

STATEMENT OF BEMIDJI ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY

We hope the information provided within this handout makes both your student's and your experience with the Bemidji School District athletics program enjoyable.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Independent School District #31, in cooperation with the family and community, is to be a proactive leader providing quality educational opportunities for all ages in a positive learning environment while meeting the challenges of a changing world through a continuing commitment to excellence.

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

It is the philosophy of Independent School District 31 that athletics be considered an integral part of a program of education providing experiences that will help young people to grow physically, mentally, and emotionally. Although it is tempting to emphasize the elements of competition and winning in an athletic program, these elements are controlled to the extent that they do not determine the nature of the program.

The belief that a student's educational experiences should include participation in athletics, both as a player and as a student, is an integral part of the philosophy of the athletic program. These experiences should contribute to the student athlete's knowledge, skill, and emotional growth, thereby making the athlete a better person and citizen. Participation in an athletic program is a privilege that carries with it responsibilities to the school, team, student body, community and student athlete. In their play and in their conduct, student athletes represent all of these groups.

The 9th grade philosophy is to allow students to participate in as many activities as possible. No cuts are made at this level. However, a transition occurs in the 9th grade, whereby all students in the Athletic program must participate, but not necessarily for an equal amount of time. We would hope that students who participate in our extra-curricular programs enjoy their experience regardless of their skill level. Most of our programs allow the students to compete against opponents with similar skills. At this level, participation and skill development are our main objectives. We would hope that the student athlete learns social and athletic skills through the winning and losing process.

The B, junior varsity and varsity philosophy is to participate at a higher competitive level, which, therefore, requires a greater amount of dedication on the part of the student. At this level it will be necessary to cut student athletes because of MSHSL restrictions place on official tournament squad size, lack of facilities, competition, staff or funds. It falls upon the coaching staff to evaluate/select the squads, based upon the skill level of those student athletes involved in the program. Although we believe that all students should have an opportunity to participate at the varsity level, the event outcome will not be sacrificed so that everyone has a chance to play.

As your children become involved in the programs at Bemidji Area Schools, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way you or your child wishes. At these times discussion with your student, which may lead to discussion with the coach is encouraged.

COMMUNICATIONS

Since research indicates a student involved in co-curricular activities has a greater chance for success during adulthood, these programs, fine arts, academic contests, and athletic activities, have been established. Many of the character traits required to be a successful participant are exactly those that will promote a successful life after high school.

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult endeavors.

Coaches and parents both want the athletes to have a positive experience as they participate in the sport or activity. Communication is the key to making that positive experiences a reality. Athletes, parents and coaches are all responsible for effective communications.

COMMUNICATION COACHES EXPECT FROM PLAYERS

1. Athletes should express concerns at the appropriate time and directly to the coach.
2. Notification of any schedule conflict should be made well in advance.
3. Specific concerns regarding a coach's philosophy and/or expectations.

COMMUNICATIONS YOU SHOULD EXPECT FROM THE COACH

1. Expectations the coach has for your student as well as all the players on the squad.
2. Practice and contests schedules.
3. Team requirements.
4. Procedure should your student be injured during participation.
5. Conduct violations that could result in the denial of your child's participation.

6. Any dramatic changes in the norm, which may directly affect your student. Ex. Tournament squad selection not anticipated.

IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN TO DISCUSS WITH A COACH

1. Call during school hours and set up an appointment with the coach. Bemidji High School hours are 8:00 AM to 3:30 PM. The Bemidji High School number is 444-1600.
2. If the coach does not return a call within two school days, please call the Activities Director during school hours and he will help to set up a meeting.
3. **PLEASE DO NOT ATTEMPT TO CONFRONT A COACH BEFORE OR AFTER A CONTEST OR PRACTICE. THESE CAN BE EMOTIONAL TIMES FOR THE PARENT, ATHLETE AND THE COACH. MEETINGS OF THIS NATURE DO NOT PROMOTE CONSTRUCTIVE RESOLUTION.**

WHAT A PARENT, ATHLETE, AND COACH CAN DO IF THIS DOES NOT RESOLVE THE CONCERN

1. Call during Bemidji High School hours and set up an appointment with the Activities Director to discuss the situation.
2. The appropriate next step can be determined at this meeting.

EXAMPLES OF APPROPRIATE CONCERNS TO DISCUSS WITH COACHES

1. Goals and regulations of program
2. The athletes mental and physical wellness - athlete behavior
3. Ways athlete can improve, evaluation of his / her talent
4. Relationship athlete has with the team
5. Situations where you can be of help to the program

EXAMPLES OF ISSUES NOT APPROPRIATE TO DISCUSS WITH THE COACH

1. Other players on the team.
2. Coaches character.
3. Making demands of the coach - playing athlete more, team strategy, play calling.
4. Concerns regarding Independent School District 31 or Minnesota State High School League policies the coach has no control over.
5. Other Bemidji School District personnel -- other coaches, administrators, support staff.

