

NIAAA National
Conference 2025

Getting Back to the Basics of Education Based Athletics for Parents

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Workshop #30

The Philosophy of Education-Based Athletics

- What "education-based athletics" really means
- Differences between club sports vs. school sports
- The role of sports in overall student development

What Has Changed

Education vs Entertainment

What is the
purpose

Do we have the
same purpose?

Youth Sports

Financial
investment

Club dynamics and
systems

Trainers

Physical Activity

The loss of
playing outside, PE,
and recess

Coachability

Coaching vs
Bullying

College Sport Climate

What is “seen on
TV” vs reality

High School “Transfer Portal”

Changes to state
association rules

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What Hasn't Changed

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The NEED for Education based activity

The classroom court
connection for both
learning but also
trust building
relationships
between student
and adult

The Positive Effect

The outlet athletics
can be for a student
as well as the
motivation to
perform in the
classroom

Life Lessons

Leadership
Responsibility
Teamwork
Time Management
Resilience

Community Building

School athletics is a great venue
to create a sense of community -
within a group of students, within
the school, or within the greater
outside community

Redefining the Parents' Role

- PUT IT IN WRITING! Clearly define what you want your parents' role to be within the athletics at your school. Example:

- The parents' role is to support, not pressure, and to prioritize their child's fun and well-being over winning or performance. They should focus on encouraging life skills like resilience and sportsmanship, emphasize the child's effort and enjoyment rather than outcomes, and give kids ownership of their sports experience.

What Parents Should Be Doing or Saying

Be a supportive bystander: Attend games and practice, offer positive reinforcement, and be involved without being directive. *Define what being involved means*

Facilitate their child's interests: Help them explore and connect with the sport in ways that align with their personal growth and interests. *Child focused, not parent*

Praise effort and progress: Acknowledge little accomplishments, as these add up and build confidence.

What Parents Should Avoid Doing or Saying

Excessive pressure: Refrain from placing undue expectations, which can lead to negative motivational outcomes. *Does the child have the same expectations or are we living through them?*

Negative feedback: Avoid feedback that is critical or only focuses on the final result. *What does your post game talk look like? What are you saying from the sideline?*

Dismissing emotions: Don't ignore or dismiss a child's feelings about their sport; validate their emotions instead. *Also take the time to recognize what the rest of their day looked like*

How Do WE Help Get Parents Back There?

Educate parents on the true value of education based athletics

Promote positive, supportive environments

Empower parents to model positive behavior

Clearly communicate expectations and enforcement

Effective Communication Between Parents, Coaches, and ADs

Coaches preseason parent meetings

Consistent and constant communication of the mission and vision

Chain of communication: athlete → coach → AD (when necessary)

Constructive feedback and conflict resolution; having a clear and known path

Setting boundaries and respecting roles; having a clean and known standard

Redefining Success in High School Sports

**Moving away from
“win-at-all-costs” mindset**

**Celebrate growth, effort,
sportsmanship, and integrity**

**Teaching kids how to fail,
recover, and improve**

Intrinsic Motivation

Athletics as an Extension of the Classroom

Lessons Learned

Teaching and application in real time

Lessons learned transfer into the classroom

Coach as an Educator

A coach is a teacher - strategy, character, connection

Coaches are to challenge an athlete, not punish

Athletics as a Support

What keeps a student engaged - motivation but not threat

A second family - Mom/Dad - sister/brother

Do You Care this Much About the English Teacher

Are we questioning the new English teacher like we do the coach

Athletics don't compete with education - they complete it

Contact Us!

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Questions?



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