

**MIAA**  
**Sportsmanship**  
**Manual**



# MIAA SPORTSMANSHIP MANUAL

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# INTRODUCTION

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines sportsmanship as “conduct (as fairness, respect for one's opponent, and graciousness in winning or losing) becoming to one participating in a sport.”

Sportsmanship needs to be a primary role of interscholastic athletics in an educational prospective. Athletic competition is an extension of the classroom. The need for improvements of sportsmanship in society is evident and will require a maximum effort by everyone involved in athletics.

The responsibility for developing sportsmanship involves many different people. The complexity of this subject extends beyond the definition. Unlike most areas of education, athletics are played before spectators, and young people, who look to their coaches, teammates, parents, fellow students and citizens of the community for positive reinforcement that they have made the right choice in wanting to compete for their school.

## Mission Statement

The ideals of good sportsmanship, ethical behavior, and integrity should encompass all interscholastic athletics in our community. In perception and practice, good sportsmanship shall be defined as qualities of behavior characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others. Our athletic fields should be the classrooms to produce good sports who reflect "fair play" in every area of life.

## Purpose

The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) is committed to encouraging and promoting the high ideals of sportsmanship, integrity and ethics at all levels of interscholastic competition. The MIAA is also committed to developing a positive environment for athletic events throughout the Commonwealth.

In an effort to achieve this goal of establishing a healthy and positive environment for athletic competition, the MIAA has put together this Sportsmanship Manual. Following the guidelines in this packet will help your school achieve the highest level of sportsmanship through a cooperative approach of understanding and committing to sportsmanship.

## **MIAA's Support for Enforcing Sportsmanship**

*The MIAA will firmly support enforcement of unsportsmanlike conduct rules at all MIAA sanctioned events. Furthermore, the MIAA may assess penalties for improper behavior which is not detected or properly addressed during the contest. Member schools and their personnel are expected to fully cooperate with the MIAA's effort to investigate inappropriate behavior. In the unfortunate event that an altercation occurs during a contest, all individuals who are on the bench are expected to remain there. It is incumbent upon the head coach to ensure that this occurs. The MIAA may suspend the head coach of a team whose bench personnel enter the playing area during an altercation, regardless of whether those individuals become involved in the altercation.*

## **School and Athletic Administrators**

It is incumbent upon high school administrators to do everything in their power to create a positive environment for interscholastic events. They must adopt the attitude that the treatment of visiting teams and spectators will be in the same manner that they would want their own teams and spectators treated. Athletic Directors must ensure that those representing the host school treat opponents with fairness and respect. This includes student-athletes, cheerleaders, bands, and public address announcers. School administrators and athletic directors should review periodically with all groups involved what constitutes acceptable conduct, as set forth in this statement.

## **Student-Athletes**

Respect for the sport in which the student-athlete participates also demands respect for the opponent. Student-athlete participating in MIAA sponsored events are expected to treat opponents with respect. There can be absolutely no tolerance for trash-talking, taunting or baiting of opponents. MIAA student-athletes must appreciate and understand that they are perhaps the most visible representatives of their schools. In addition, their behavior is observed and emulated by younger students. MIAA student-athletes must honor the responsibility that accompanies the privilege of representing their school by behaving with dignity and class on and off the field.

## **Coaches**

Coaches have the greatest influence over whether student-athletes are taught to recognize and follow the principles of sportsmanship, integrity and ethics. Good coaches have risked losing by removing a student-athlete from a contest who has demonstrated disrespect for his or her opponent. This disciplinary measure teaches the importance of sportsmanship over participation or winning in athletic events. Administrators and coaches must pay special attention to the behavior of their student-athletes. Such attention and education is needed to counteract the constant messages received by our young people from many professional athletes and others who demonstrate a total lack of respect for others. The MIAA is committed to sending a strong message to our student-athletes that encourages sportsmanship and good ethics. Coaches also have the ability to influence the behavior of their fans. MIAA coaches must take every opportunity to express their desire for spectators to support their own teams, and not to abuse visiting teams and their fans.

## Cheer, Band & Other Student Groups

These groups are visible representatives of their schools. High expectations are placed on them for appropriate behavior. Cheerleaders, bands and other student groups are admitted to contests to support their teams and assist in creating a positive atmosphere. They will conduct themselves in an exemplary manner, showing respect for the game and officials.

