



Excerpt 2015-16 OSAA Handbook, Rules

Rule 3 – Contests – Sportsmanship – Crowd Control

- 3.1. The arrangement of all festivals, meets, contests, or championships is the responsibility of the superintendent, assistant superintendent, or high school principal, subject to the Regulations of the Association.
- 3.2. When a festival, meet, contest, or championship is in progress, the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) rules governing such activities shall apply, except for specific deviations as approved by the Executive Board.
- 3.3. **Sportsmanship Responsibility.** The high school principal, coach and other responsible officials of each member school shall take all reasonable measures to insure that the school's coaches, players, students and supporters maintain a sportsmanlike attitude toward all events so that events may be conducted without unreasonable danger or disorder. All cheers, comments and actions shall be in direct support of one's team. No cheers, comments or actions shall be directed at one's opponent or at contest officials. Derogatory and/or unsportsmanlike language is not allowed. No player may be singled out by number, name or position with negative comments of any kind.

When a petition is filed alleging violation of this rule, the Executive Director may, at his/her discretion and with concurrence of any two Executive Board members, postpone any pending event which the Executive Director has reason to believe cannot be conducted without an unreasonable danger of disorder. All such protests shall be referred to the Executive Board, which shall proceed as provided in Rule 4. In addition to any other action the Executive Board may take regarding a protest alleging a violation of this rule, the Executive Board shall have the power to cancel or re-schedule the event involved, or to impose conditions on conducting it.

- 3.4. **Sportsmanship Violations/Penalties.** When the coaches, players, students, staff, or supporters of any member school engage in unsportsmanlike conduct, disorder or infliction of damage to persons or property in connection with any festival, meet, contest or championship sponsored by this Association, the Executive Board may treat such acts as a violation by the school of the Rules of the Association. Any school whose coaches, players, students, supporters, rooters or partisans take part in riots, fights, pilfering, painting or any other unsportsmanlike conduct shall be subject to penalty.
- 3.5. A member school shall not participate in any festival, meet, contest or championship with a school that has been suspended or expelled from the Association.
- 3.6. The Association shall conduct state championships as directed by the Delegate Assembly.
- 3.7. A school shall not be allowed to participate in more than one state championship in a given sport.

1. **Q.** Is the host school exclusively responsible for crowd control?
 - A. No. While the host school for any activity must assume a primary responsibility for the physical management of the activity, including providing for crowd control, this is a mutual responsibility. The visiting school also must take such measures as are necessary to insure proper behavior on the part of its own students and fans.

Excerpt 2015-16 OSAA Handbook, Executive Board Policies

64. SPECTATOR CONDUCT AT OSAA SANCTIONED EVENTS

(Revised Winter 2015)

In addition to the general expectations included in the OSAA Constitution, Rule 3, that school officials "...shall take all reasonable measures to ensure that the school's students and supporters maintain a sportsmanlike attitude toward all events..." the following specific expectations regarding spectator conduct at all OSAA sanctioned events, including regular and post season competition, are provided:

- A. All cheers, comments and actions shall be in direct support of one's team. No cheers, comments or actions shall be directed at one's opponent or at contest officials. Some examples of inappropriate conduct or actions that are not permitted are: turning backs, holding up newspapers or jeering at cheerleaders during opposing team introductions; disrespecting players by name, number or position; negative cheers or chants; throwing objects on the floor.

- B. Spectators are not permitted to have signs or banners (larger than 8 ½ by 11 inches), confetti, balloons or glass containers. **“Fathead” type items are considered signs and shall not be larger than 8 ½ by 11 inches.** Spectators are required to wear shirts.
- C. Spectators are not permitted to have artificial noisemakers. Some examples of artificial noisemakers are Thunder Stix, cowbells, clappers and air horns.
- D. Spectators shall not be permitted to use vulgar/offensive or racially/culturally insensitive language. Spectators shall not be permitted to engage in any racially / culturally insensitive action.
- E. Spectators who fail to comply with Association or site management spectator conduct expectations may be expelled from the contest.
1. **Q.** May home team schools display signs and/or banners at their home venues?
A. Yes, home team schools may display “permanent” signs and/or banners that are positive/supportive at their home venues. Examples are welcome signs, in-season rosters, league banners, league/state championship banners and sportsmanship banners.
 2. **Q.** May visiting schools bring signs and/or banners to hang at the host school’s venue?
A. No.
 3. **Q.** Are “run through” signs allowed?
A. Yes, so long as the message is positive/supportive.
 4. **Q.** May a school use an artificial noisemaker at specific times during athletic events?
A. In limited cases, yes. An example of an allowable use of artificial noisemakers by a school would be the firing of a cannon or the ringing of a bell after a touchdown is scored.
 5. **Q.** May spectators use small, handheld megaphones?
A. Yes, but only cheerleaders are allowed to use large megaphones. Neither cheerleaders nor spectators may use megaphones for banging on the floor or bleachers.
 6. **Q.** What are some examples of cheers that do not encourage a positive atmosphere?
A. Any yell that is intended to antagonize an opponent detracts from a positive atmosphere. “Air Ball! Air Ball!”, booing, “You! You! You!”, or “You Got Swatted!” are examples of yells that will not encourage a positive atmosphere. Conversely, a positive atmosphere is created when fans focus on positive yells in support of their team, rather than on negative yells attacking their team’s opponents.
 7. **Q.** May students stand on the bottom row of the bleachers?
A. Yes, but when they sit down, they must be seated on the second row.
 8. **Q.** May students cheer during serves in volleyball and free throws in basketball?
A. Yes, so long as they are just “making noise” and not specifically addressing a contest official or an individual player from the opposing team.
 9. **Q.** May a school use balloons at an athletic event?
A. Yes, a host school may use balloons for decoration. However, fans may not have balloons, and balloons may not be placed by the school in any manner that would block spectator viewing.
 10. **Q.** May a school use balloons at a state championship final site?
A. No.
 11. **Q.** May spectators have oversized foam fingers at athletic events?
A. Yes, they are allowed so long as they are not blocking spectator viewing.