

MPSSAA

Respect The Game Handbook



Coaches Leading The Way



"As a coach I have an example to set for my teams. I need to show them how to act as a coach even if I don't agree with a call or like what's going on with my team. It's hard to do sometimes, but I have to remember I'm the adult and I'm responsible for my actions."
--- MPSSAA Coach

Respect



The Game

DUNBAR

MPSSAA.ORG

Respect The Game - MPSSAA.org - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.mpssaa.org/respectthegame/index.asp

MARYLAND PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

FALL SPORTS WINTER SPORTS SPRING SPORTS

MPSSAA UPDATES e Players, Coaches and Fans: Remember to RESPECT THE GAME The Marines and Allstate are proud sponsors

RESPECT THE GAME

Respect The Game

The ultimate indicator of the value of school athletic programs must be the level of citizenship displayed by those who participate. Hence, teaching and living good sportsmanship is the fundamental objective of our program.

The "Respect the Game" initiative speaks to the heart of sportsmanship. There are no fancy strategies or lofty exhortations. There are no official pronouncements or haughty platitudes. The message is simple and direct. Let all of our actions be guided by respect. To achieve that goal, everyone is targeted in a way that relates to their individual circumstances yet collectively achieves a common goal.

THIS IS THE MPSSAA

PUBLICATIONS

COACHES/ATHLETIC DIRECTORS

RESPECT THE GAME

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- Respect The Game PSA
- Sportsmanship Releases
- Game Administration Respect The Game
- Game Administration Check List
- Coaches Respect The Game
- Players Respect The Game
- Parents Respect The Game
- Fans Respect The Game
- PA Announcer Reminders
- Respect The Game PA Announcements

EVENTS CALENDAR

The website home of the MPSSAA features a *Respect The Game* page with downloadable logos, public service announcements, public address announcements and upcoming events with information on ways you can contribute to sportsmanship in Maryland High School Athletics. Get involved and *Never Forget To Respect the Game.*

ORGANIZED 1946



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THE NATIONAL FEDERATION
OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL
ASSOCIATIONS

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EDWARD F. SPARKS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Greetings:

The ultimate indicator of the value of school athletic programs must be the level of citizenship displayed by those who participate. Hence, teaching and living good sportsmanship is the fundamental objective of our program.

No one has a greater influence on sportsmanship than the coach. It is, after all, the coach that sets the tone and provides the most visible example of team values. The old axiom that teams take on the personality of their coach could never be truer than when it relates to sportsmanship.

This year the emphasis for "Respect the Game" is with the coach. They are the one person more than any other who has the greatest access to students and exerts the most influence over the team. The coach serves multiple roles from teacher, to parent figure, to role model, to friend, to taskmaster. The influence of a coach in the life of an athlete will many times extend far beyond the sports arena.

To be addressed as "Coach" is in itself an honor because the title brings respect and deference to the great responsibility of leading young people. Honor your title of "Coach" by Respecting the Game in all you say and do. Your example not only says a lot to your team, it also says a lot about yourself.

Respectfully yours,

Edward F. Sparks
Executive Director, MPSSAA



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Never Forget To Respect the Game



Coaches



Respect the Game

- *Respect* the rules by teaching athletes to play fair.
- *Respect* the important leadership role you play within the dynamics of high school athletics. Fans, players and parents mimic your behavior.
- *Respect* officials for their efforts in keeping the game within a set of boundaries. Recognize that a neutral observer of an event will not always agree with your perception.
- *Respect* the language you use in communicating with athletes. Would you talk to their parents the same way?
- *Respect* that high school athletics is based on an education model. As teachers you are entrusted with impressionable young people. Your responsibility to your athletes begins by respecting every player and his or her set of life experiences.

Never Forget To Respect the Game



Coaches



You're The Role Model

It is important that coaches understand when you assume the position of coach, you have taken on the responsibility as the foremost influential and visible figure representing your school team. Taking pride in this responsibility means you become the role model that leads the team in all facets associated with the school and community.

