



Arizona Interscholastic Association, Inc.

Arizona Accord

Preamble

At its best, athletic competition can hold intrinsic value for our society. It is a symbol of a great ideal: pursuing victory with honor.

The love of sports is deeply embedded in our national consciousness. The values of millions of participants and spectators are directly and dramatically influenced by the values conveyed by organized sports. Thus, sports are a major social force that shapes the quality and character of the American culture.

In the belief that the impact of sports can and should enhance the character and uplift the ethics of the nation, we seek to establish a framework of principles and a common language of values that can be adopted and practiced widely.

It is therefore agreed:

1. The essential elements of character-building and ethics in sports are embodied in the concept of sportsmanship and six core principles: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and good citizenship. The highest potential of sports is achieved when competition reflects these "six pillars of character."
2. It is the duty of school boards, superintendents, school administrators, parents and school sports leadership-including coaches, athletic administrators, program directors and game officials-to promote sportsmanship and foster good character by teaching, enforcing, advocating and modeling these "six pillars of character."
3. To promote sportsmanship and foster the development of good character, sports programs must be conducted in a manner that enhances the academic, emotional, social, physical and ethical development of student-athletes and teaches them positive life skills that will help them become personally successful and socially responsible.
4. Participation in athletic programs is a privilege, not a right. To earn that privilege, student-athletes must abide by the rules and they must conduct themselves, on and off the field, as role models who exemplify good character.
5. School boards, superintendents, school administrators, parents and school sports leadership shall establish standards for participation by adopting and enforcing codes of conduct for coaches, athletes, parents, spectators.
6. All sports participants must consistently demonstrate and demand scrupulous integrity and observe and enforce the spirit as well as the letter of the rules.
7. The importance of character, ethics and sportsmanship should be emphasized in all communications directed to student-athletes and their parents.

8. School boards, superintendents, school administrators, parents and school sport leadership must ensure that the first priority of their student-athletes is a serious commitment to getting an education and developing the academic skills and character to succeed.

9. School boards, superintendents, principals, school administrators and everyone involved in sports program governance must maintain ultimate responsibility for the quality and integrity of these programs. Such individuals must assure that education and character development responsibilities are not compromised to achieve sports performance goals and that the academic, social, emotional, physical and ethical well-being of student-athletes is always placed above desires and pressures to win.

10. All employees of the school must be directly involved in and committed to the academic success of student-athletes and the character-building goals of the school.

11. Everyone involved in athletic competition-including parents, spectators, associated student body leaders and auxiliary groups- has a duty to honor the traditions of the sport and to treat other participants with respect. Coaches have a special responsibility to model respectful behavior and the duty to demand that their athletes refrain from disrespectful conduct, including verbal abuse of opponents and officials, profane or belligerent trash-talking, taunting and inappropriate celebrations.

12. School boards, superintendents and school administrators must ensure that coaches, whether paid or voluntary, are competent to coach. Training or experience may determine minimal competence. These competencies includes basic knowledge of: 1) the character-building aspects of sports, including techniques and methods of teaching and reinforcing the core values comprising sportsmanship and good character; 2) the physical capacities and limitations of the age group coaches, as well as first aid; and 3) coaching principles and the rules and strategies of the sport.

13. Because of the powerful potential of sports as a vehicle for positive personal growth, a broad spectrum of sports experiences should be made available to all of our diverse communities.

14. To safeguard the health of athletes and the integrity of the sport, sports programs must prohibit the use of alcohol, tobacco, drugs and performance-enhancing substances, as well as demand compliance with all laws and regulations, including those relating to gambling and the use of drugs.

15. Schools that offer athletic programs must safeguard the integrity of their programs. Commercial relationships should be continually monitored to ensure against inappropriate exploitation of the school's name or reputation. There should be no undue interference or influence of commercial interests. In addition, sports programs must be prudent, avoiding undue financial dependency on particular companies or sponsors.

16. The profession of coaching is a profession of teaching. In addition to teaching the mental and physical dimensions of their sport, coaches, through words and example, must also strive to build the character of their athletes by teaching them to be trustworthy, respectful, responsible, fair, caring and good citizens.