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## Officials

Officials who are assigned to MIAA contests must enforce the rules regarding sportsmanship without tolerance for abuse. The only warning to participants and coaches regarding sportsmanship should come at the beginning of the contest. Once the contest begins, penalties (consequences), not warnings, must be assessed for unsportsmanlike conduct. The MIAA expects that officials will eject any coach who protests unsportsmanlike conduct calls provided by the rules of that sport. Each official at an MIAA sponsored event will be provided with a card of the following statement, which must be read to the captains and coaches before every contest:

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*“The MIAA requires officials to enforce all rules regarding unsportsmanlike conduct by coaches and student-athletes. There will be no tolerance for negative statements or actions between opposing players, especially trash-talking, taunting, or baiting of opponents. If such comments are heard, a penalty will be assessed immediately. We have been instructed not to issue warnings during the contest. It is strongly suggested that you remind your participants of this policy.”*



## Ethical Behavior

- Ethics is the discipline of dealing with what is good and bad. Ethics deals with moral duty and obligation.
- Ethical behavior is being honest, truthful and doing the right thing even at the expense of self interest.
- A person who demonstrates ethical behavior contributes to the enjoyment and growth of all, rather than the rise of a few at the expense of many.
- Ethical behavior enables the strong to help the weak.
- People who practice ethical behavior realize that it is hard work.
- Being ethical ensures an equal opportunity for fair participation competition. Ethical participants place fair play above personal gain or victory.
- Ethical behavior promotes equal opportunity to participate regardless of race, gender, or cultural

## Integrity

- A person of integrity is unified - not divided. This person does not say one thing and do another. A person of integrity is at peace within and displays serenity outright.
- A person of integrity is whole - not lacking any ingredient. This person has a boldness to try and the compassion to comfort, the patience to wait, the persistence to endure, and the poise to give in.
- The person of integrity knows that honor is more than honesty. This person realizes that honor means doing not only what the person is legally obligated to do, but also what the person is morally required to do.
- The person of integrity has a highly developed conscience and listens to it, having the courage to act on his/her own convictions.

# Fundamentals of Sportsmanship

The following steps will help athletes, coaches, officials and spectators to understand their responsibilities at an athletic contest.

**1. Gain an Understanding and Appreciation for the Rules of the Contest.**

The need to be well informed is essential. Know the rules.

**2. Exercise Representative Behavior at All Times.**

Good sportsmanship requires one to understand his/her own prejudices that may become a factor in his/her behavior.

**3. Recognize and Appreciate Skilled Performance Regardless of Affiliation.**

Applause for an opponent's good performance displays respect and is a courtesy that should be regularly practiced.

**4. Show Respect for the Officials.**

The officials of any contest are trained impartial arbitrators who perform to the best of their ability.

**5. Display Respect for the Opponent at All Times.**

Opponents are guests and should be treated cordially and with thoughtfulness.

**6. Display Pride in Your Actions at Every Opportunity.**

Never allow your ego to interfere with good judgment.

## **The Keys to SPORTSMANSHIP**

- ◆ **Know the rules of the game.**
- ◆ **Recognize good play by both teams.**
- ◆ **Respect your opponent and its spectators.**
- ◆ **View the game with your head instead of your**

## **Responsibilities of the School Committee, School Administrators, and Directors of Athletics**

### **School Committee**

Good sportsmanship starts with the local school committee. The committee should develop a sportsmanship policy and philosophy and direct the school administrators to carry it out. Sportsmanship should be taught in all activities. The school committee should approve guidelines for good conduct at all school-sponsored programs.

### **School Administrators**

The administration, which includes all executive personnel of the school, must take the leadership role in establishing and communicating the importance of good sportsmanship. The quality of sportsmanship at athletic contests reflects the leadership of the administrative staff. This does not mean that they will avoid all problems but, will show how they attempt to solve those problems indicating the leadership and the philosophy of the school administration.

### **Directors of Athletics**

The administrator is directly responsible for implementation of the comprehensive sportsmanship effort and the Athletic Director serves as the leader and catalyst. All details essential to the purposeful educational contest require the efforts of individuals committed to the ideals of sportsmanship. The policies and procedures must reflect the goals established by the administration. All coaches' and spectators' conduct is directly under his/her supervision.

## **Coaches' Responsibilities**

Coaches are privileged with the opportunity to coach student-athletes. It is essential to understand the importance of teaching good sportsmanship. The coach must accept primary responsibility for the behavior and actions of her/his players, and realize that a good example to players and spectators alike is a serious responsibility. If a coach's actions become the center of attention in a negative way, he/she has failed as a role model.

The coach plays a crucial role for student-athletes and often times are a substitute parent. There is no doubt that the coach in part molds the athlete's general attitude. How he/she measures success is reflected in how the student-athlete views it. Success should be measured not only in terms of winning, but also in terms of moral values and good sportsmanship.