- *Being the Role Model* means your coaching attire should reflect a professional approach that signifies a respect for the game, respect for your school and respect for yourself.
- *Being the Role Model* means making sure your verbal and body language are a reflection of the language used by your team, parents and fans.
- *Being the Role Model* means teaching through sportsmanship and that true victory is accomplished through achieving desired outcomes without compromising ethical and morale values.
- *Being the Role Model* means making the tough decisions that teach life lessons and hold the best interest of the student-athletes future development at the forefront, instead of decisions that benefit personal self desires.
- *Being the Role Model* means taking pride in your position as the most visible figure of your program and honoring that responsibility with respect and integrity.

Never Forget To Respect the Game



Coaches

You Lead



As the coach you are the leader of your team. Your actions are mirrored by all entities associated with your team and your demeanor should reflect that responsibility. As the coach you can lead your team in the area of sportsmanship, setting the examples and trends that project an image of respect for opponents, respect for your school and community and a respect for the game.

- *Being the Leader* means setting the tone from the beginning by establishing a vision for the image your team will portray and steward that vision through established expectations of everyone in regards to sportsmanship.
- *Being the Leader* means setting guidelines and limitations for how coaches, players, parents and fans are expected to act as representatives of your school and making it clear that behaviors that do not coincide with your team's expectations are unacceptable.
- *Being the Leader* means utilizing the adverse conditions your team will face as teachable moments for good sportsmanship.
- *Being the Leader* means leading by example with a professional approach in your attire, demeanor and language and showcasing dignity in defeat and humbleness in victory.
- *Being the Leader* means empowering those around you that will foster your vision of sportsmanship. The selection of fellow coaches and team captains form your support staff in cultivating a team culture that is based on the values of sportsmanship and respect.

Never Forget To Respect the Game



Coaches



In Your Own Words

The following are quotes directly from your coaching peers in the state. These responses were given during the MPSSAA sportsmanship survey administered in the spring of 2007.

“I believe there are too many coaches in the sport for self-promoting reasons. They lose sight of teaching the fundamentals of the game and many have a win at all cost attitude.”
- MPSSAA Coach

“Coaches must really keep reminding their players of the expectations of sportsmanship and what that means on an everyday basis. Without the coaches modeling it and holding their players accountable for it, sportsmanship will never be where it needs to be in athletics.” - MPSSAA Coach

“Coaches must provide an example for parents and players.” - MPSSAA Coach

“The coaches, me included, need to be more aware of our actions. It is something I’ve become much more aware of over this past season. For the most, our student athletes are great. If I’ve ever seen or had a problem with the athletes participating in a contest I usually can look at the coach and understand the player’s actions.” - MPSSAA Coach

“I think a lot of what constitutes sportsmanship is also what image coaches teach (either directly or indirectly) their athletes to portray.” - MPSSAA Coach

“As in education, many coaches have “softened” their control over their players in order to avoid conflicts. This allows players more freedom of expression in some negative ways, such as making faces at or arguing with officials and snubbing opponents and coaches in the post-game handshake. The strict discipline found in yesterday’s sports is becoming less popular, and it shows in today’s athletes’ behaviors (unrelated to the skills and strategies of sport).” - MPSSAA Coach

“The lack of respect for authority is being brought onto the fields and courts. As a coach I have an example to set for my teams. I need to show them how to act as a coach even if I don’t agree with a call or like what’s going on with my team. It’s hard to do sometimes, but I have to remember I’m the adult and I’m responsible for my actions.” - MPSSAA Coach

Never Forget To Respect the Game



Coaches



*When the Time Comes,
Are you Ready to make the call...*

As a coach, there will be times when you will have to make an instant decision. It can involve when to hold the ball, call off the dogs to keep from running up the score or making the choice of whether it is better to win at all costs or realizing that true victory is only accomplished through doing what's ethically right.

