

**LEARNER  
ACTIVITIES  
HANDBOOK**

**2024-25**



# Brookings High School

Empowering All Learners to Embrace and be Inspired to Realize Their Potential

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Participants, Families & Guardians:

The primary purpose of education is to develop successful adults. While academic pursuits are essential in providing a necessary foundation, a variety of learning experiences enhance the probability of adult success. In fact, research indicates that successful participation in activities may be the **only valid predictor** of adult success in career and community.

The positive relationship between activity participation and adult success may be related to several factors:

1. Activity participants are, generally, highly motivated due to special interests and talents.
2. Activities are characterized by close relationships between participants and their advisors, coaches, and directors.
3. activities are “laboratories for success” because they offer relevant and authentic learning experiences.
4. Activity participation is positively correlated with developmental goals such as higher self-esteem, improved academic ability and grades in boys, increased social and political activism, lower delinquency rates, higher educational aspirations, and increased feelings of control.
5. Activities are fun!

Brookings High School attempts to satisfy the needs of all learners by offering a balanced program of activities:

1. Learner Council
2. Interscholastic ~~and Club~~ ~~and Intramural~~-Sports
3. Instrumental, Vocal, and Strings Music
4. Speech Activities
5. Theater
6. Learner Publications
7. Cheerleading
8. Numerous academic and interest clubs and organizations

We strongly encourage every learner to become fully involved at Brookings High School by participating in the program of activities.

Sincerely,

Jeff Dvorak  
Director of Learner Activities

## *SOUTH DAKOTA HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION*

### ***YOU ARE NOT ELIGIBLE IF:***

1. You have reached your 20<sup>th</sup> birthday.
2. You have attended more than 4 first semesters and 4 second semesters of school in grades 9 through 12. Once a learner enrolls in ninth grade, all eight semesters must be consecutive unless withdrawal from school is necessary due to illness or injury.
3. You did not pass 20 hours of high school work (equivalent of 4 full time subjects) per week for the preceding semester.
4. You are not enrolled in and attending a minimum of 20 hours of high school work per week during the current semester.
5. You have graduated from a regular four-year high school or institution of equivalent rank.
6. You have not enrolled by the 16<sup>th</sup> school day of the current semester
7. You have been absent from school for more than 10 consecutive school days (illness of the learner or a death in the immediate family excepted).
8. You have transferred from one high school to another without a corresponding change in residence of your parents (exception pursuant to “open enrollment”).
9. You do not have a copy of your transcript on file in the principal’s office prior to competition.
10. You do not have on file in the principal’s office a signed SDHSAA physical examination and parent’s permit form for interscholastic athletics.
11. You have ever participated in an athletic contest under an assumed name.
12. You have never participated in athletics in any institution of learning of higher rank than a standard secondary school.
13. You have violated your amateur standing.
14. During a high school sport season, you compete on an unattached basis as an individual or as a member of a non-school team in the same sport.

# **CORE VALUES OF THE ACTIVITIES DEPARTMENT**

**INTEGRITY**  
**EFFORT**  
**ACCOUNTABILITY**  
**COMMUNITY**

**TO COME TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE A COMMON GOAL**

## **OBJECTIVES**

The program of activities will assist participants in:

- Learning the wise use of leisure time.
- Developing their unique talents and skills.
- Developing new recreational and vocational interests and skills.
- Developing positive habits that will contribute to a healthy lifestyle.
- Developing leadership and collaborative skills.
- Developing a work ethic.
- Developing a more positive attitude and increased motivation for education.
- Increasing their understanding and participation in the democratic process.
- Improving their communication skills.
- Developing a repertoire of skills – problem solving, decision making, goal setting, time management, etc. – which are marketable.
- Achieving successes that result in increased self-esteem.

**LEARNER CONDUCT - ACTIVITIES**

**General Statement of Philosophy**

The Brookings School District (BSD) encourages learners to participate in activities due to the benefits of such participation. The BSD also recognizes the need to establish a code of conduct for activity participants that reinforces behaviors that reflect positively on the individual, school, and community.

