

North Suburban Conference Protocol for Addressing Hate Speech at Contests

(Adopted April 18, 2018)

This Protocol for Addressing Hate Speech will be in effect at all NSC scheduled contests (exclusive of the IHSA state series) and is created to accomplish the following goals:

1. Make a clear statement that the NSC does not tolerate hate speech.
2. Demonstrate that addressing hate speech is more important than the game itself.
3. Address the situation early on so that it does not escalate into a worse incident later.
4. Demonstrate to the target and team that their concern is being heard and addressed.
5. Institute more severe consequences for an athlete who persists in using hate speech.
6. Allow time for emotions to cool down.

Hate Speech Definition and Policy Administration

Definition of Hate Speech:

Hate speech is any speech, gesture or conduct, writing, or display which is forbidden because it may incite violence or prejudicial action against or by a protected individual or group, or because it disparages or intimidates a protected individual or group. This protocol is designed to provide a consistent, rational framework for managing and dealing with situations at contests when an athlete or coach believes an opposing school's athlete or coach has used hate speech towards a member of their team. "Target" refers to the individual who heard the hate speech. "Alleged offender" refers to the individual(s) who allegedly used the hate speech. "Comment" refers to the hate speech that was used.

Administration of Policy

1. The target will inform his/her head coach of the following at the next stoppage in action after the comment was heard:
 - a. The specific comment made.
 - b. When and where the comment was made.
 - c. Identification of the alleged offender (number, position, etc.)
 - a. NOTE: if the target is unable to identify who made the comment, the target should still communicate what s/he heard to their coach and their coach should notify the official and opposing coach immediately
2. If the contest is being officiated, the head coach will immediately inform the official of the information above. The official will stop play and meet with the head coaches of both teams and host school administration (if present) and review the comment. The teams will go to their respective benches. The coach of the alleged offender, the official and an athletic administrator (if present) will meet with the alleged offender to ask the offender about the comment made.

3. If there is not an official present, the head coach of the target will inform the head coach of the alleged offender of the information above. The coach of the alleged offender and an athletic administrator (if present) will then ask the alleged offender about the comment made.
4. If the alleged offender admits to saying the comment, s/he will be ejected from the contest and suspended for the next contest and will be subject to the individual school's discipline policies and procedures for the use of hate speech.
5. If the alleged offender does not admit to saying the comment, the alleged offender will be informed by his/her coach that if the official or a coach hears any other use of hate speech from the alleged offender later in the contest, the offender will be ejected, suspended for the next contest and will be subject to the individual school's discipline policies and procedures for the use of hate speech. The coach/official will provide written documentation of what they heard to be included in the incident log.
6. The target will then be told by his/her head coach of the outcome. If the alleged offender did not admit to saying the comment, the coach will tell the target to continue informing him/her directly if hate speech is used again. Additional reports involving the same alleged offender will be shared with the official who will inform the other head coach but play will not be stopped unless the official actually hears the comment.
7. The head coaches of both teams will inform their Athletic Directors within 24 hours of ALL situations in which hate speech was suspected. The AD's will meet directly with any athlete identified as possibly using hate speech or alleging the use of hate speech.
8. If the target does not inform his/her coach about the comment until after the team has left the contest site, the coach shall inform his/her Athletic Director and that AD shall inform the other AD. Both AD's shall meet with their respective student-athletes (alleged offender and target) and then communicate back to the other AD of their findings. If the alleged offender admits to saying the comment, s/he will be suspended for the next contest and will be subject to the individual school's discipline policies and procedures for the use of hate speech.
9. The Athletic Directors will inform the NSC President of the incident who will document the incident in the NSC Hate Speech Incident Log.