

PARENT/COACH COMMUNICATIONS

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefit to our student athletes. When your children become involved in our program, you, as a parent, have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communications from the coach of your child's program.

Communication you should expect from your child's coach:

1. Philosophy of the coach.
2. Expectations the coach has for your child as well as the players on the squad.
3. Locations and times of all practices and contests.
4. Team requirements, i.e. practices, special equipment, out of season conditioning.
5. Procedure followed should your child be injured during participation.
6. Discipline that may result in the denial of your child's participation.

Communication coaches expect from parents:

1. Concerns expressed directly to coach.
2. Notification of schedule conflicts well in advance.
3. Specific concerns with regards to coach's philosophy and/or expectations.

As your children become involved in the programs at Oakville High School, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way you or your child wishes. At these times discussion with the coach is encouraged.

Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches:

1. The treatment of your child, emotionally and physically.
2. Ways to help your child improve.
3. Concerns about your child's behavior

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. These are encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedure should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue or concern.

Issues that **are not** appropriate to discuss with coaches:

1. Playing Time
2. Team Strategy
3. Play Calling
4. Other Student Athletes

It is very difficult to accept your child's not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches are professionals. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be the best for all students involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain things can be and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other things must be left to the discretion of the coach.

Communication is the cornerstone to any relationship. This is especially true in the coach-athlete relationship. Within this relationship difficult issues must be dealt with at times, including: discipline, player performance, and player dissatisfaction. Proper communication results in the positive resolution of such issues, stronger coach-player relations, and other benefits such as the student learning how to solve problems.

Parents also have relationship with their child's coach, and communication is equally important to this relationship. Parents may feel the need to step in on their child's behalf. Whatever the motive, proper communication will enhance coach-parent and coach-player relations.

The following is a guide for coaches, parents, and student athletes. This guide provides a chain of command of communication that will maintain and build positive relationships.

CHAIN OF COMMUNICATION:

1. Step One: Mandatory Coach-Athlete Session

- a. If a player or his/her parent has any issue with his/her sport experience, the student-athlete is expected to address the coach. Athletes are also encouraged to talk with the coach about any issue in their personal or academic lives. The district's expectation of coaches include open communication and positive relations. Coaches have been trained on communication and counseling skills.

2. Step Two: Coach-Parent-Athlete Session

- a. If an issue has not been resolved in step one, this is the next step in the chain of communication. The guideline here is to set up an appointment at the coach's discretion. If the issue is emotional, the appointment should be scheduled at a later time so the parties involved are calm and problem solving can occur. Also, the parent or player should define the purpose of the session when the appointment is set.

Parents who try to discuss important issues with a coach as they are walking off the game or practice field would be an example of circumvention of this process.

In this step, there may be rare cases when it may be best if the athlete does not participate in the session. If either parent or coach feels this is the case, this should be discussed when setting the appointment and purpose of the meeting.

3. Step Three: Administrator-Coach-Parent-Athlete Session

- a. If an issue is not resolved in step two, this is the next step in the chain of communication. This step may be initiated by any party. Using the same process as noted in step two, an appointment is set and all parties define the purpose of the meeting.

Again, there may be cases where it is appropriate that an athlete not be present. This is to be discussed and determined prior to the appointment.

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES:

1. All sessions should contain some key elements for success:
 - a. Issues should be well defined. Solutions should be offered by all parties and then the best solution selected. Thus, a decision is made, a problem is solved.
 - b. Tone and volume of voice, respect, and appropriate behavior are the other common elements.
 - c. All sessions should be student-centered. In other words, it is assumed all parties have the best interest of the student-athlete held as top priority. It is also assumed all parties can recognize the difficulty in balancing the good of the individual vs. the good of the majority.

Best Regards,

Becky Czuppon – Activities Director

STANDARDS AND EXPECTATIONS FOR FANS AND PARENTS

1. Display good sportsmanship at athletic contests.
2. Support and promote high school sports and activities.
3. Communicate effectively without using offensive and/or demeaning language or actions.
4. Fans should show respect for:
 - a. Coaching Staff
 - b. Himself
 - c. All team members/players
 - d. Officials
 - e. Other coaches
 - f. Other parents and fans
 - g. Opposing players
 - h. The integrity of the game
5. Remember that school athletics are learning experiences for students and that mistakes are made. Praise student athletes in their attempt to improve themselves as students, as athletes and as people.
6. A ticket is a privilege to observe the contest. It is not a license to verbally assault others and be generally obnoxious.
7. Learn the rules of the game, so that you may understand and appreciate why certain situations take place.
8. Recognize and show appreciation for an outstanding play by either team.
9. Use only those cheers that support and uplift the teams involved.