



Dear Mom and Dad: Cool it

By Dr. Karissa Niehoff, Executive Director of the National Federation of State High School Associations and Dr. Robert Lombardi, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association.

If you are the mother or father of a high school athlete here in Pennsylvania, this message is primarily for you.

When you attend an athletic event that involves your son or daughter, cheer to your heart's content, enjoy the camaraderie that high school sports offer and have fun. But when it comes to verbally criticizing game officials or coaches, cool it.

Make no mistake about it. Your passion is admired, and your support of the hometown team is needed. But so is your self-control. Yelling, screaming and berating the officials humiliates your child, annoys those sitting around you, embarrasses your child's school and is the primary reason Pennsylvania has an alarming shortage of high school officials.

It's true. According to a recent survey by the National Association of Sports Officials, more than 75 percent of all high school officials say "adult behavior" is the primary reason they quit. And 80 percent of all young officials hang up their stripes after just two years of whistle blowing. Why? They don't need your abuse.

Plus, there's a ripple effect. There are more officials over 60 than under 30 in many areas. And as older, experienced officials retire, there aren't enough younger ones to replace them. If there are no officials, there are no games. The shortage of licensed high school officials is severe enough in some areas that athletic events are being postponed or cancelled—especially at the freshman and junior varsity levels.

Research confirms that participation in high school sports and activities instills a sense of pride in school and community, teaches lifelong lessons like the value of teamwork and self-discipline and facilitates the physical and emotional development of those who participate. So, if the games go away because there aren't enough men and women to officiate them, the loss will be infinitely greater than just an "L" on the scoreboard. It will be putting a dent in your community's future.

If you would like to be a part of the solution to the shortage of high school officials, you can sign up to become a licensed official at HighSchoolOfficials.com. Otherwise, adult role models at high school athletic events here in Pennsylvania are always welcome.



We request you to please share the following OP-ED piece with your parents and spectators. The Op-Ed piece has also been shared to various media outlets.

Upcoming Events:

February 7th—9th

Team Wrestling Championships
GIANT Center—Hershey

March 7th—9th

Wrestling Championships
GIANT Center—Hershey

March 13th—16th

Swimming & Diving Championships
Bucknell University—Lewisburg

March 21st—23rd

Basketball Championships
GIANT Center—Hershey

May 17th—18th

Boys' Team Tennis Championship
Hershey Racquet Club—Hershey

May 24th—25th

Boys' Singles/Doubles Championships
Hershey Racquet Club—Hershey
Track & Field Championships
Shippensburg University—Shippensburg

June 8th

Boys' Volleyball Championships
Penn State University—State College
Lacrosse Championships
West Chester East HS—West Chester

June 13th—14th

Softball Championships
Penn State University—State College
Baseball Championships
Penn State University—State College

**The Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association**

goal is to provide educational, character building opportunities for students through athletics.

319,000

Student-Athletes

1,434

Member Schools

766 High Schools — 668 Junior High Schools

1 GOAL



**PIAA RESOURCES**

Be sure to check out the following resources available to you on the PIAA website:

Links are located under the Resources Tab at [www.piaa.org](http://www.piaa.org)

[OPEN DATES](#)

[EVENTS](#)

[CLASSIFIEDS](#)

**2019 Spring Dates**

Boys' Tennis, Track and Field,  
Boys' Volleyball, Lacrosse,  
Baseball and Softball

**First Practice Date:**

Monday, March 4th

**First Inter-School Practice or**

**Scrimmage Date:**

Saturday, March 9th

**First Contest Date:**

Tennis: Monday, March 11th  
All Others: Friday, March 22nd

**2019 Spring Rules Meetings**

Click the Patch for Information on Spring Rule Meetings



**Basketball Inter-District Championships**

As a reminder during Inter-District Playoffs the designated home team shall provide the basketball for the entire contest. We will no longer be switching basketballs at halftime.



**ATTENTION WRESTLING COACHES:**

The deadline for senior high school wrestlers to establish their Minimum Wrestling Weight is **Friday, February 15th.**



**PIAA Wrestling & Basketball Championship Tickets:**

PIAA Wrestling Championship and Basketball Championship tickets are on sale. Do not wait to reserve your seat. Tickets can be ordered through telephone or walk-up. For more information on Wrestling Tickets, click [here](#). For more information on Basketball Tickets, click [here](#).

The GIANT Center Box Office is open Monday-Saturday 9:00 am — 5:00 pm and is located at 550 West Hersheypark Drive, Hershey, PA 17033. Phone number is (717) 534-3911.

**PA Attorney General & PIAA have teamed up for a Public Service Announcement Contest**

The PA Attorney General Office and the PIAA have partnered up to fight opioid abuse. As part of this year's "Don't Let Pain Become a Killer" campaign we would like to encourage school TV production studios and students to create a public service announcement (PSA) that raises awareness of opioid abuse in our communities.

The winning PSA will be played during the 2019-20 statewide telecasts of selected PIAA Championships broadcasts on the Pennsylvania Cable Network as well as on site on the videoboards at PIAA Championships. In addition there will be two cash prizes to schools to enhance their TV Production studios. For more information and contest rules, please click [here](#).

**2019 Pitch Count Baseball Adoptions**

1. An OFFICIAL PITCH COUNTER will be required for District and Inter-District Play-Off Games.
2. **For District and Inter-District Play-Off games only:**

The top pitch count threshold, per game, has been amended to 105 pitches and the weekly limit to 210 pitches.



**PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT CONTEST**