- Your team has qualified for the state championship game when you suspect that one of your key players may be ineligible. After consulting with the athlete you realize that he/she has been knowingly playing ineligible all season and you are the only two that know. --- **Your Call**
- Your team is playing at home and is in the midst of a close contest when you begin to over hear your fans behind the visiting team bench making disrespectful and highly demeaning remarks. You realize that this is not only affecting your opponent's performance but starting to make tensions rise. --- **Your Call**
- While facing a formidable opponent, you view a call that you thought clearly should have went your way but didn't. While nearing the official to discuss the call, you become more aware of fans and your players making remarks about the play and are watching you as you get the officials attention. --- **Your Call**
- During the game one of your players takes a cheap shot at an opponent when none of the officials are watching. You are informed by someone after the game of the incident and notice your player gloating to their teammates. --- **Your Call**
- In close match, your athlete comes up on the losing end and storms off, throwing equipment and refusing to shake the opponent's hand. --- **Your Call**

While many scenarios can be described, knowing your role as the leader and being prepared to make tough decision can go a long way in building sportsmanship.

Never Forget To Respect the Game



Coaches

Setting The Tone



As coaches you have the ability to set the tone by addressing all entities associated with your school's program. Parents, fans, student-athletes, public address announcers and game administration all play an equal part in cultivating a program centered on the core values of sportsmanship.

- *Setting the tone* means establishing preseason meetings with parents and booster clubs to establish guidelines of how they shall handle themselves at your contests.
- *Setting the tone* means working with your athletic director and game administrator to ensure that a respectful environment will be established.
- *Setting the tone* means conveying from day one to your athletes the expectations they are to uphold as they represent your program.

*The remaining pages speak to parents, fans, student athletes, public address announcers and game administration on some of the basic principles that should be stressed as an integral part of interscholastic athletics. These pages are included to help remind all associated with High School sports to *Respect The Game.**

Never Forget To Respect the Game



Players



Respect the Game

- *Respect* your opponents as fellow athletes and worthy competitors; like you, they have worked hard to represent their school.
- *Respect* your teammates. Everyone makes a contribution to the team in his or her own way. Respect everyone's effort.
- *Respect* your coaches for their efforts in molding the team that represents your school.
- *Respect* officials for their efforts in keeping the game within a set of boundaries. Recognize that a neutral observer of an event will not always agree with your perceptions.
- *Respect* yourself. What you do is a reflection on you, your school and your family.

Never Forget To Respect the Game



Parents



Respect the Game

- *Respect* the fact that all athletes are someone's son or daughter.
- *Respect* coaches and their decisions. Remember their job performance is on display at every game. Very few professions are so openly observed and publicly critiqued. Second guessing their work does not provide a positive atmosphere for the player, coach and parents.
- *Respect* a time and place to air concerns with the coach. After a game or practice is usually not the best time.
- *Respect* your son or daughter by realistically assessing their skills. Don't relive your experiences through them.
- *Respect* the educational component of school athletics. Remind your son or daughter that there is many times more money available for academic aid to college than there is for athletic aid.

Never Forget To Respect the Game



Fans



Respect the Game

- *Respect* all athletes because they are representatives of their school. They are not the enemy but fellow competitors in athletic games designed to mold character.
- *Respect* all opponents along with their symbols, traditions and heritage. That includes student-athletes, coaches, cheerleaders, mascots, bands, signage, logos, etc. They are supporting their team as you are supporting your team.
- *Respect* all fans as they are merely encouraging their teams as you are encouraging your team.
- *Respect* our country, its flag and anthem. Recognize our blessings as a nation allow us the ability to compete in today's contest.
- *Respect* officials and the role they need to play. The game needs them in order to be contested. Remember calls go both ways and we should respect their honest assessment of the rules.