1. learner participation in activities is a privilege, rather than a right, and
2. learners who voluntarily exercise the privilege of participating in activities shall, consequently, be expected to exemplify high standards of behavior, and
3. The program of activities should address the need for good order and a concern for learner health and safety.

**Definitions**

1. “Extracurricular activities” are interscholastic & club sports, fine arts, clubs, and co-curricular activities sponsored or recognized by the BSD, now and in the future.
2. “Activity advisor” shall apply to any employee of the BSD who is assigned the responsibility for coaching, directing, or advising an activity.
3. No “Public appearance” means learners cannot travel or be in attendance at any organized public event associated with the activity(ies) during suspension.
4. “Year-round” shall mean 24-hours a day, 365 days a year.
  - A. Conduct violations for seventh and eighth grade learners shall commence on the first day of each school year.
  - B. Conduct violations for high school learners shall commence on the first day of the freshman year or the first day of an activity if a freshman becomes a member of an activity that starts before the first day of the freshman year of school.
5. “Suspension” begins with the date of adjudication (as determined) by school officials. Learners participating in extracurricular activities will be adjudicated and begin a suspension when a conduct violation becomes evident. Learners not involved in an extracurricular activity when a conduct violation becomes evident, will be adjudicated when they become a member of an extracurricular activity.
6. “Crime” shall mean a violation of any city, state, or federal law, excluding Class II misdemeanors and all motor vehicle offenses not classified as felonies.

7. "Evidence" of a violation may be the result of:
  - A. Information received from law enforcement or court services personnel which provides reasonable cause to believe that an infraction has occurred;
  - B. A learner found guilty, pled guilty, or enters a no contest plea in either juvenile court or adult criminal court;
  - C. A self-reported violation by either the parent or learner; or
  - D. An observed violation reported by a staff member.
  - E. An image or video clearly identifying a violation.

### General Policy Statements

1. The Code of Conduct is in force, year-round, for all learners in grades 7-12, participating in extracurricular activities under the auspices of the BSD.
2. The possession, use, distribution, ingesting, inhaling or otherwise taking into the body of tobacco, alcohol, anabolic steroids, controlled drugs or substances or marijuana is a violation of the Code of Conduct.
3. The BSD will utilize and comply with all South Dakota Codified Laws in the implementation of this policy.
4. The administration reserves the right to determine appropriate consequences for all criminal or civil violations or behavior that is determined detrimental to the representation of the school in any activity.
5. All other crimes as defined in this policy are a violation of the Code of Conduct.
6. Learners leaving eighth (8<sup>th</sup>) grade will have their previous violations expunged.
7. Conduct violations are cumulative from grades nine (9) through (12). All violations will, however, be expunged after eighteen (18) months without further violations.
8. A learner must successfully complete an activity season in order to satisfy a suspension.
9. The principal, or the principal's designee, shall be responsible for the fair and equitable administration of the Code of Conduct.
10. E-cigarettes or vaping devices, in any form, are not permitted on school property or at school sponsored events and functions. Consequences for possessing these devices will be a tobacco violation (BHS Handbook).
11. Learners in violation of the Code of Conduct are subject to the following consequences.

