



Pursuing Victory With Honorsm

Code of Conduct for Coaches

CIF Member School: _____

We, in the California Interscholastic Federation, believe that high school athletic competition should be fun, but that it must also be a significant part of a sound educational program. We believe that those who coach student-athletes are, first and foremost, teachers who have a duty to assure that their sports programs promote important life skills and the development of good character.

We believe that the essential elements of character-building are embodied in the concept of sportsmanship and six core ethical values: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and good citizenship (the “Six Pillars of Character_{sm}”). We believe, further, that the highest potential of sports is achieved when teacher-coaches consciously Teach, Enforce, Advocate and Model (T.E.A.M.) these values and are committed to the ideal of pursuing victory with honor. Finally, we believe that sincere and good-faith efforts to honor the words and spirit of this Code will improve the quality of our programs and the well being of our student-athletes. This Code of Conduct applies to all full-time and part-time coaches involved in interscholastic sports.

I understand that in my position as a coach, I must act in accord with the following code:

TRUSTWORTHINESS.

- **Trustworthiness** Be worthy of trust in all I do and teach student-athletes the importance of integrity, honesty, reliability and loyalty.
- **Integrity** Model high ideals of ethics and sportsmanship and always pursue victory with honor; teach, advocate and model the importance of honor and good character by doing the right thing even when it’s unpopular or personally costly.
- **Honesty** Don’t lie, cheat, steal or engage in or permit dishonest or unsportsmanlike conduct.
- **Reliability** Fulfill commitments; I will do what I say I will do; be on time.

- **Loyalty** Be loyal to my school and team; put the team above personal glory.
- **Primacy of Educational Goals** Be faithful to the educational and character-development missions of the school and assure that these objectives are not compromised to achieve sports performance goals; always place the academic, emotional, physical and moral well being of athletes above desires and pressures to win.
- **Counseling** Be candid with student-athletes and their parents about the likelihood of getting an athletic scholarship or playing on a professional level. Counsel them about the requirement of many colleges preventing recruitment of student-athletes that do not have a serious commitment to their education, the ability to succeed academically or the character to represent their institution honorably.
- **College Recruiters** Be honest and candid with college recruiters about the character and academic abilities and interest of student-athletes.

RESPECT

- **Respect** Treat all people with respect all the time and require the same of student-athletes
- **Class** Be a good sport, teach and model class, be gracious in victory and accept defeat with dignity; encourage student-athletes to give fallen opponents a hand, compliment extraordinary performance, and show sincere respect in pre- and post-game rituals.
- **Taunting** Don't engage in or allow trash-talking, taunting, boastful celebrations, or other actions that demean individuals or the sport.
- **Respect Officials** Treat contest officials with respect; don't complain about or argue with official calls or decisions during or after an athletic event.
- **Respect Parents** Treat the parents of student-athletes with respect; be clear about your expectations, goals and policies and maintain open lines of communication.
- **Profanity** Don't engage in or permit profanity or obscene gestures during practices, sporting events, on team buses, or any other situation where the behavior could reflect badly on the school or the sports program.
- **Positive Coaching** Use positive coaching methods to make the experience enjoyable, increase self-esteem and foster a love and appreciation for the sport. Refrain from physical or psychological intimidation, verbal abuse, and conduct that is demeaning to student-athletes or others.
- **Effort and Teamwork** Encourage student-athletes to pursue victory with honor, to think and play as a team, to do their best and continually improve through personal effort and discipline. Discourage selfishness and put less emphasis on the final outcome of the contest, than upon effort, improvement, teamwork, and winning with character.

- **Professional Relationships** Maintain appropriate, professional relationships with student athletes and respect proper teacher-student boundaries. Sexual or romantic contact with students is strictly forbidden as is verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature directed to or in view of student-athletes.