Never Forget To Respect the Game



PA Announcers

Respect the Game



1. Be organized and prepared. This item really speaks for itself, but the good PA announcer will have announcements and forms prepared ahead of time to facilitate his or her job. Being prepared simply means that PA personnel are better able to handle the announcements for emergency situations as they arise.
2. Check that all equipment operates properly. There is more to be concerned with than just a properly working microphone. Do not forget about tape and cassette players, electronic message centers, and so forth. Often, announcements are to be synchronized with songs or scripts, so ensuring that all equipment works properly will make for a quality presentation.
3. Be professional and unbiased. High school sport announcers should not imitate the styles and antics of some college and/or professional PA personnel who draw attention to themselves and away from the athletic contest.
4. Speak slowly, clearly, and distinctly always! Of these, “slowly” is most important. Not only does the announcer need to be heard, he or she also must be easily understood.
5. Say only what is necessary. Talking all the time and speaking constantly into the microphone—especially with unnecessary comments and/or endless promotion—turns people off and makes them not want to listen. People who “turn off” the announcer may miss out on important, valuable, or emergency announcements.
6. Do not rush and do not panic on public service announcements or emergency announcements.
7. Do not attempt to do play-by-play.
8. Do not editorialize about or comment on any aspect of the game. The fastest and easiest way for an announcer to lose all respect and credibility with everyone at the contest (spectators, players, officials, coaches, and others) is to make a comment about or react to a game situation or outcome. As with item seven, this is not the announcer’s role or responsibility.
9. Be involved with the teams and the competition, not with yourself. Enjoy the competitive atmosphere of the game, meet or match and become excited about the young people who are performing. Do not become wrapped up in yourself and excited to hear yourself talk.
10. The announcer is not the entertainment. The spectators came to watch the game and the players perform, to support the cheerleaders, to enjoy the band and its auxiliary units, to congratulate the homecoming courts, to see their neighbor’s kids, to observe special halftime activities—NOT TO LISTEN TO THE ANNOUNCER!
11. Give location of restrooms, concessions, and lost-and-found station.

Never Forget To Respect the Game



PA



Announcements

Respect the Game

Team Sport Competition

_____ (Host School) welcomes everyone to today's contest. As each team represents their respective schools we remind you that honoring the values of sportsmanship is the essence of every athletic contest. We ask you to please show Respect for players (pause), Respect for coaches (pause), Respect for officials (pause) and Respect for those around you. Players, Coaches and Fans; Let's all remember to **"RESPECT THE GAME"**.

Individual Sport Competition

_____ (Host School) welcomes everyone to today's contest. As all athletes represent their respective schools we remind you that honoring the values of sportsmanship is the essence of every athletic contest. We ask you to please show Respect for athletes (pause), Respect for coaches (pause), Respect for officials (pause) and Respect for those around you. Athletes, Coaches and Fans; Let's all remember to **"RESPECT THE GAME"**.

Never Forget To Respect the Game



Game Administration



Respect the Game

- *Respect* your facility by promoting a positive atmosphere for competition between schools who share the same goals for their students.
- *Respect* your role in providing for the safety of all who come under your authority.
- *Respect* the atmosphere created at your school through the selection of music, PA announcements, cheers and chants.
- *Respect* your position as the one charged with the overall authority of the event.
- *Respect* the treatment your school provides to visiting teams and guests. Their treatment has a direct reflection on you as their host.

Never Forget To Respect the Game



Game Administration



Respect the Game

Participation in sound and wholesome athletic programs is an extension of the educational experience. Cooperation and competition are both important components of life and, as such, it is important for administrators, athletic directors, and coaches to do everything possible to create a climate conducive to good sportsmanship. A crowd faced with a disorganized event is more prone to become disruptive. These procedures are designed to help promote a wholesome atmosphere, encourage good sportsmanship, and provide a safe experience for all students, athletes, officials, and spectators at athletic events.

Local schools, school systems, and sports statewide have a wide variety of different needs. The following checklist was prepared for the athletic director/game manager to be used and modified as needed and as appropriate.

Yes	N/A	
		Contact visiting school AD / Principal to discuss upcoming contests
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact police to discuss needs, supervision, assignments
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact coaches to discuss with teams the expectations and responsibilities of players as representatives of the school and local school system
		School administrators stress expectations with students, parents, boosters, community, and PTA
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Announcements week of contest and prior to game emphasizing positive sportsmanship
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If there are serious concerns, consider limiting the number of tickets sold or selling tickets only by advance sale (requires notification of all parties)
		Prepare diagram or map of gym/ stadium/ field for visiting school. Send following to visiting school.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directions/ routes
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seating (signs designating special sections for home, visitors, band, pep squads, etc.)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An emergency plan (inside and outside)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An evacuation route (weather, disruptive behavior)
		Creating a parking plan
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic direction: pregame and postgame
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reserved areas for buses, special guests, etc. (use of barrels, sawhorses, etc.)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Handicap access/ parking
		Prepare a supervision chart
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solicit additional help from parents, boosters, and PTA
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly define duties, expectations, responsibilities, i.e., staying the whole game or until everyone leaves
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare a site plan, designating who is assigned where
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue sideline tags/ passes to limit access to field/ court
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider not admitting elementary and junior high/ middle school students unless accompanied by an adult
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly identify the passes that are acceptable at the gate
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare a plan for acquiring police backup, if necessary

