

Office of Teaching, Learning, and Schools
School Support and Improvement – Athletics Unit
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Rockville, Maryland

July 26, 2021

MEMORANDUM

To: High School Athletics Coaches

From:  Jeffrey K. Sullivan, Director, Systemwide Athletics

Subject: Crowd Control Responsibilities and End-of-Game Procedures

Coaches have an important responsibility regarding security and crowd control at athletic contests. Coaches primarily accomplish their security and crowd-control responsibilities in three ways:

1. Careful supervision of all team personnel
2. Displaying professional, appropriate, and respectful behavior at all times
3. Following appropriate end-of-game procedures.

Supervision of Team Personnel

Coaches should carefully supervise all team personnel at athletic contests. Team personnel include student-athletes, managers, statisticians, volunteers, and others on the field associated with the team. Appropriate comments and respectful behavior should be addressed prior to contests. Inappropriate behavior should be corrected immediately.

Professional Behavior

Coaches have a greater degree of influence over the actions and behavior of spectators and student-athletes than any other person at an athletic contest. It is difficult to insist on appropriate and respectful behavior from spectators and competitors when coaches do not demonstrate appropriate and respectful behavior. Coaches accomplish an important crowd control responsibility by comporting themselves in a professional manner at all times, and by ensuring that all team personnel comport themselves in an appropriate and respectful fashion.

End-of-Game Procedures

An important potential source of confrontation and conflict at athletic contests occurs at the end of games. MCPS coaches should adhere to the following end-of-game procedures.

1. Speak to the athletics specialist or game manager when arriving at the site to determine when, where, and how the team should depart. Venues vary, but generally, the earlier a team departs, the better for all concerned. See # 5 below.

2. Immediately after the game ends, student-athletes should gather near the team bench. Take approximately one minute to make certain that all team personnel are composed, and remind student-athletes to exercise good sportsmanship in the post-game handshake. Coaches should also take this opportunity to collect themselves. If a coach has a concern to express to a game official or to the opposing coach, it should be addressed the following day when emotions will not interfere with the manner in which the concern is delivered and received.
3. Once both coaches are certain that all student-athletes and team personnel are composed, coaches should supervise student-athletes in the post-game handshake.
4. Student-athletes should gather again immediately after the handshake, and coaches should instruct team personnel on how to exit the stadium or game site. Coaches should escort the team.
5. Coaches should keep post-game talks to an absolute minimum. The post-game period is a potential time for conflict among spectators, many of whom linger until the teams depart. Generally, the quicker the teams leave, the quicker the crowd leaves. At some venues, it is best for the team to delay their exit to give the crowd a chance to disburse; but at most venues athletics specialists want the earliest team exit possible. Speak with the host athletics specialist or game manager prior to the game regarding exiting the venue. If coaches feel that they must speak to the team about the game, then they should do so on the bus ride back to school or upon arrival at the school.
6. Host schools should provide security personnel to assist coaches in escorting teams back to the bus, and coaches should supervise their student-athletes while they are on the bus. A source of conflict is spectators from the home school heckling the visiting team as they board the bus or after they board the bus. When student-athletes on the bus respond, tensions escalate. It is the home schools responsibility to control spectators, and the visiting coach's responsibility to supervise student-athletes on the bus.

JKS:rtm

Copy to:

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