## Consequences

### 1. SDCL 13-32-9 Violation

- A. **First offense:** If a learner is adjudicated, convicted, the subject of an informal adjustment or court-approved diversion program, or the subject of a suspended imposition of sentence or suspended adjudication of delinquency, for possession, use, or distribution of controlled drugs or substances or marijuana, or for ingesting, inhaling, or otherwise taking into the body any substance as prohibited by statute, the learner shall be suspended one year which shall be reduced to 30 calendar days if the learner participates in an assessment with a certified or licensed addiction counselor. If a suspension for a first offense is reduced to 30 calendar days, the learner is also ineligible for a minimum of two South Dakota High School Activities Association sanctioned events upon completion of the reduced suspension period. If two sanctioned events for which the learner is ineligible do not take place within the reduced suspension period, the learner's suspension remains in effect until two sanctioned events for which the learner is ineligible have taken place. Learners who are ineligible to participate in activity events, competitions, and performances shall be allowed to participate in practices.
- B. **Second offense:** If a learner is adjudicated, convicted, the subject of an informal adjustment or court-approved diversion program, or the subject of a suspended imposition of sentence or suspended adjudication of delinquency, for possession, use, or distribution of controlled drugs or substances or marijuana, or for ingesting, inhaling, or otherwise taking into the body any substance as prohibited by statute, the learner shall be suspended one year. The one year suspension for a second offense shall be reduced to 60 calendar days if the learner completes an accredited intensive prevention or treatment program. If the suspension for a second offense is reduced, the learner is also ineligible for a minimum of six South Dakota High School Activities Association sanctioned events upon completion of the reduced suspension period. If six sanctioned events for which the learner is ineligible do not take place within the reduced suspension period, the learner's suspension remains in effect until six sanctioned events for which the learner is ineligible have taken place. Learners who are ineligible to participate in activity events, competitions, and performances shall be allowed to participate in practices. In order for events to count toward the minimum number of events for which the learner is ineligible following a reduction in the suspension for a first or second offense, the learner must participate in the entire activity season. Failure of a learner to complete the entire activity season results in the learner being ineligible for one year from the date of adjudication, conviction, the subject of an informal adjustment or court approved diversion program, or subject of a suspended imposition of sentence or suspended adjudication of delinquency. A suspension that is not completed by the learner during one activity season carries over to the next activity season in which the learner participates.
- C. **Third offense:** Upon a third or subsequent adjudication, conviction, diversion, or suspended imposition of sentence for possession, use, or distribution of controlled drugs or substances or marijuana, or for ingesting, inhaling, or otherwise taking into the body any substances as prohibited by statute, by a court of competent jurisdiction, the learner is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activity.

## Non-SDCL 13-32-9 Violations and Crimes

- D. **First Offense:** After confirmation of the first violation, the learner shall lose eligibility in extra-curricular activities for 20% of the total number of originally scheduled regular season interscholastic events (minimum of one). If the Learner is participating in multiple activities during the violation, he/she will lose eligibility for 20% of each season. If the Learner is not currently participating in an extra-curricular activity, he/she will serve the suspension in the next activity which he/she is involved. (The official starting date of practice will determine the next activity). ~~the next two contests or 14 calendar days of a season in which the learner is a participant, whichever is greater. A learner in a fine arts program will not be allowed to participate in any public appearances during the 14 calendar day suspension and must miss at least one performance, which may fall outside the suspension period.~~ Suspensions apply to all extra-curricular activities during the time frame and carry over to the following activity or year when not fully served. In addition, Learners will be ineligible to represent Brookings School District in any school-sanctioned leadership groups including, but not limited to, Homecoming Royalty, Girls/Boys State, Student Council, National Honor Society, or Monogram Club, for one calendar year from the violation. Although the suspension is not reduced by doing so, it is recommended that the learner enroll in a local education program to receive information about the effects of misuse or abuse of mood-altering chemicals.
- E. **Second Offense:** After confirmation of the second violation, the learner shall lose eligibility in extra-curricular activities for 50% of the total number of originally scheduled regular season interscholastic events (minimum of one). If the Learner is participating in multiple activities during the violation, he/she will lose eligibility for 50% of each season. If the Learner is not currently participating in an extra-curricular activity, he/she will serve the suspension in the next activity which he/she is involved. (The official starting date of practice will determine the next activity). ~~the next six contests or 42 calendar days of a season in which the learner is a participant, whichever is greater. A learner in a fine arts program will not be allowed to participate in any public appearances during the 42 day suspension and must miss at least two performances, which may fall outside the suspension period.~~ Suspensions apply to all activities during the time frame and carry over to the following activity or year when not fully served. No exception is permitted for a learner who becomes a participant in a treatment program; however, before being re-admitted to activities following suspension for the second violation, the learner shall provide documentation issued by the director or a counselor of a chemical dependency treatment center that she/he has sought or has received counseling from a community agency or professional individual such as a drug counselor, medical doctor, psychiatrist, or psychologist. In addition, Learners will be ineligible to represent Brookings School District in any school-sanctioned public events or leadership groups including, but not limited to, Homecoming Royalty, Girls/Boys State, Student Council, or Monogram Club for one calendar year from the violation.
- F. **Subsequent Offenses:** After confirmation of the third or subsequent violations, the learner shall lose eligibility to participate in all extra-curricular activities for one calendar year from the date of the violation. ~~the next twelve contests or 84 calendar days in which the learner is a participant, whichever is longer. A learner in a fine arts program will not be allowed to participate in any public appearances during the 84 day suspension and must miss at least three public appearances, which may fall outside the suspension period.~~



