

Parent & Coach Communication Guide

2009 – 2010

Guide to Parent/Coach Communication
East Wake Academy Athletic Department

The Parent-Coach Relationship

Parenting and coaching are both extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each role, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide a greater benefit to children. When parents have children involved in the EWA Athletic program, they have the right to understand what expectations are placed on their sons or daughters. This begins with clear communication from the coach of the sport.

Communications you should expect from your child's coach:

East Wake Academy requires coaches to hold parent/player/coach meeting before or near the beginning of each season. Although this might not be the only forum for coaches to communicate with parents, it provides an excellent opportunity for them to talk about a wide variety of subjects that parents need and want to hear. While the following list is not meant to be an agenda for every meeting, here are some topics that should be considered.

1. The philosophy of the coach
2. Expectations and goals for the team and the season
3. Locations and times of practices and games
4. Team requirements, special equipment, strength and conditioning and off-season programs
5. Procedure if your child is injured during participation
6. Team and school conduct rules
7. Eligibility requirements including attendance
8. Lettering criteria
9. Proper care and responsibility for equipment issued by the school

Communication coaches expect from parents:

1. Concerns are expressed directly to the coach
2. Notification of any scheduling conflicts in advance
3. Notification of illness or injury as soon as possible

The purpose of the athletic program at East Wake Academy is to support the academic mission of the school. One of the goals of the program is to enable students to experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives outside the classroom. Unfortunately, there may be times when things do not always go the way you and your child wish. At these times, discussion with the coach is encouraged. The coach is the adult who has the most insight into the details of the situation.

Communicating with the coach is the first and most integral step to understanding and resolving the problem.

If you have concern to discuss with a coach, we recommend this procedure:

1. Call or email the coach to schedule an appointment. Depending on the nature of the situation, resolution by phone or email may be inappropriate.
2. If the coach cannot be reached or does not acknowledge the request for an appointment within 3 business days of the request, call the athletic director. They will arrange a meeting.
3. Do not confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both coaches and parents. Meetings of this nature usually do not promote positive resolutions.

Appropriate/Inappropriate concerns to discuss with coaches:

The following topics are appropriate for discussion.

1. Treatment of your child, disciplinary consequences, etc.

2. Ways to help your child improve his or her skills
3. Concerns about your child's behavioral, personal, or academic growth

It is very difficult to accept your child not playing as much as you had hoped. Coaches make decisions on the basis of what they believe to be best for the team. While we truly don't believe in "winning at all costs," we make no apologies for coaching for success. As you can see from the list above, certain things can and should be discussed with a coach. On the other hand, the topics listed below should be left to the discretion of the coach.

We do not expect the coach to respond to questions involving the following topics.

1. Amount of playing time, positioning, event entry
2. Team strategies, game tactics, play calling, etc.
3. Any discussion about other student-athletes. We encourage coaches to ignore any concern or criticism delivered anonymously.

Player/Coach Conferences

All coaches should have an open-door policy for conferences with players. Players need to have confidence that their concerns will be heard and addressed with respect and confidentiality in a timely manner.

Parent/Coach/Player Conferences

If a parent/coach conference is scheduled (by appointment), we recommend the following guidelines.

1. The coach will meet with the parent or two parents or guardians of one player at a time. The coach is not expected to approve requests to meet with larger groups.
2. Although not mandatory, we highly recommend that the student be present for the parent/coach conference. Bringing all parties to the same table can effectively bring important issues to light.

The Next Step

What can a parent do if the meeting with the coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution?

1. Call or email the athletic director to schedule an appointment to discuss the situation. Please note that the athletic director will inquire about whether or not the parent has addressed the concerns with the coach.
2. If a meeting with the athletic director does not provide a satisfactory resolution, appropriate next steps will be determined.

Standards of Ethics and Sportsmanship For Everyone

Interscholastic athletic competition should demonstrate high standards of ethics and sportsmanship and promote the development of good character. Therefore, everyone involved with the program is expected to exhibit these traits.

1. Courage - having the determination to do the right thing even when others don't.
2. Good Judgment - setting priorities in accordance with team, county, state, and national rules.
3. Integrity - having the inner strength to be fair and courteous during an athletic event.
4. Kindness - being considerate, courteous, generous in spirit to the opposing team; treating others as you would wish to be treated.
5. Perseverance - being persistent in pursuit of worthy objectives in spite of opposition.
6. Respect - showing high regard for coaches, officials, opponents, fans, administrators, self, team, and the students of East Wake Academy.
7. Responsibility - showing reliability and consistency in words and conduct and being accountable for your actions.
8. Self-discipline - refraining from inappropriate behaviors and maintaining self-control at all times.

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