A coach must view his/her role as an educator and never lose perspective of what interscholastic athletics are all about.

### ***How to Be a Supportive Coach***

- Know your players as individuals. Be sensitive to their needs in sports and their personal lives.
- Be free with praise and give constructive criticism. Players get frustrated, too. A tense atmosphere is not conducive to learning.
- Be fair. Players depend on a coach to make fair decisions.
- Be consistent. Do not give preferential treatment to the superstar. Discipline and team rules apply equally to all team members.
- Never use a player to further your own interests. Looking at a player as your “ticket” is not coaching. There is no place for a self-serving coach in any sport.
- Never break a player's self-confidence. Always give specifics when making changes or giving constructive criticism.
- Know how to motivate your players. Each individual has a unique motivating factor. Find out what it is.
- Set realistic goals for your players as individuals and for the team as a whole. Help athletes progress from potential to reality. Use short-term and long-term goal setting.
- Vary practice routines and make the workouts fun. Most athletes consider fun the top motivating factor for participating in sports.
- Keep the team functioning as a **Team**. This should happen as a result of good coaching. Being aware of players’ individual differences will help prevent personality conflicts. Demonstrating qualities such as fairness, patience, consistency and leadership will lead to good morale. The team is a direct reflection of the coach.



### **The Real Score**

A coach can never make a great player of a youngster who isn't potentially great.  
But a coach can make a great competitor out of any child. And miraculously, coaches can make adults out of children. For a coach, the final score doesn't read so many points for my team; so many points for theirs.  
Instead it reads: So many men and women out of so many boys and girls. And this is a score that is never published.  
And this is a score that coaches read to themselves, and in which they find real joy . . .  
When the last game is over.



## **Golden Rule of Coaching**

If athletes are coached with criticism, they learn low self esteem.

If athletes are coached with hostility, they learn to fight.

If athletes are coached with ridicule, they learn to withdraw.

If athletes are coached with shame, they learn to feel guilty.

If athletes are coached with patience, they learn to improve.

If athletes are coached with encouragement, they learn confidence.

If athletes are coached with praise, they learn to have faith.

If athletes are coached with fairness, they learn justice.

If athletes are coached with approval, they learn positive self esteem.

If athletes are coached with honesty, they learn to trust.

If athletes are coached with modesty, they learn teamwork.

If athletes are coached with acceptance and friendship, they learn to find love in sport.



# How Coaches Can Teach Good Sports Behavior

## **1. Lead "Fair Play" Scenarios.**

Using authentic sports scenarios, make discussions of ethical behavior a part of your daily training routine.

## **2. Establish a Code of Ethics.**

Your code should include both acceptable and unacceptable behaviors.

It should be decided by consensus of the coach and athletes.

## **3. Set a System of Positive Reinforcement.**

Rewarding positive behavior and penalizing inappropriate behavior reinforces the idea that those performance goals apply more than sports skills.

## **4. Model Appropriate Behavior.**

Coaches should lead by example, consciously modeling the team's code of ethics in all competitions and practices.

## **5. Teachable Moment**

Acknowledge the unplanned event that can be used as a positive learning experience.

## **Student-Athlete Responsibilities**

Respect, commitment, dedication, and hard work; these are the qualities that describe a student-athlete, and these are the attributes that the opponent brings to the competition. The opponent is exactly that, an opponent, and not the enemy. By treating the opponent with courtesy and respect, student-athletes demonstrate respect for themselves, their family, community and school.

As a student-athlete, you bring to every competition an attitude that you will do your best and strive to achieve and excel. Competition is designed to meet the highest standards of your play, and to fall within the rules of the game.

Student-athletes have an essential role in the development and maintenance of sportsmanship. Because participants are admired and respected, their behavior significantly influences the actions and behavior of spectators of all ages. Student-athletes are the role models of younger athletes and are a facet to the development of sportsmanship.

## **Cheerleader, Band and Student Group Responsibilities**

All support organizations share the responsibility for promoting sportsmanship at games and events. Their intended purpose is to provide support, despite the outcome, in a positive manner. They have an enormous influence on behavior and are important parts of the educational process.

Cheerleaders and student groups, like student-athletes, represent the student body and are chosen to such positions based on their skills and general ability to lead. By the nature of their position and the fact that fellow students respect them, cheerleaders and student groups have an excellent opportunity to promote good sportsmanship.

### **When to Cheer**

1. As your team comes on the floor or field.
2. When the team or a player makes an exceptional play.
3. When substitutions are made on your team.
4. As encouragement and tribute to an injured player.
5. When an opponent who has played spectacularly well leaves the game. Such a cheer would recognize his/her fine play and good sportsmanship.
6. To encourage your own team in a drive for a score.
7. To encourage your own team in defense of a score.