Suspensions apply to all activities during the time frame ~~and carry over to the following activity or year when not fully served.~~ If, after the third or subsequent violations, the learner on her/his own volition becomes a participant in a chemical dependency program or treatment program, the learner may be certified for reinstatement in activities after **serv**ing a minimum **suspension of 60 % of the scheduled events of the current or next activity that the Learner participates in** ~~of eight contests or 56 calendar days.~~ Such certification must be issued by the director or a counselor of a chemical dependency treatment center and provided in writing to the Activities Director. **In addition, the Learner will be ineligible to represent Brookings School District in any school-sanctioned public events or leadership groups including, but not limited to, Homecoming Royalty, Girls/Boys State, Student Council, or Monogram Club for one calendar year from the violation.**

### **Grievance Procedure**

A learner penalized for violating the Code of Conduct may file form “[JFH](#)” with the building principal, indicating the following:

1. A rule is unfair;
2. A rule in practice discriminates against or between learners based on gender, age, race, color, religion, national origin, or handicap;
3. School personnel used an unfair procedure in assessing a form of punishment against a learner.

**Adopted: 05/1 1/1987 (51 I P9)**

**Revised: 06/13/1994**

**Revised: 08/11/1997**

**Revised: 06/12/2000**

**Revised: 01/08/ 2007**

**Reviewed: 08/12/201**

## BROOKINGS HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible to compete in interscholastic activities at BHS a learner must pass the minimum amount of coursework/credits that keeps them on track to graduate. That means a minimum of 5 credits of coursework must be taken two years and a minimum of 6 credits of coursework taken the other two years. Learners must pass all courses they are enrolled in to remain eligible for extra-curricular activities. Grades will be checked at the end of each 9 weeks. If a Learner is failing any class, they will become ineligible for 2 weeks, at which point grades will be rechecked. During that 2 weeks, Learners may practice but will not be allowed to participate in any interscholastic contest nor will they be able to make any public appearance with their team. If a Learner's grades are all above passing at the 2 week recheck, they will become eligible. If any grade remains below passing, the Learner will be ineligible for the remainder of the semester. All eligibility checks will be made by the Activities Director and/or the High School Principal.

~~To participate in activities a learner must have passed a minimum of 2.0 units of high school credit the previous semester, be enrolled in and attend a minimum of 2.0 units of high school credit in the current semester, and be passing a minimum of 2.0 units of high school credit at mid term and quarter. If the 2.0 units are not earned the previous semester, the learner is ineligible for the next semester. If a learner is not passing 2.0 units at mid term and quarter, the learner is ineligible until he/she is passing 2.0 units, with determination of eligibility to take place no sooner than 1 week following initial eligibility check. This means a learner is ineligible for a minimum of 1 week. All eligibility checks are to be completed by the high school principal.~~

## BROOKINGS HIGH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

A learner who is absent without permission of the building principal will neither practice nor participate in an event or travel on that **or the following day. The timeline of the suspension from participation will be determined by the administration's evaluation of the validity of the absence.** Learners with an excused absence may participate in all respects unless the absence is due to illness **that results in the Learner not being in attendance by noon on a regular day of scheduled school or in attendance for at least one Block Period prior to a contest or bus departure.** ~~Learners who have been excused due to illness must be in attendance for at least one Block Period prior to either a contest or trip.~~ Learners who are absent 20 or more days during a semester will be dropped from all activities unless the absences were excused for health reasons. Learners may not participate in activities during a period of out-of-school suspension.

