

October 8, 2018

To: Midland Parents and Patrons

From: Ryan Steines  
Raymond Dosland  
Lennie Miller  
Carol Reilly  
Doug Tuetken

Re: Fan Behavior

Our Midland fan base is one of the most dedicated and passionate in the State! The support that our student-athletes receive from our school community is second to none. Week in and week out this is demonstrated by the large crowds that attend our events, by the signs and decorations that students, staff and parents create, by the volunteering that our parents do for our programs, and by the monetary contributions that a number of parents, patrons and businesses donate to our programs.

But in recent weeks, there has been a concern that we are letting our passion for our kids and programs get in the way of how we should be truly supporting our kids. In the past few weeks, we have had two fan ejections occur. This is not what Midland support is about. We need to channel our passion to provide positive support for our teams and our kids. As adults, and knowing that we are role models for our children, we have an obligation to support our kids unequivocally, no matter what the adversity might seem to be. That is what first-class programs and school communities do. And in our opinions, we should hold ourselves to this expectation.

So, we please ask you to remember, that our student-athletes are competing in a *game*, and that the officials are human and will make mistakes. Officials have a difficult job with little compensation for the work that they are doing. I think you realize that spectators yelling and barking at the officials will not improve their on-field or on-court judgements. In the end, if our negative behaviors continue, we will continue to receive negative ratings that are reported each and every game to the Athletic Associations, and then, our school and kids will earn a negative reputation because of how our parents are behaving. No one wants this, and plain and simple, our kids and programs do not deserve this kind of reputation.

Below are some things to remember when attending and supporting our student-athletes at Midland events.

#### **1. Cheer for the Team.**

Competitions are very high stress situations for our athletes. They need our positive support and encouragement to be successful.

**2. Don't criticize the officials, coaches, or the teams.**

Iowa has a major shortage of people willing to coach and officiate. The number one reason is player and spectator abuse. We need to encourage and thank these people who are willing to make school athletics a possibility.

**3. Think about how others see you.**

Imagine that your actions and negative behaviors and comments were recorded. How would you and others feel about it?

**4. Remember that the game is about our student-athletes.**

Do everything in your power to support our student-athlete **positively**. Keep negative comments from reaching others and most importantly from the players, coaches, and officials. Remain positive during times of adversity. That is much more effective in motivating our kids.

**5. Be a strong role model for our students.**

As adults, we are the ones that athletes look up to and idolize. Whatever actions we show, they are likely to mimic them during competitions and their everyday life.

**6. When it's all said and done, competing is about much more than the game.**

Although we would like to see every competition end in a victory, the main concern is that our athletes learn from their experiences, and to overcome adversity and work together even when things don't always go our way. Every competition should be an enjoyable experience for everyone; including our athletes, coaches, fans, workers, and officials.

If we do have fans that cannot remain positive, the following protocol will be enforced:

If a Midland spectator is ejected from a home or away event, the following procedure will be followed:

A meeting will be held with the Activities Directors and/or Administration.

1st offense: Not allowed to attend the next event in that sport

2nd offense: Not allowed to attend any event in that sport for the rest of the season

3rd offense: Not allowed to attend any Midland sporting event for 1 year

Again, we understand the frustration at times, but we *cannot* let our emotions overcome the spirit and intent of the game. It is about the kids and their experience on the field and/or court; it is not about us. Make competitions positive experiences for all of those involved. This is who we are at Midland!