



# NEW BERLIN EISENHOWER LIONS

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## ATHLETICS & ACTIVITIES COMMUNICATION POLICY

### PLAYER-COACH & COACH-PARENT COMMUNICATION

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. As parents, when your son/daughter becomes involved in a sport program, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your son's/daughter's team.

### COMMUNICATION YOU SHOULD EXPECT FROM THE ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT:

- Game schedules (listed on the website)
- Directions for completing participation forms
- Directions to athletic events (listed on the website)
- Monthly newsletters and updates

### COMMUNICATION YOU AND/OR YOUR SON/SON/DAUGHTER SHOULD EXPECT FROM THE ATHLETIC TRAINER:

- Training Room Procedures
- For your son/daughter - what to do for treatment of minor injuries
- For you, the parent - a phone call or email if your son/daughter needs the attention of a physician
- Any recommendations that are appropriate

### COMMUNICATION YOU SHOULD EXPECT FROM YOUR SON'S/DAUGHTER'S COACH:

- Explanation of coach's philosophy
- Expectations the coach has for your son/daughter
- Explanation of your son's/daughter's role on the team
- Locations and times of all practices and contests/travel information
- The Athletics and Activities Code of Conduct and the penalties associated with a code violation.

### COMMUNICATION COACHES SHOULD EXPECT FROM THE PLAYERS:

- When possible, 48 hours notification of any scheduling conflict.
- Any physical illness or injury that would prevent the athlete from practicing or playing. Any school and class conflicts that would cause them to miss practice or games.
- Coaches should expect and openly embrace feedback from their players.

As your son/daughter becomes involved in the athletic program at IKE, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their life. However, there will be times when he/she will encounter adverse situations that may affect their attitude. Although it is usually not apparent in the moment, adversity can also be a valuable moment or experience in a young person's life. Research proves that students involved in sports and activities develop traits and characteristics that are considered valuable assets later in life (e.g, time management, dedication, determination, ability to handle adversity, etc.). All students are encouraged to communicate any concerns with their coach.

### **APPROPRIATE CONCERNS TO DISCUSS WITH THE COACH:**

- Ways to help your son/daughter improve
- Concerns about your son's/daughter's behavior or academic progress
- The mental or physical treatment of your son/daughter
- The role your son/daughter plays on the team
- The behavior of teammates if deemed necessary

Coaches and administration very much understand that it is difficult to accept if a son/daughter is not playing as much as they had hoped. Varsity coaches here at IKE make decisions based on what they believe to be in the best interest for the team and your son/daughter. In many cases, this results in a student-athlete not playing as much as he/she desires. Varsity reserve programs are asked have a philosophy where each student-athlete on the team is awarded adequate and fair playing time.

### **CONCERNS NOT APPROPRIATE FOR PARENTS TO DISCUSS WITH COACHES:**

- Playing time
- Team strategy
- Play calling
- Other student-athletes

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

### **IF YOU OR YOUR SON/DAUGHTER HAS ANY CONCERNS TO DISCUSS WITH A COACH, THE PROCEDURE LISTED BELOW SHOULD BE FOLLOWED IN THIS ORDER:**

1. The participant should speak to their parent. The parent should avoid being the "middle man" and be a good listener. Discussion should focus on resolving the conflict. No resolution?
2. The participant should talk with the advisor/coach. The parent should avoid denying the participant this educational opportunity by meeting with the advisor/ coach on behalf of the participant. Following this session, the parent and participant should talk. No resolution?
3. The parent should call the advisor/ coach to arrange a meeting with the participant included. Please avoid approaching a coach after a game. Following this session, the parent and participant should talk. No resolution?
4. The parent should call the activities coordinator to arrange a meeting with advisor/coach and participant included. No resolution?
5. The parent should call the principal to arrange a meeting with the Athletics & Activities Director, coach and participant included.

### **THE 24 HOUR RULE**

Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent, the student-athlete, and the coach. Parents/guardians shall not confront a coach, team member, or official to discuss any "negative" game or practice situation until at least 24 hours has passed from the completion of the game or practice. 24 hours gives the parents as well as the coaches a "cooling off" period and time to think more rational. It's encouraged you to go to the coach first with any problems, but also ask that you respect the 24 hour rule.

### HOW TO APPROACH YOUR ADVISOR OR COACH WITH A PROBLEM

- The most opportune time to arrange a meeting is before or after practice. All successful problem solvers realize that effective communication only results when emotions are held in check. Therefore, out of respect for all parties, attempting to resolve conflict on game day is not effective and must be avoided.
- After a meeting is arranged, put your thoughts on paper. Rehearse. Take notes with you to the meeting. Use positive communication skills i.e. proper eye contact, respect, and emotional control.
- The advisor/coach must also seek to understand your position.
- Understanding does not necessarily imply agreement. After making your case, become an active listener. Seek to understand the advisor/coach position before defending your own.
- Take notes. Avoid interrupting.
- Remember that listening does not necessarily imply agreement for either party.

### WHAT CAN A PARENT OR COACH DO IF THE MEETING WITH THE COACH DID NOT PROVIDE A SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION?

- Call and set up an appointment with the Director of Athletics & Activities to discuss the situation. ***The Director of Athletics & Activities will not discuss a coach's decision on playing time, coaching strategy, play calling or other student-athletes. By virtue of their position, the head coach in each sport is given the authority to determine a student-athlete's playing time.***

As you probably are already aware, research indicates a student involved in athletics has a greater chance for success throughout schooling and into adulthood. IKE and the School District of New Berlin strongly support our Athletics & Activities. Many of the character traits required to be a successful student-athlete are exactly those that will promote a rewarding life after high school. We trust the information provided within this document will make both your son's/daughter's and your experience with the IKE athletic program a positive one. Thank you for all you do in supporting your child's involvement, and the New Berlin Eisenhower Athletics & Activities program!