**Attendance:** All learners will be allowed **10 unexcused absences** per semester.

After **7 unexcused absences** in one or more classes per semester, school personnel will send a letter to parent or guardian.

After **10 unexcused absences** in one or more classes per semester, learners are considered excessively absent and a letter will be sent to parent/guardian. Henceforth, the learner will only be excused in the case of serious illness (doctor's verification necessary within 2 days of absence) or other extenuating circumstances. If the learner is failing the class, he/she may be removed from that class (replaced with study hall) and will no longer receive credit.

**\*\*Learners/parents may appeal the decision of the school administration to drop the learner from class (es) by**

making a request to the principal or assistant principal.

### Excessive Absences

- 1) When a learner has accumulated 10 unexcused absences in one or more classes.
- 2) No credit for work missed will be provided.
- 3) Parents may contact administration to discuss excessive absences. Administration has the right to be flexible with granting no credit for work missed.

Learners 18 years old or older who have excessive absences may be dropped from all classes; they may be considered for re-enrollment the following semester.

Absences will be classified as excused or unexcused.

Excused Absences include but are not limited to: funeral, family emergency, court, illness, surgery, religious holidays, hazardous weather, parent request, school-sponsored and school-recognized activities, college visits

Unexcused Absences include but are not limited to: hair appointments, tanning appointments, staying at home to study for a test, truancy, out of school suspension

~~Learners have 2 days to~~ **Learners must** clear absences. **prior to the next scheduled practice, event or travel.** If absence is not cleared by parent/guardian, the absence will be considered **unexcused** ~~truancy~~ and the discipline policy will apply.

Due to [SDCL 13-27-1](#) (Compulsory School Attendance), caregivers are required by law to send their child (ren) (six years – eighteen years old) to school on a regular basis. After 10 unexcused absences, the Brookings School District will submit a truancy report to law enforcement indicating missed classes/days of school. Law enforcement will submit all truancy requests to the Deputy State’s Attorney’s office.

## ATHLETIC AWARDS

Basketball, competitive cheer, competitive dance, cross country, football, golf, gymnastics, sideline cheer, soccer, softball, tennis, track & field, volleyball, and wrestling are the interscholastic sports which are sponsored by Brookings High School. Basketball, cross country, football, golf, tennis, track and field, volleyball, and wrestling are sponsored at the Mickelson Middle School. Baseball, clay shooting, bowling, tae kwon do, and swimming are recognized as club sports at Brookings High School.

Athletes must complete a season in “good standing” in order to either be eligible for any award or to earn credit for special awards. If either a hardship case or extenuating circumstances exist, that may warrant special consideration of whether or not an athlete should or should not receive an award, the head coach and/or staff will make a recommendation to the activities director for a final decision.

Brookings High School holds an Annual Athletics Awards banquet that recognizes special achievements in and contributions to Bobcat Varsity Interscholastic Athletics and Club Sports.

### Major Award – Varsity Letter

Each athlete will receive a varsity letter and a Sports Pin when they, first, meet the athletic department competition requirements through varsity competition in any sport. ~~Boys are awarded a black letter, and girls earn a red letter.~~ Each time the participant letters they will receive a Gold Bar in Addition to the Sport of Activity pin they receive during their first letter in that sport or activity.