### **When Not to Cheer**

1. As team signals are called or during the huddle of either team.
2. When an opposing player makes a mistake or the opposing team is penalized.
3. When an opposing player is injured
4. If the opposing section has started a cheer, or the opposing school band is playing.
5. During announcements.

## Spectator Responsibilities

The greatest peril to interscholastic athletics is overzealous fans. Past problems, including lack of trained coaches, officials, specialization, and over emphasis on winning, have seen drastic improvement.

Spectators think little of harassing players, coaches and officials in their classroom, and the field of play. High school administrators often give the benefit of the doubt to a player's parent, or an interested citizen. The spectator should be informed that administrators can no longer tolerate immature behavior, whether from a recent graduate, parent, or community resident.

High school athletics were not developed as a sounding board for fans' to let off steam or to get rid of frustration. This may be accepted in professional sports where a premium price can be paid to vent emotions at athletes who are paid a premium salary to tolerate any antics. It is different in interscholastic athletics.

For the school sports program to be an educational experience, spectators must understand the need for good sportsmanship. Many sports fans have lost perspective and have linked collegiate and professional sports with high school programs. Problems that should not be associated with the educational program have dampened what should be a positive experience for students.

### Acceptable Versus Unacceptable Behavior

Acceptable Behavior	Unacceptable Behavior
Applaud during introduction of players, coaches and officials.	Yelling or chanting at opponents.
Accept all decisions of the officials.	Making derogatory yells, chants, songs, or gestures.
Shake hands with other student-athletes and coaches after the contest, regardless of outcome.	Booing or heckling an official's decisions.
Treat the contest as a game, not a war.	Criticizing officials in any way; displaying temper with an official's call.
Search out opposing players to recognize them for outstanding performance or coaching.	Refusing to shake hands or to recognize a good performance.
Applaud the performance of all participants after the contest.	Blaming loss on game officials, coaches, or players.
Show concern for injured players, regardless of team affiliation.	Laughing or name-calling to distract an opponent
Encourage surrounding people to display only sportsmanlike conduct.	Using profanity or displaying anger that draws attention away from the contest.



## Officials' Responsibilities

Well-managed athletic contests are planned and designed. Good officials are an integral part of the process. During a contest, officials are responsible for the safety of the players. Officials must know the technical rules of the contest, be physically capable of keeping pace and be aware of contingencies. A good official is adept at the technical interpretation and enforcement of rules. A good official protects the welfare of the contest participants. Competent impartial officials recognize the place for interscholastic athletics in the educational program.

## Media's Responsibilities

The media is an important tool to interscholastic athletic programs. We strongly encourage the media to increase their role in the area of sportsmanship. Recognition of good sportsmanship by the media is greatly appreciated by all involved.

## Crowd Control Policy

Crowd control guidelines need emphasis by administrators and event managers. Good crowd control consists of sound preventative planning and organization long before problems arise. While most interscholastic contests proceed without incident, it is necessary to plan for all contests in advance and explore every possible avenue.

1. Establish written behavioral standards and expectations for players, coaches, students, cheerleaders, spectators and personnel. Communicate these standards to the participants and spectators.
2. Establish and communicate policies and emergency procedures regarding:
  - Fire.
  - Drinking and possession of alcohol.
  - Possession, use or sale of drugs.
  - Medical emergencies.
  - Lost and found.
  - Presence of food, beverages, radios and music players in the gym or stadium.
  - Bomb threats.
  - Alternatives in case of failures with score clocks, lights, or other equipment.
  - Transportation problems.
3. Be sure the public address announcer clearly understands written emergency procedures.
4. Identify supervisors and ushers by use of jackets, arm bands, or badges. Require them to be active and visible to discourage problems.
5. Make sure personnel, supervisors and security are observant, active and consistent in applying rules and procedures, rather than becoming too involved in watching the event.
6. Be consistent in applying policies and rules; be supportive of your personnel.
7. Avoid seating your school's band or spectators near the visiting team spectator seating area.

