

District Policy

9162 - SPECTATOR CODE OF CONDUCT

Section: Community

9162 SPECTATOR CODE OF CONDUCT

The Board of Education requires that all individuals involved in or attending the athletic and intramural programs sponsored by the Board exhibit sportsmanship when representing the school at any athletic or intramural event. A spectator is defined as any person, including but not limited to an athletic department staff member, staff member, student-athlete, or a fan, involved in or attending such an event.

The purpose of this policy is to establish the expectations of appropriate behavior at athletic and intramural events and the consequences for failing to abide by these expectations. Per NJSIAA requirements this policy must:

1. Be provided to the parents/guardians of participating student-athletes and require a sign-off indicating understanding of the policy during the school's sports registration process.
 2. Include expectations of appropriate behavior at interscholastic events and the disciplinary actions that will be taken when the policy is violated. The disciplinary actions must include, at minimum, a suspension from attending future interscholastic event(s) and require an educational component.
 3. Include increased disciplinary actions for multiple violations in a defined period of time; and
1. Be made available to NJSIAA staff upon request.

Sportsmanship is defined as abiding by the rules of the contest as defined or accepted by the participating teams. All spectators are expected to exhibit sportsmanship as defined in **Board Policy 5570** – Sportsmanship. In exhibiting sportsmanship all spectators shall:

1. Respect and follow the rules of the contest;
1. Recognize skilled performance of others regardless of affiliation;
 1. Display respect for all individuals participating in the athletic event;
 1. Treat opponents in an empathetic manner; and
 1. Congratulate opponents in victory or defeat.

Unsportsmanlike conduct shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Any person who strikes or physically abuses an official, coach, player, or spectator;
1. Any person who intentionally incites participants or spectators to violent or abusive action;
1. Any person who uses obscene gestures or profane or unduly provocative language or action towards officials, coaches, opponents, or spectators;
1. Any person who engages in harassing verbal or physical conduct which exhibits bias based on any of the protected categories listed at N.J.A.C. 6A:7-1.1(a);
1. Any person who is publicly critical of a game official, opponents, and/or coaches/players;
1. Any person who enters the field of play – before, during, or after an interscholastic event;
1. Any person who uses artificial noisemakers or other instruments intended to disrupt the interscholastic event or distract the participants during an interscholastic event;
1. Any person who verbally harasses an official or player by using names or uniform numbers;
1. Any person who engages in a physical altercation with an official, coach, player, or spectator – before, during, or after an interscholastic event;
1. Any person who displays conduct judged by the Principal or Director of Athletics to be unsportsmanlike in character; and
1. Any person who violates the rules of the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association.

Per Board Policy 5570 - Sportsmanship, schools are not permitted to conduct pre-meet/game activities of an intimidating nature, e.g., the use of fog machines, the blaring of sirens or loud music/unusual sound effects, strobe/unusual lighting effects, or similar type activities.

Unsportsmanlike conduct will be addressed by officials, school supervisors, administrators or site staff. Prior to disciplinary action, a warning may given at the discretion of the officials, school supervisors, administrators, or site staff depending on the nature of the offense. For example, a verbal infraction may result in an initial warning, whereas a physical infraction will result in immediate disciplinary action. Likewise, if the offense is egregious, officials, school supervisors,

administrators, or site supervisors may use discretion in administering disciplinary actions from any listed in the first, second, or third offense categories below.

Per NJSIAA guidelines, any person who exhibits unsportsmanlike conduct may be subject to the following disciplinary actions:

First Offense (365 Day calendar starts):

Immediate removal from the event and school premises. If the individual refuses to leave the venue, play will be stopped until they vacate the premises.

1. Suspension as follows:
 - Two (Home) game suspension from the sport ejected and all other (Home) events. One (Home) game suspension in the sport of Football.
 - The event at which the incident occurred does not count toward the suspension(s).
 - If the offense occurs during the last game of the season, suspension will carry over into subsequent regular season/sport.
 - If offense occurs during last game of the Spring season, suspension will carry over into the following regular fall, winter, or spring season for all school sport events.
 - If offense occurs to a Senior parent or spectator in which no other games are left on the calendar the individual may be barred from the school premises for the remainder of the school year.
1. Required completion of the NFHS Sportsmanship Course and submission of the course certificate to the Athletic Director prior to attendance at future home interscholastic event.

Second Offense: (occurs within the 365-day calendar of first occurrence)

Immediate removal from the event and school premises. If the individual refuses to leave the venue, play will be stopped until they vacate the premises.

1. Required follow-up meeting with school administration (Athletic Director/Principal) and receipt of letter memorializing the events.
1. Suspension as follows:
 - Four (Home) game suspension from the sport ejected and all other (Home) events. Two (Home) game suspension for the sport of Football.
 - The event at which the incident occurred does not count toward the suspension(s).
 - If the offense occurs during the last game of the season, suspension will carry over into subsequent regular season sport events.
 - If offense occurs during last game of the Spring season, suspension will carry over into the following regular fall, winter, or spring season for all school sport events.

- If offense occurs to a Senior parent or spectator in which no other games are left on the calendar the individual may be barred from the school premises for the remainder of the school year.

Third Offense: (occurs within the 365-day calendar of first occurrence)

Immediate removal from the event and school premises. If the individual refuses to leave the venue, play will be stopped until they vacate the premises.

1. Required follow-up meeting with school administration (Athletic Director/Principal) and receipt of letter memorializing the events.
1. Suspension as follows:
 - Suspension for the remainder of the current season and for one (1) year from date of the third occurrence.
 - Required completion and submission of completion certificate of a National Federation of High School Sport "NFHS Learn" (www.nfhslearn.com) course, such as:
 1. Positive Parenting within School Programs
 1. Sportsmanship
 1. Teaching and Modeling Behavior
 1. The Parent Seat

Failure of a member school to enforce its policy may result in discipline by the NJSIAA. In addition to the penalties set forth in Article X of the NJSIAA Bylaws, a school that does not enforce its policy may be prohibited from hosting an NJSIAA state tournament event.