Winning a letter in each sport involves many variables, exceptions, and unique situations. As a result, defining a number of quarters or games or time to determine a Letterwinner is neither practical nor fair. Thus, the standard used to determine if an athlete is a Letterwinner or not will be this: A head coach/advisor will award a Letter at his/her discretion based on whether or not he/she deems an athlete to have made a significant & consistent contribution to the varsity program that season.

~~**Basketball, Football and Soccer:** Must compete in one half of the total quarters or halves of the regular season schedule.~~

~~**Golf, Gymnastics, Tennis and Wrestling:** Must compete in one half of the regular season schedule or place in either an ESD, Regional, or State Tournament.~~

~~**Cross Country:** Must compete in one half of the regular season schedule or place at an invitational meet, the ESD meet, or the State meet.~~

~~**Track and Field:** Must compete in one half of the regular season schedule or earn a total of twelve (12) points during the season, place in either the ESD meet or the Howard Wood Dakota Relays, or qualify for the State meet in accordance with SDHSAA standards.~~

~~**Volleyball, Competitive Cheer, Competitive Dance & Softball:** Must compete in one half of the regular season schedule.~~

**Sideline Cheer:** ~~Attend at least 90% of all games, practices and training sessions unless approved by the coach.~~

**Managers:** ~~Must complete two seasons in the same sport.~~

**Team:** ~~When a team wins either ESD or State Championship, the entire varsity squad may earn letters with the coach's recommendation.~~

**Seniors:** ~~Who have completed both their junior and senior seasons in the same sport, but who have not attained the competition requirements, will qualify for a varsity letter when recommended by the coaching staff.~~

**Recognized Club Sports:** ~~Criteria as approved by the Activities Administrator~~

### **Scholar Athlete**

Each varsity athlete, who earns a grade point average of 3.5 during the quarter of participation, will be recognized with a Varsity Scholar Athlete Certificate.

### **Varsity – MVP, MInsP, MImp**

At the conclusion of each athletic season, teams select a Most Valuable, Most Inspirational, and Most Improved athlete. These athletes are recognized with an individual plaque at the postseason awards banquet as well as on a school plaque in the athletic department trophy case.

### **Outstanding Senior Athlete**

As an incentive for multi-sport participation, this special award can be earned by any senior athlete, who participates in an interscholastic sport during each session in their junior year and letters during three seasons in their senior year.

### **White Letter – Coaches’ Award**

The white letter award was initiated by the Bobcat Head Coaches, as a special incentive to participate in multiple, interscholastic sports. It acknowledges outstanding interscholastic athletics as well as club sport and activity participation. Recipients must earn 30 points – during three consecutive years – and must continue to participate in the sports in which they have earned a major award (or in another sport during those seasons). Note: each recipient must earn a minimum of three varsity letters (15 points) in interscholastic sports in order to qualify for the white letter. This special coaches’ award remains the property of the athletic department until graduation, and may be revoked either due to a lapse in participation or learner misconduct. The white letter is awarded at the Annual Athletic Awards banquet and pictures of white letter recipients are displayed above the athletic department trophy cases. White letter recipients who continue to participate, in all sports – in which points have been earned during their senior year, will be awarded a white letter plaque at the annual awards banquet.

#### White Letter Points

Frosh Sports-1 point	Soph Sports-1 point	Junior Sports-1 point	Varsity Scholar Athlete-1 point
Varsity Letter-1 point	Most Valuable-1 point	Most Improved-1 point	Most Inspirational-1 point
Varsity Manager-1 point	O-S-S Cond.-1 point	NHS Member-1 point	Outstanding Sr. Athlete-1 point
Monogram Club-1 point	Monogram Officer-1 point	FFA/FCCLA-1 point	Learner Govt.-1 point
Band/Orch/Choir-1 point	Debate/Oral Interp-1 point	Drama/Improv-1 point	Learner Publication-1 point

## MICKELSON MIDDLE SCHOOL

### Certificates

Each athlete who completes a season in “good standing” will receive a certificate of participation.