8. Have admission, ticket sales and parking lot personnel observe and screen people for alcohol or abnormal behavior. Alert crowd supervisors to observe behavior and whereabouts of potential problem people.
9. Supervise the rest rooms, concession stands, drinking faucets and first aid-facilities.
10. Establish precise job descriptions, expectations and authority of personnel and inform them of rules, regulations and emergency procedures.
11. Try eliminating all lines as this helps to deter crowd problems.
12. Have a policy against noisemakers, confetti, beverages or bottles in the facility. The policy should state that “Bands, horns, posters, banners, signs, confetti and artificial noisemakers” are not permitted. The director reserves the right to remove such items from the contest.
13. Special attention should be given to the last five minutes of the game. Do not allow fans to enter at a reduced rate or without a ticket. Practicing this policy eliminates loitering and problems. Police and ushers should move to a place where they can facilitate the orderly flow of traffic from the stands to the exits. About two minutes before the end of the contest, exits should be opened and attended.

## MIAA SPORTSMANSHIP GUIDELINES FOR FAN/SPECTATOR SUPPORT ITEMS

In the chart below, **ONLY** those items marked “Yes” will be allowed as fan/spectator support items at MIAA events.

The items indicated on this page are for use by member schools as policy guidelines for their fans.

MIAA Rules and Regulations are subject to change. We suggest checking the **MIAA Handbook** for any updates.

ITEM	ALLOWED	COMMENTS/RATIONALE
Fans storming the court/field of play	No	Such actions create an unsafe environment. Spectators are encouraged to remain in their seats to observe the postgame handshake ceremony/trophy presentation.
Leaving team’s side of play/court	No	Spectators must stay within the confines of their school’s student body section.
Banners on wall*	No	Exceptions – Welcome signs, corporate sponsors, school signs that are permanently fixed on walls.
Objects thrown into crowd (confetti, miniature sports balls, candy, etc.)	No	
Noise Makers (horns, bells, buzzers, whistles, thunder sticks, rattles, shakers, music instruments not part of a band, air horns, sirens, megaphones, etc.)	No	Per MIAA Handbook Rule 99.10.5 “ <i>Horns, posters, noisemakers, confetti, pompoms, balloons, and banners are not to be permitted at any site. If the site manager feels that something not mentioned above is also creating a nuisance at a contest site, the site manager should have such items removed.</i> ”
Hand-held signs (individually or more than one person)*	No	See explanation for “Noise Makers”.
Balloons*	No	See explanation for “Noise Makers”.
Face Paint/ Hair Coloring	Yes	Fans are not prohibited from painting their faces or coloring their hair in manners that appropriately demonstrate school spirit. However, out of respect to facilities that host MIAA tournament contests, student support groups should do their painting prior to entering the facility.
Taking off shirt	No	Shirts and shoes are required attire at every facility.
Paper banners for team to run through	Yes	
Actions that distract participants, obstruct vision, affect play	No	Spectators who participate in activities that intentionally attempt to distract participants, obstruct the vision of spectators, or affect the competition are subject to removal from the premises by the tournament site director or local authorities.
Laser light/pointer	No	See rationale for “Actions that distract participants” above.
Recorded music over PA system*	Yes	Recorded music is permitted only with the approval of the tournament site director.
School/Pep bands	Yes	Per MIAA Handbook Rules 99.10.5.1-99.10.5.3 with the following restrictions: 1. A maximum of 12 is permitted. An advisor must be in attendance and sit with the band. 2. Permission in advance must be granted by the Tournament Director and Site Director. 3. Pep bands are not permitted to play while the game is in play. A full complement of high school bands is permitted at all Superbowl football contests.
Cannons/muskets/guns	No	
Carried school flags	No	
Dressed school mascots/costumes	Yes	School mascots must stay within the confines of that school’s student body section.
Live animal mascots	No	

\* Allowed at the discretion of the host site administration.

## Public Address Announcements for Home Events



### Pre-Game Announcements

Pre-contest announcements serve to remind fans, cheerleaders, cheering sections, and players of their responsibility for creating a cooperative and sportsmanlike atmosphere for interscholastic athletic competitions. The following samples could be read prior to all athletic events.

\*\*\*\*\*

(Host), would like to take this opportunity to encourage you to help everyone enjoy tonight's event with character. By displaying respect and good sportsmanship to all involved, you can help us create a positive environment for the teams and the fans.

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to tonight's match-up between (Host) and (Opponent). (Host) are committed to maintaining the true spirit of competition in athletics. Please do your part by showing respect to every spectator, athlete, coach, and official involved in today's contest.

(Host) welcomes you to tonight's game and asks that you join us in promoting character and sportsmanship in high school athletics. We encourage athletes and coaches to be positive role models and ask that you help us by respecting the efforts of the teams and officials in tonight's game.

This game is being played according to the rules of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association. These rules provide fair competition among players. Spectators can help promote good sportsmanship by observing the rules of fair play. Each one is requested to take personal responsibility for keeping this game at a high level of good sportsmanship.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Introduction of Officials after Lineups

The officials for tonight's game are (name of officials). These individuals are enrolled by the MIAA (Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association). Their experience and integrity qualify them to administer the rules of the game. An attitude of good sportsmanship should be upheld by all spectators, players and coaches, no matter what their personal feelings or loyalties may be in this contest.

