



OSAA Equity and Diversity Newsletter

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How To Intervene When People Dishonor the Game

https://devzone.positivecoach.org/sites/uploads/files/PCA_HowToIntervene.pdf

All schools and youth sports organizations are subject to adult misbehavior at games, such as yelling at officials or opponents. Here are guidelines for how to intervene.

Be Prepared and Use Handouts. You never know when someone will misbehave, so your organization's "Culture-Keeper" will do well to wear a "We Honor the Game Here" button to games and carry Honoring the Game cards and stickers. If adults misbehave, handing them a card or sticker is often just the low-key reminder of what your organization expects of adults at an educational-athletic game.

Ask Questions. If handouts don't do the job, ask the misbehaving adults, "Do you think you are Honoring the Game right now?" or tell them, "You seem pretty upset." Turning their attention to you may stop them from yelling at officials long enough for you to remind them, "You may be right about the official's call, but in this organization we Honor the Game and show respect to officials even if we disagree with their calls."

Make Assertive Statements. If none of the above work, clearly state how you feel about this misbehavior. Examples: "That's not the way we do things in this organization!" or "Yelling at the official is not Honoring the Game" or "That kind of behavior has no place here." You might want to stand back during this phase of intervention to avoid invading personal space and any risk of escalating matters or incurring physical harm. If anyone becomes abusive to you or continues to act inappropriately, do not retaliate physically or verbally. Just withdraw and move on to the next step of intervention.

Official Warnings. If misbehavior does not cease, then official sanctions must take effect. If you are not an official of the organization (board member, administrator, etc.), contact one and ask that appropriate action be taken. If you are an official of the organization, you can keep this situation under control by consulting with game officials to warn the head coach of the team whose fans are misbehaving. The coach should be warned that his or her fans must behave properly or the game will not continue. The coach should tell the misbehaving adults that their actions are unacceptable.

Physical Removal. If all steps above fail, officials should stop the game until those who are misbehaving leave the premises. If they refuse, then the police should be called to remove them.

Remember, people watch how organizations deal with misbehavior. They will improve their behavior if they see that your organization means business.

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Changing School Culture Requires Intentional Focus

By Joe Kimling, CMAA On October 22, 2019

<https://www.nfhs.org/articles/changing-school-culture-requires-intentional-focus/>

Even though the Madeira High School Athletic Program (Cincinnati, Ohio) was successful in terms of competition, there was a feeling on the part of athletes, coaches, administrators and fans that there was room to grow.

Many people believed that the focus had drifted away from educational athletics and thought it was important to direct efforts back to the character and culture of the teams. By intentionally concentrating and trying to address the principles and values, the goal was to focus on something greater than results on the playing fields.

To set the Madeira Athletic Department apart from the other area schools and their programs, several meetings were scheduled to discuss the direction for the transformation and redirection. The committee was composed of community members, youth recreation directors, players, coaches and administrators. The task of this group was to help define the issues and create the foundation to be used moving forward.

The Plan

The committee thought that the characteristics which the community held close should be the focus and, as a result, believed everyone would buy in and support the new approach. After much discussion, core covenants were developed to share with players, coaches and community members – covenants that focused on qualities, characteristics and actions that were about more than winning. The phrase at the time was “Do You Measure Up.”

Initially, a covenant for players and coaches, and another for fans and parents, were created.

Covenants for Players and Coaches

- We are Measured by more than wins and losses.
- We are Measured by our dedication and preparation.
- We are Measured by more than individual success.
- We are Measured by our accountability to self, team and our community.
- We are Measured by more than participation.

We are Measured by our focus on leadership, character and integrity.

The “M” Standard for Fans

- Madeira Fans are Measured by our positive voice of support for the Madeira Community – a voice of respect for players, officials and fans.
- Madeira Fans are Measured by the active role we take in supporting all Madeira Athletics.
- Madeira Fans are Measured by our presence at the game, and taking a positive and active role for our community teams.

Where Did This Take Us?

The message went from the athletic fields to the hallways. After presenting the plan and covenants to the school administrative team, the focus went from an athletic culture change to a school culture change. This switch in attention and emphasis meant that the covenants needed to be revised and were represented by the three letters “DNA” – Different, Noticeable and Appealing.

How Did We Change our DNA?

The first vital step was to get students to buy into the concept. If this was going to work, the students also had to be a part of the process.

To accomplish this goal, a meeting with student leaders was scheduled in order to get their feedback on the plan, the covenants and the delivery system. The students participated in developing the messaging and the branding efforts which included creating the t-shirts. This piece of apparel would eventually be given to students and it was distinctive and unique, which illustrated the concept of being Different, Noticeable and Appealing.

The key factor to getting the student body to buy into this concept was to have students deliver the message. To accomplish this, the students helped to design the format and messaging that would be used and presented it at an all-student assembly.

The Challenge

Once the students were committed to this new focus, teachers were challenged to find something positive in every one of their students and to send them a post card, thanking them for their positive behavior. The desired outcome was to make sure every student had a positive referral (HI 5 Card) sent home during the course of the year. The administration made it a point to track the data for each card sent home and that each teacher wrote at least one.

The Result

In the first year of this initiative, 97 percent of the student body was recognized with a positive referral. Since 2013, the process has expanded to include students writing referrals for each other, staff writing referrals to staff and staff writing referrals to parents. The incredible, positive changes that have been experienced have led to the foundation for the anti-bullying and school culture initiatives, all of which are led by the student body.

Where Are We Today?

What started as a movement to put the focus back on education-based athletics has transitioned into a district-wide focus on school culture. This past year, the plan was to work with students and staff to create the Culture Playbook. This document provides a common language when it relates to our school district culture. It is an intentional focus on each individual's part to make sure that the culture is part of everyday operations. The playbook is used to drive various initiatives, as well as building and district goals.

Recommendations for Other Schools

If you are serious about changing your culture, you need to be intentional in making it your focus. It will not happen by accident. The starting point is to bring in your key stakeholders in order to start the conversation. Define your goals. Once you have your objectives in place, make sure you include students in the process in order to get their buy-in. And lastly, be serious and determined about making the change.

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