

SPORTSMANSHIP LETTER – *from Mark Kryka, Verona High School*

Dear AD's:

As we prepare for the remainder of our winter tournament season, it is an appropriate time to review the goals of our programs as they relate to sportsmanship. As educational institutions, our schools should be committed to teaching our young people to set goals, strive for excellence, and react properly to adversity. The aim is the same in the classroom as it is in the competitive setting.

The greatest challenge to good sportsmanship is adversity. When things are not going well, the easy response is to shift the blame, and in particular, to shift it away from ourselves to our opponents or the officials. As teachers and coaches we feel it is essential that our athletes maintain a positive approach to adversity. We need the support of our parents/spectators/administrators as role models if we are to accomplish this goal.

In this regard, we would like to suggest that abusive and negative behavior is counter-productive to the educational goals of our programs. In addition, it creates a very uncomfortable environment for the fans who want to support the team and enjoy the game. Finally, this type of behavior is an embarrassment to the athletes. We are asking "ALL" fans to keep comments positive and upbeat. In the face of unsportsmanlike conduct of our opponents, we point to the value in "taking the high road" rather than succumbing to an unsportsmanlike response.

School administrators hire contest officials who are deemed competent by our coaches and athletic administration. Their efforts and decisions may not be perfect and their interpretation of the action may be different from yours. However, we ask that you recognize they do their best and that they are an essential part of the game. Please strive to pay less attention to their performance and focus more on the skills of our athletes. Let's unite in supporting a successful basketball season.

Sincerely,

Mark Kryka, Athletic Director