

# School Sports Are Vital To Ohio's Youth

# WHY WE PLAY

With the increased number of opportunities for young people today, along with the increased amount of exposure and the ever-increasing pressure to win, the purpose of interscholastic athletics sometimes gets lost. Therefore, one of the roles of the Ohio High School Athletic Association is to promote the purpose of interscholastic athletics and to make sure that these programs remain an important part of young people's educational experiences.

The purpose of interscholastic athletics is to enrich a student's high school experience; promote citizenship and sportsmanship; instill a sense of pride in community; teach lifelong lessons of teamwork and self-discipline, and help young people grow physically and emotionally. In short, interscholastic athletic programs are an extension of the classroom and exist to prepare students for the next level of life, not the next level of sports.

Statistics show that students who participate in these programs tend to have higher grade-point averages, better attendance records, lower dropout rates and fewer discipline problems than the general student population. Statistics also show that only one percent of all high school participants will earn a Division I college athletic scholarship and approximately five percent will play collegiately in any division. Unlike major colleges and professional sports teams, interscholastic athletic programs do not exist to entertain us.

So please keep in mind why we play the games. For many students, it will be the last time of their lives that they will ever compete in organized athletics. They should certainly work hard, have fun, make new friends and strive to be the best. But participants should also strive to be the best students, teammates and members of the community so that when they enter the next phase of their lives they are responsible adults and productive citizens.

## The Five W's of Interscholastic Athletics

### WHO?

We're educational athletics, not big-time event promoters.

### WHAT?

We're the builders of tomorrow's community leaders, not farm clubs for college and professional teams.

### WHEN?

We're an after-school activity, not a year-round endeavor. These are programs that should allow kids to be kids.

### WHERE?

Our games should be played locally. There's plenty of healthy competition where kids can learn and grow through athletics in most of our backyards. We don't need national schedules to accomplish our purposes.

### WHY?

Because it's the right way to do it. Schools offer these programs because they enhance the educational experience of the young people who participate.



# WHY WE COACH

## Coaches Fair Play Code

- I will teach my athletes to play fairly and to respect the rules, officials and opponents.
- I will ensure that all athletes get equal instruction, support and opportunities.
- I will not ridicule my athletes for making mistakes or performing poorly. I will remember that young people play to have fun and must be encouraged to have confidence in themselves.
- I will remember that young people need a coach they can respect. I will be generous with praise and set a good example.
- I will make sure that equipment and facilities are safe and match the athletes' ages and abilities.
- I will obtain proper training and continue to upgrade my coaching skills.