### Bobcat Award

Athletes that earn a total of 25 points as a result of athletic as well as non-athletic participation will be awarded the Certificate. In order to qualify for a Bobcat award, the athlete must earn 50% (6) of the competition points (12).

## PARENT or GUARDIAN & COACH COMMUNICATION

Parenting and coaching are both extremely difficult vocations. Mutual understanding and respect contributes to the acceptance of the actions of both parties for the greater benefit of the learner. As parents or guardians, you need to understand the expectations of specific programs. **You can expect your child's coach to communicate:**

1. Philosophy
2. Expectations of your child as a squad member.
3. The potential for injury and risk management procedures.
4. Learner conduct responsibilities and consequences.

As your child becomes involved in activities, he/she will experience some very rewarding moments and have the opportunity to learn many of life's lessons. There may be times when your child and/or you may be disappointed. Please encourage your child to communicate questions and concerns directly to the coach(es) by following the procedures listed below:

1. Learner communicates with grade level coach.
2. Learner and grade level coach communicate with the head coach.
3. Learner and parents communicate with coaches and activities director.

Coaches are professionals who are involved in highly competitive, interscholastic sports. They are expected to make team decisions, based upon what they believe is best for all participants. Certain issues must be left to the discretion of the coach. **Topics that are not appropriate to discuss with the coach include:**

1. The playing time of team members.
2. Team strategy.
3. Play calling.
4. Other athletes.

Neither a learner or a parent/guardian are to confront a coach either before or after a contest or practice. These times can be emotional for both parents/guardians and coaches. Meetings of this nature do not promote the resolution of issues.

## FUNDAMENTALS OF SPORTSMANSHIP

Reprinted from the SDHSAA Newsletter

One of the missions of co-curricular school activities is to serve as an extension of the classroom.

There are strong lessons to be learned in athletics, speech and music. One of those lessons is to set and maintain high standards of sportsmanship, ethics and integrity in our schools and our society. It is up to each of us to provide the direction under which good sportsmanship can prosper and have a positive impact on our society.

As we begin the school year, please take a few minutes to emphasize to your learners, coaches, and fans what is expected of them at an athletic event as a competitor or spectator. After all, such events are an extension of the school day, and we should expect the same type of respectful behavior exhibited in the athletic arena as we do in the classroom. We urge you to ask your community to demonstrate self-control and self-discipline and at the same time, enjoy the games.

Everyone should keep the following fundamentals in mind while attending a high school event.

- ▶ **Gain an Understanding and Appreciation for the Rules of the Contest.** The necessity to be well informed is essential. Know the rules. If you are uninformed, refrain from expressing opinions on the officials, coaches, players or administrative decisions.
- ▶ **Exercise Representative Behavior at All Times.** Good sportsmanship requires one to understand personal prejudices that may become a factor in his/her behavior. The true value of interscholastic competition relies on everyone exhibiting behavior which is representatives of a sound value system.
- ▶ **Recognize and Appreciate Skilled Performance Regardless of Affiliation.** Applause for an opponent's good performance displays generosity and is a courtesy that should be regularly practiced. This not only represents good sportsmanship, but also reflects a true awareness of the game by recognizing and acknowledging quality.
- ▶ **Exhibit Respect for the Officials.** The officials of any contest are impartial arbitrators who are trained and who perform to the best of their ability. Mistakes by those involved in the contest are part of the game. We should not rationalize our own poor or unsuccessful performance or behavior by placing responsibility on the officials.
- ▶ **Display Respect for Opponents.** Opponents are guests and should be treated cordially, and with thoughtfulness. They should be treated the same as a guest in your own home.
- ▶ **Display Pride in Your Actions at Every Opportunity.** Never allow your ego to interfere with good judgment. Regardless of whether you are a learner, player, coach or official, this value is paramount since it suggests that you care about yourself and how others perceive you.
- ▶ **Always Practice the Golden Rule.** Always treat others the way you would expect them to treat you.

**Remember: Sportsmanship Begins With You!**