## **Sample Public Service Announcements for Radio and TV Stations**

The MIAA (Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association) is committed to the welfare of the student-athletes throughout the Commonwealth and to the fairness of competition among its member schools. Many boys and girls enjoy additional educational experiences by qualifying for one or more of 250 post-season championships in 34 different sports sponsored by the MIAA. The (Game) you are listening to /watching is a culmination of these activities.

In our society today, 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, regardless of the final score. Remember to be a sport and practice good sportsmanship. A public-service message from MIAA.

Ethics, integrity and respect are values important in our daily lives. All of these important values are learned through participation in interscholastic activity programs. During competition, they are translated into one word—sportsmanship. Sportsmanship is one of the strongest educational lessons and lifetime values taught by interscholastic activities. It makes sense to exhibit good sportsmanship. A public-service message from your Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association.

The dictionary defines good sportsmanship as playing fair and being a good winner or loser. We often forget that it's more important to be gracious in victory. Good sportsmanship gives us a standard to follow at all times. Good sports act courteously and maintain self-control in all circumstances. Remember to be a fan and not a fanatic when watching interscholastic activities and activity programs. A public-service message from your Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association and (Name of school).

A positive educational environment is essential to the success of high school athletics and activity programs. An important part of that environment is planning for good sportsmanship. Without good sportsmanship, the lessons learned lose their value. Remember the next time you attend an interscholastic contest that you are really inside a classroom where good sports receive the highest grade. A public service message from your Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association and (name of school).

## **Promoting Sportsmanship**

### **Ten Commandments**

- Do unto others as you would have others do unto you.
- Enjoy yourself and promote enjoyment for others.
- Be responsible for your actions.
- Have an open mind to others weaknesses and have a forgiving attitude.
- Take pride in one's performance and one's school.
- Be a friend, not an enemy and create a positive environment.
- Encourage others to do or be their best.
- Sportsmanship should be contagious.
- Remember it is a privilege to participate.
- Practice sportsmanship in all situations at all costs.

### **Characteristics of Sportsmanship**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have Pride</li><li>• Teamwork</li><li>• Patience</li><li>• Spirit</li><li>• Applaud When Injured Players get up.</li><li>• No Negative Reactions</li><li>• Motivation</li><li>• Compromise</li><li>• Respect</li><li>• Enthusiasm</li><li>• Winning isn't Everything</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Help Opponent After a Fall</li><li>• Positive Mental Attitude</li><li>• Controlled Temper</li><li>• Friendship</li><li>• Play by the Rules</li><li>• Respect the Officials</li><li>• Congratulate Opposing Team – Win or Lose</li><li>• Tolerance</li><li>• Do Your Best</li><li>• Have Fun</li></ul> |
|--|---|

## MIAA Sportsmanship Initiatives

You can get involved in the MIAA's goal of creating healthy and positive environments for athletic competition beyond your home school by participating in any of our Sportsmanship Initiatives.

## Committees

- **Sportsmanship, Integrity, and Ethics Committee** – Membership of the Sportsmanship, Integrity, and Ethics Committee elected by the Assembly consists of one principal and one athletic director from each of the eight athletic districts except District E which has two principals and two athletic directors; two coaches, and two enrolled game officials representing boys' and girls' activities, in addition to one school committee member and one superintendent elected or appointed by their respective associations. Duties and responsibilities of the Sportsmanship, Integrity, and Ethics Committee include “prepare and promote strategies designed to improve the attitudinal postures of all constituencies” and “warn, censure, place on probation, or suspend up to one calendar year any player, team, coach, game or school official, or school determined to be acting in a manner contrary to the standards of good sportsmanship.”
- **Sportsmanship Alliance of Massachusetts (SAM)** – This collaboration of leaders represents the professional and scholastic sports community, health and education experts, state and local law enforcement, and others committed to the promotion of sportsmanship in Massachusetts with the mission to “promote a culture of fairness, respect, responsibility, and civility in sports and to foster initiatives which encourage positive attitudes and behavior in athletes, coaches, officials, parents, and spectators of all ages in Massachusetts.” The MIAA is a founding member of SAM and is currently represented as co-chair.
- **Student Advisory Committee** – This committee is comprised of students who attended the New England Student Leadership Conference. Student Advisory Committee members attend seasonal meetings with the Wellness Advisory Committee and help facilitate student and captains' leadership workshops throughout the school year. In addition, these students are asked to participate in various association activities and provide continual feedback from the perspective of students on how to improve the Student Services offerings of the MIAA.
- **MIAA Student Ambassador Program** – This initiative seeks to provide student-athletes from each MIAA member school with the opportunity to become involved and educated in the Association structure. MIAA member schools are asked to appoint or elect one junior and one senior student to serve as their school's ambassadors. Regular communication regarding Association news, policies, and events is sent to the ambassadors. In addition, these students are asked for their feedback to help the Association improve the services that it offers. Visit [MIAA.net](http://MIAA.net) for more information.

