



NEW ENGLAND PREPARATORY SCHOOL  
ATHLETIC COUNCIL



# NEPSAC

## CODE OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT

As a basic principle, we believe that the lessons learned from fairly played athletics, whether interscholastic or not, and including games and practices, are of benefit to our students and our schools. The purpose of this Code of Ethics and Conduct is to define what "fairly played" means and to provide guidelines for NEPSAC athletes, coaches, officials and spectators alike to follow.

### **Proper Conduct and Good Sportsmanship:**

At the heart of this matter lie several terms which are often hard to define - yet no more important task confronts teachers and coaches than to set standards which are fair and honorable. Throughout this Code, when such terms as "proper conduct" and "good sportsmanship" are mentioned, they refer to such standards as these:

1. Treat other persons as you know they should be treated, and as you wish them to fairly treat you.
2. Regard the rules of your game as agreements, the spirit or letter of which you should not evade or break.
3. Treat officials and opponents with respect.
4. Accept absolutely and without quarrel the final decision of any official.
5. Honor visiting teams and spectators as your own guests and treat them as such. Likewise, yourself behave as an honored guest when you visit another school.
6. Be gracious in victory and defeat; learn especially to take defeat well.
7. Be as cooperative as you are competitive.
8. Remember that your actions on and off the field reflect on you and your school.

### **Purpose of Athletics In Our Schools:**

Athletics exist primarily as an essential part of the student's full education. As an educational process, they serve these purposes:

1. To teach and instruct students in the rules, fundamentals and skills of various individual and team sports; to provide physical training and physical outlet for adolescent energy.
2. To provide healthy competition and cooperation within and between schools, thus inculcating in each student the best principles of good sportsmanship.
3. To develop the other aspects of good sportsmanship which will best serve each student's education.

4. To maintain the spirit of true amateur competition.

### **Middle School Spirit of Competition:**

Along with the rules for middle school play, coaches should play with a good spirit of competition. The NEPSAC Code of Ethics provides the framework on which all game behavior should be based. Beyond that, middle school coaches should intentionally make the game a positive experience for everyone involved - players on both teams, coaches, officials and spectators. This means taking a leadership role with your team and setting standards of behavior. Running up the score, keeping a press on in a basketball game when the outcome is clearly evident, putting your starters in as a group when the score is already lopsided, and continuing a run and gun style of play rather than emphasizing passing and a set offense, all represent examples of coaching strategy which do not meet the intended spirit of middle school competition.

### **Guidelines For Coaches:**

1. Coaches shall remember that school athletics are primarily part of each student's education, not a goal in themselves. Coaches shall use athletics to help each student achieve the standards listed above.
2. Coaches shall assist each student toward developing his or her fullest potential in athletics.
3. Coaches shall remember that the behavior of a team can reflect the coach's own manner, attitudes, temper and approach to athletics, and shall conduct themselves in a way which brings credit to themselves, their team, their school and their sport.
4. Coaches shall be responsible not only for coaching their teams, but also for running games, dealing fairly and properly with officials, meeting before and after games and visiting coaches and players, and maintaining an objectivity and sense of balance commensurate with good sportsmanship. Coaches shall in particular preserve the tradition of shaking hands after games and matches.

### **Guidelines For Players:**

1. Players shall at all times represent themselves and their school with honor, proper conduct, and good sportsmanship. They shall understand that competitive rivalries are encouraged, but that disrespect for opponents is unsportsmanlike and lessens the value of the rivalries. They shall confine the competitiveness of the game to the field, and in particular behave properly on the sidelines and in the locker rooms both before and after games.
2. They shall comply fully with the rulings of the officials. In no way, either by voice, action or gesture, shall they demonstrate their dissatisfactions with the decisions made.
3. Players will not deface property or remove equipment of any kind from their own or another school.

### **Guidelines For Paid Officials:**

1. Officials shall arrive at school well in advance of game time, making themselves available to coaches and other officials, and shall be prepared to start the game on time.
2. They shall, in dress, conduct, and knowledge of the game rules, advance the objectives of this Code of Ethics and Conduct.
3. They shall bring understanding and patience to situations which involve young players who err through lack of skill, experience, and maturity.

4. Officials shall deliver in energy and speed their fullest capacities. The association requires, regardless of the level of the game or the size of the fee, that officials always give their best.

### **Guidelines For Spectators:**

1. Spectators - whether students, faculty, parents, alumni or friends - bear important responsibilities to the school for the atmosphere and conduct of games, whether home or away.

2. Spectators should watch games from those areas defined by each school as spectator areas. They must *not* run up and down sidelines, call to players, coaches or officials in an unsportsmanlike manner, go onto the field of play, or deface property. Any action which detracts from the ability of coaches, players and officials to do their best is not acceptable.

3. Faculty members should remember that their responsibilities for student discipline and behavior extend to disciplining and controlling students who misbehave as spectators.

4. The use of alcohol and illegal drugs should not be associated with any athletic event.

These standards are ones which NEPSAC expects all athletes, coaches, officials and spectators to meet.

### **NEPSAC Guidelines for Recruiting**

Secondary school coaches at NEPSAC schools should refrain, for the purpose of recruiting, from contacting directly a student-athlete at a NEPSAC pre-preparatory or middle school prior to that student athlete's final year. Likewise, secondary coaches should refrain, for the purpose of recruiting, from contacting directly a student-athlete who is enrolled at another NEPSAC secondary school unless the student-athlete and/or parent has initiated the contact with the school in question.

NEPSAC schools should refrain from allowing a candidate for admission to practice or "try-out" for a particular team.

Those schools and/or coaches who violate the spirit of the above should be reported to the Executive Board of NEPSAC for further action.

### **Expulsion Rule**

Players or coaches who are ejected from interscholastic games for "unsportsmanlike conduct" or other flagrant behavior will forfeit their eligibility to play or coach in the next regularly scheduled interscholastic game or tournament game played in that sport. We encourage a conversation between athletic director, coach and disqualified offender.