



Oregon School Activities Association

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TO: Athletic Directors and Baseball/Softball Coaches, Commissioners, and Umpires

FROM: Kris Welch, Assistant Executive Director (Baseball)
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SUBJECT: Procedures to Address Discriminatory Behaviors During a Baseball/Softball Contest

Thank you for all your work with students to make this a successful high school season for students. The OSAA continues to work with schools to address unsportsmanlike conduct and discriminatory harassing behaviors during interscholastic activities. We believe that with common steps to follow, including interrupting the behaviors occurring, we can more effectively stop acts of discrimination during high school baseball/softball games.

We want to remind you of behavior expectations of participants during a game, as well as expected steps to take if an incident of discriminatory harassment occurs.

When discriminatory harassing behavior is heard or seen by an umpire:

- Apply NFHS rule as it should be enforced resulting in the appropriate penalty, which may include restriction to the dugout and/or ejection from the contest.
- Speak with both coaches immediately regarding the incident that occurred and ensure that coaches address their teams on expected behaviors for the remainder of the contest.
- Umpires immediately alert event management of what has occurred so event management can follow through with the school(s) involved.

The OSAA encourages participants to report discriminatory behaviors to officials and event management when they occur during a contest. Below are steps umpires and event management must take when such behaviors are reported.

When discriminatory harassing behavior is reported to an umpire by a student or coach:

- Stop the game, immediately bring both coaches together to discuss what was reported. Explain to both coaches what behaviors were reported and that any such behavior will not be allowed to continue, and consequences will occur if reported again, including potential postponement of the contest.
- Return coaches to their students to explain what was reported and the consequences that will be applied if the behaviors continue, including restriction to the dugout and/or ejection from the contest.
- Umpires immediately alert event management of what has been reported so event management can follow through with the school(s) involved.

Discriminatory harassing behavior reported to event management by an umpire, student, or coach:

- Alert umpires to stop the game, to bring both coaches together to discuss what was reported. Explain to both coaches that those behaviors will not be allowed to continue, and consequences will occur if reported again, including potential postponement of the contest.
- Return coaches to their athletes to explain what was reported and the consequences that will be applied if the behaviors continue, including restriction to the dugout and/or ejection from the contest.
- Umpires and event management should be in communication throughout the remainder of the game regarding alleged behaviors.
- Event management contacts administrator(s) present at the game and follows through with the school(s) involved.

There are also applicable NFHS rules that shall be followed regarding unsporting conduct in baseball and softball:

NFHS Baseball Rules

3-3 BENCH AND FIELD CONDUCT

Article 1 ... A coach, player, substitute, attendant or other bench personnel shall not:

- f. commit any unsportsmanlike act to include, but not limited to,
 - 1. use of words or actions to incite or attempt to incite spectators demonstrations,
 - 2. use of profanity, intimidation tactics, remarks reflecting unfavorably upon any other person, or taunting or baiting. The NFHS disapproves of any form of taunting.
 - 3. use of any language intended to intimidate,
 - 4. behavior in any manner not in accordance with the spirit of fair play;

NFHS Softball Rules

3-6 BENCH AND FIELD CONDUCT

Article 13 ... Unsporting acts shall not be committed, including, but not limited to:

- a. use of words or actions to incite or try to incite spectators to demonstrate.
- b. use of profanity intimidation and/or deceitful tactics, baiting or taunting; or
NOTE: The NFHS disapproves of any form of taunting which is intended or designed to embarrass, ridicule or demean others under any circumstances, including race, religion, gender or national origin.
- c. behavior in any manner not in accordance with the spirit of fair play.

Points of Emphasis from NFHS: Sportsmanship

Unsportsmanlike behavior shall not be tolerated in interscholastic activities. Umpires and coaches need to work together for the benefit of the students they officiate and teach. It is these game situations that provide coaches and umpires excellent “teachable moments” to reinforce proper behavior and perspective. The positive values that are learned at the diamond will serve the young people long after their high school careers have ended.

Players are not allowed to stand or kneel outside their dugout/bench and make disparaging remarks to the other team. Rooting for your team is an integral part of high school activities. Supporting your teammates is extremely important and encouraged, however, making disparaging remarks toward your opponent is not part of the game, in fact it detracts from the contest. The purpose of interscholastic sports is educational. Chants/intentional distractions/loud noises (natural or artificial) directed at the opponent’s pitcher prior to pitching, the batter preparing to hit, or a fielder getting ready to make a play is not good sportsmanship and should not be accepted. We should strive to have our young people play to the best of their ability and let their natural talent be the barometer of their success.