RESPONSIBILITY

- **Life Skills** Always strive to enhance the physical, mental, social and moral development of student-athletes and teach them positive life skills that will help them become well-rounded, successful and socially responsible.
- **Advocate Education** Advocate the importance of education beyond basic athletic eligibility standards and work with faculty and parents to help student-athletes set and achieve the highest academic goals possible for them.
- **Advocate Honor** Prominently discuss the importance of character, ethics and sportsmanship in materials about the athletic program and vigorously advocate the concept of pursuing victory with honor in all communications.
- **Good Character** Foster the development of good character by teaching, enforcing, advocating and modeling (T.E.A.M.) high standards of ethics and sportsmanship and the six pillars of character.
- **Role-Modeling** Be a worthy role-model, always be mindful of the high visibility and great influence you have as a teacher-coach and consistently conduct myself in private and coaching situations in a manner that exemplifies all I want my student-athletes to be.
- **Personal Conduct** Refrain from profanity, disrespectful conduct, and the use of alcohol or tobacco in front of student-athletes or other situations where my conduct could undermine my positive impact as a role model.
- **Competence** Strive to improve coaching competence and acquire increasing proficiency in coaching principles and current strategies, character-building techniques, and first-aid and safety.
- **Knowledge of Rules** Maintain a thorough knowledge of current game and competition rules and assure that my student-athletes know and understand the rules.
- **Positive Environment** Strive to provide a challenging, safe, enjoyable, and successful experiences for the athletes by maintaining a sports environment that is physically and emotionally safe.
- **Safety and Health** Be informed about basic first aid principles and the physical capacities and limitations of the age-group coached.
- **Unhealthy Substances** Educate student-athletes about the dangers and prohibit the use of unhealthy and illegal substances including alcohol, tobacco and recreational or performance-enhancing drugs.
- **Eating Disorders** Counsel students about the dangers of and be vigilant for signs of eating disorders or unhealthy techniques to gain, lose or maintain weight.

- **Physician's Advice** Seek and follow the advice of a physician when determining whether an injured student-athlete is ready to play.
- **Privilege to Compete** Assure that student-athletes understand that participation in interscholastic sports programs is a privilege, not a right and that they are expected to represent their school, team and teammates with honor, on and off the field. Require student-athletes to consistently exhibit good character and conduct themselves as positive role models.
- **Self-Control** Control my ego and emotions; avoid displays of anger and frustration; don't retaliate.
- **Integrity of the Game** Protect the integrity of the game; don't gamble. Play the game according to the rules.
- **Enforcing Rule** Enforce this Code of Conduct consistently in all sports-related activities and venues even when the consequences are high.
- **Protect Athletes** Put the well being of student-athletes above other considerations and take appropriate steps to protect them from inappropriate conduct.
- **Access** Help make your sport accessible to all diverse communities.
- **Improper Commercialism** Be sensitive to and avoid unwholesome commercialism including inappropriate exploitation of my name or the name of the school and undue financial dependence on corporate entities. Make sure any affiliation or association with a corporate entity is approved by school and district officials.

FAIRNESS

- **Fair and Open** Be fair in competitive situations, selecting a team, disciplinary issues and all other matters; and be open-minded and willing to listen and learn.

CARING

- **Safe Competition** Put safety and health considerations above the desire to win; never permit student-athletes to intentionally injure any player or engage in reckless behavior that might cause injury to themselves or others.
- **Caring Environment** Consistently demonstrate concern for student-athletes as individuals and encourage them to look out for one another and think and act as a team

CITIZENSHIP

- ***Honor the Spirit of Rules*** Observe and require student-athletes to observe the spirit and the letter of all rules including the rules of the game and those relating to eligibility, recruitment, transfers, practices and other provisions regulating interscholastic competition.
- ***Improper Gamesmanship*** Promote sportsmanship over gamesmanship; don't cheat. Resist temptations to gain competitive advantage through strategies or techniques (such as devious rule violations, alteration of equipment or the field of play or tactics designed primarily to induce injury or fear of injury) that violate the rules, disrespect the highest traditions of the sport or change the nature of competition by practices that negate or diminish the impact of the core athletic skills that define the sport.

I have read and understand the requirements of this Code of Conduct. I will act in accord with this code. I understand that school (and district) officials as well as league and section officials will and should expect that I will follow this code.

Teacher-Coach Signature

Date

“Pursuing Victory With Honor” and the “Six Pillars of Character” are service marks of the CHARACTER COUNTS! Coalition, a project of the Josephson Institute of Ethics. For more information on promoting character education and good sportsmanship, visit www.charactercounts.com.