



Burr Oak Community Schools

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Dear Students, Parents, Athletes, Coaches, and Fans:

While I can appreciate the enthusiasm and passion that comes with our students who are involved in athletics, we as a school district need to be sure that our actions and words represent good sportsmanship at all times. I would like to thank those of you who have maintained your composure during our school's athletic events.

Over the past month, I have been to various sporting events where I observed poor sportsmanship from both student athletes and parents. As well, some of these events have been live streamed and I have taken calls from the extended community about things that are overheard via the live stream. This is not acceptable and I know we can do better.

I have spent hours reading through research material about sportsmanship as well as through our own athletic handbook trying to figure out the cause of the problem and wondering if we should make changes. Basically what it boils down to is that sportsmanship is a choice.

What this means for the future for Burr Oak Community Schools Athletics:

I am asking the adults involved to role model good sportsmanship. School sports are for learning and growing. Yes, our teams strive to win, but it is a game and one team is always going to lose; sometimes that will be Burr Oak.

You can help your children and our district by doing the following:

- a. Yell only **positive comments** toward ALL children during games.
- b. **Let the coaches coach.** If you think you can do better, apply for the jobs when they become available; otherwise, please support them by helping out where you can.
- c. **Accept officials' decisions.** Let the referees ref without input. When you display negativity toward them, it does not change the outcome. Even if a referee is not the best, it will not change the situation other than by possibly making them not want to come back to Burr Oak. Refs are not easy to come by and we cannot have games without them.
- i. Coaches rate refs after every game through MHSAA. Allow your coaches to take care of this; it's part of his/her job.
- d. **Use clean language.** If a kid can be kicked out of a game for foul language by a referee or be given a personal foul, then fans/parents can get kicked out of a game for the same.
- e. If you have **valid complaints** about a situation, **please save them for after the game.** We have systems to follow, which are as follows:
 1. Wait 24 hours and then schedule a meeting with the coach; putting things in writing is also helpful.
 2. If you do not come to an agreement with a coach, then schedule a meeting with the coach and the athletic director.
 3. If you still believe a resolution has not been reached, schedule a meeting with the coach, the AD, and the superintendent.
 4. The final step would be to include the school board along with the aforementioned employees of Burr Oak Schools.

I appreciate your help in working toward improvement. Let Burr Oak Schools be known as a positive place for young athletes to compete and a place where good refs and good coaches want to work.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Kristina Owens