## Programs

- **Leadership Training Institute** – The purpose of this one-week residential training workshop is to train participants to take advantage of opportunities within athletics and other school activities to promote positive sportsmanship, wellness and leadership. Workshop participants learn practical strategies for involving school activity staff

members, health educators, student activity participants and their parents in these efforts. Visit MIAA.net for more information.

- **MIAA/Anti-Defamation League’s “A World of Difference” Respect Workshop** The training focuses on the implication of respect, bias, racial diversity and integrity on athletic competition. Through case studies, the workshop explores specific strategies to improve the quality of the school and athletic climate. For more information about the Anti-Defamation League’s “A World of Difference” Respect Workshop, including registration material, please visit MIAA.net for more information.
- **Sportsmanship Summit** – This annual MIAA event celebrates over 1000 student-athletes who make sportsmanship a priority. The summit features district sportsmanship awards, and workshops on such topics as sportsmanship strategies, and how students can make a difference. For more information about the Sportsmanship Summit, including registration material, please visit MIAA.net for more information.
- **Massachusetts Student-Athlete Citizenship Day Program** – This annual event is sponsored by the MIAA and Northeastern University’s Center for the Study of Sport in Society to honor and congratulate student-athletes from across the state for their achievements on the playing field, in the classroom and for their commitment to the school or community. Events of the day include panel discussions, keynote speeches, and award presentations. Two separate events are held at Northeastern University and the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame. For more information about the Massachusetts Student-Athlete Citizenship Day Program, including nomination and registration materials, please visit MIAA.net for more information.
- **Captains’ Leadership Workshops** – This one-day workshop involves students interacting with adult Leadership Training participants to learn ways that they can make a significant difference in their schools. Through small group activities, students discuss strategies for influencing their peers and handling difficult situations. Workshops are conducted regularly at the request of leagues or schools. For more information about Captains’ Leadership Workshops, including registration materials, please visit MIAA.net for more information.
- **Citizenship Through Sports/Leadership Training Institute** – This workshop gives the athletic director and coach theoretical and practical instruction on how to create, modify, implement and maintain a character-based athletic program. The program is presented in a manner that provides clear, understandable explanations of terms, concepts and practical methods that athletic directors and coaches can capture, reflect and act upon.
- **New England Student Leadership Conference** – The New England Student Leadership Conference took place at Stonehill College. Over 250 student-leaders from across New England took part in large and small group sessions involving a citizenship-based curriculum. Components of the curriculum involve respect, positive values, perspective, sportsmanship, teamwork, healthy lifestyles, community service and self-evaluation. For more information about the New England Student Leadership Conference, please visit MIAA.net for more information.
- **District Sportsmanship Awards** – These awards are presented at the MIAA Sportsmanship Summit for each of the eight athletic districts within the MIAA structure. District sportsmanship awards are chosen by the athletic directors within each district.
- **James F. Mulloy Annual Sportsmanship Awards** – These annual awards are presented to the high school hockey program in each division, both boys and girls that exemplifies the sportsmanship qualities of the late James F. Mulloy, former MIAA Ice Hockey Chair and high school hockey coach.