Never Forget To Respect the Game



Game Administration

Respect the Game



Yes	N/A	
		Identify key people
		• Provide each person on duty with easily identifiable arm band, hat, button, etc., labeled "event staff"
		• Identify representatives from each school
		• Identify cheerleader and pompon sponsor/ coaches
		• Identify band directors
		• Identify administrators from host schools
		Establish guidelines for cheerleaders NOTE: Inform visiting school of exception to allowable number, due to local regulations.
		• Do not allow taunting, inflammatory, or insulting cheers
		• Request sponsors/ coaches to identify themselves to game manager
		• Designate special seating/ specific areas based on available space.
		• Give mascots specific directions and limitations (Note that mascots are under National Federation Spirit Rules.)
		Secure equipment that may be helpful
		• Access to phone
		• Communication devices, such as walkie-talkies, bull horns, etc.
		• Rope, tape
		• Signage
		• Flashlights/ lanterns/ batteries
		• Barrels, saw horses,, etc.
		• Money bags for frequent pickups (secure area for deposit)
		Consider availability of and access for medical personnel and supplies
		• Paramedic, trainer, or physician
		• Plan emergency vehicle access to site
		• Ice/ water
		• First Aid Kit
		Analyze and prepare facility
		• Have designated home and visitor dressing rooms
		• Know seating capacity and do not exceed
		• P.A. system (announcements should be positive, helpful, and impartial)
		• Maximum available lighting should be utilized during any contest and not restricted to area of competition
		• At sold-out contest, clear the site of fans that could not gain admission
		• Evaluate conditions, factors, and resultant impact of on-site construction projects
		• Instruct video taping equipment operator to record all incidents of inappropriate behavior
		• Consider announcing that fans will not be allowed on the field/ court at any time
		Follow-up
		• Evaluate procedures (update information/ resolve issues)

Never Forget To Respect the Game

2007-08 MPSSAA

State Tournament

Sportsmanship Award Winners

VolleyballWootton

Boy's SoccerPoolesville

Girl's SoccerUrbana

FootballArundel

Boy's BasketballGwynn Park

Girl's BasketballPocomoke

SoftballFranklin

Boy's LacrosseSouthern-AA

Girl's LacrosseGlennelg

Never Forget To Respect the Game.

What Does Respect the Game Mean To You?

"Respect The Game" means that the rules of the game are applied and adhered to by all concerned. The referees, players and coaches all follow the rules of the game. If the coaches and players set this standard and adhere to it, I believe the fans will follow suit.

--- MPSSAA Parent

"Respect The Game" means to compete to the best of your abilities within the rules of the sport at all times, while treating opponents and officials with the dignity that you would expect for yourself.

--- MPSSAA Fan

"Respect The Game" means that you should play the game in as mature and responsible way as possible and have fun doing so. You shouldn't berate anyone playing, coaching or officiating.

--- MPSSAA Student-Athlete

"Respect The Game" means respecting traditions of a particular sport. Behaving with dignity and class when winning or losing.

--- MPSSAA Official

"Respect The Game" means to abide by ALL of the rules of the particular sport and to compete in a manner that brings out the best in yourself, your teammates and your opposition.

--- MPSSAA Coach

"Respect The Game" is understanding that any game presents unique "teachable moments" that are difficult to find anywhere else for our kids. It means allowing coaches to teach sportsmanship, how to deal with failure and what it means to be a team member when you might have to sacrifice the "I" for the "We".

--- MPSSAA Administrator

"Respect The Game" means that everyone involved in a contest whether a player, coach or fan must adhere to conduct that does not take away from the spirit of fair play. Respect must be demonstrated by each participant or spectator.

--- MPSSAA Principal