- **MIAA “Outstanding Sportsmanship Award” Certificate Program** – These certificates are available to MIAA member schools upon request to present to student-athletes who exemplify the true spirit of interscholastic athletic competition through the demonstration of outstanding sportsmanship.
- **NFHS/MIAA Sportsmanship Certificate Program** – This joint program of the National Federation/MIAA provides to student-athletes who exemplify the true spirit of interscholastic athletic competition through the demonstration of outstanding performance.
- **Sportsmanship “The Only Way to Win” Program** – Through this program, coaches, athletic directors, game officials or school administrators can fill out a form that notifies the MIAA about outstanding acts of sportsmanship. Both teams and individuals may be recognized. Recipients will receive a letter and a certificate praising their accomplishment. Press releases are provided to the local media, and the awards will also be published on the MIAA web site and in the Association’s newsletter. Nomination forms are available on the MIAA website, and on page 43.
- **Sportsmanship Essay/Multimedia Contest** – This contest is held annually to promote various themes of sportsmanship. Students in grades 9-12 are encouraged to share their ideas in an essay of 500 words or less or a multimedia presentation of 3 minutes or less. The creators of the top entries present their work at the Annual MIAA Sportsmanship Summit and are recognized for their achievements. Winning and honorable mention essay entries are published in an anthology entitled “Sportsmanship: A Game Plan for Life” and distributed at various MIAA functions.
- **Team Sportsmanship Awards** – These awards are presented annually at the state championship final to a worthy team in each division of competition. The awards are presented to those teams who have demonstrated a sincere commitment to the highest ideals and objectives of sportsmanship during their season of play. Teams can be nominated for this award by coaches, administrators, or officials.
- **Sportsmanship Alliance of Massachusetts (SAM) Awards Program** – These seasonal awards are presented by the professional sports teams in Massachusetts to deserving teams in their respective sport. The award recipients are honored at a home event of the professional team. Participating professional teams include: the New England Patriots, Boston Bruins, Boston Celtics, and Boston Red Sox.
- **Sportsmanship Preseason Meetings** – These meetings are conducted seasonally at the local level with administrators, coaches, representatives of athletic teams, and parents focusing on the educational mission and desired outcomes of each athletic program. MIAA speakers and resources are available upon request.
- **Sportsmanship Public Address Program (local level)** – Public service announcements are offered to member schools to welcome and introduce all interscholastic games as well as remind spectators and participants of their expected behavior.
- **Tournament Sportsmanship PSA requirements (statewide)** – These contractual commitments are required of radio/television mediums who cover MIAA Tournament events.

## Policies

*Note: MIAA policies are subject to change. Member schools should see the [MIAA Handbook](#) for the up to date policies, rules, and regulations.*

- **MIAA Taunting Policy** – adopted by the Board of Directors in November of 1994. Taunting includes any actions or comments by coaches, players or spectators that are intended to bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule or demean others. Examples include “trash talk” and “in the face” confrontations. Officials are to consider taunting a flagrant unsportsmanlike foul that disqualifies the offending contestant or bench personnel from the contest. The offender may also be subject to existing MIAA expulsion rules. Spectators may be given one warning for taunting. Thereafter, spectators who taunt players, game officials or other spectators are subject to ejection. (Brochure and taunting interpretation guide available upon request).
- **Game Officials’ Partnership** – The MIAA Taunting Policy is read prior to every MIAA interscholastic athletic contest by Game Officials to participating captains.
- **Handshake Rule** – Per MIAA Handbook Rule 92.20 Officials will be required to remain at the TEAM competition site until the handshake ceremony has concluded.
- **Sportsmanship Compliance Rule** – As of Fall 1999, any coach who is suspended from an MIAA athletic contest or had 3 or more athletes suspended during the season will be required to attend a Sportsmanship Compliance workshop before being eligible to coach the next year. Compliance sessions are scheduled seasonally.
- **Coach/Media Relations Rule** – “Coaches will not publicly criticize any game official; will not permit anyone under their supervision to criticize game officials; will cooperate with the media in the interpretation and clarification of rules and/or other aspects of the game, but will not make comments about specific decisions of game officials; and will make an effort in their communication with the media, to stress the positive displays of sportsmanship demonstrated by the student-athletes, coaches, fans spectators, and schools involved in the contest.”
- **Hockey/Soccer Sportsmanship** – All leagues must conduct a pre-season meeting for head coaches to review sportsmanship goals and objectives.
- **Hockey/Soccer Sportsmanship standards for tournament eligibility** – Any team who receives a combination of (specified number) misconducts, game misconducts and/or game penalties during regular season shall not qualify for the MIAA Tournament.
- **Hockey/Sportsmanship Compliance requirements** – As part of MIAA’s continuing effort to promote the concepts of sportsmanship and to promote an appropriate on-site atmosphere, an additional requirement for state tournament qualification states that all member schools who enter the MIAA Ice Hockey Tournament, will provide the presence of school personnel that will assist the efforts of on-site management in maintaining control and conduct of their student spectators at all games in the tournament during which their team is a participant.



# Concluding Statement

The MIAA believes that the efforts to meet the expectations outlined in this statement will encourage and promote the high ideals of sportsmanship at all levels of play. The MIAA seeks to create a positive atmosphere for athletic competition at interscholastic events throughout the Commonwealth. It is clear that policy without positive programming will fail. MIAA constituents are encouraged to complement this sportsmanship initiative with preseason meetings, coaches' workshops, and captains/leadership workshops.



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