ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING A CHAIN OF COMMAND

A well defined and maintained chain of command within a district can achieve your goals and lessen the chance of misunderstanding and confrontations that could diminish the experience. Conflict-resolution should take place at the lowest possible level.

Coaches/teachers should be required to hold a pre-season meeting with parents and students prior to the season. The meetings are a good time to distribute written materials, including athletic handbooks, parent/coach communication flyers, and code of conducts.

Effective and well organize pre-season meetings will lessen the chance of misunderstandings and confrontations.

There still may be times when things do not go the way someone wishes. Staff members should encourage the person to speak directly to the person involved, usually the coach.

Chain of Command

- Student Meet with the Coach
- Parent Meet with Coach
- Parent Meet with Activity Director
- Parent Meet with Principal
- Parent Meet with Assistant Superintendent
- Parent Meet with Superintendent
- Parent Meet with Board of Education

It is understandable parents wish to talk to principals and or superintendents before handling the issue at the lowest level. Such a break in the chain of command is counter productive. Most of the time the upper level administrator is not fully aware of all the facts pertaining to the situation and cannot render a sound and informed judgment. Further, if upper-level administrator is involved in the process prior to the coach then the decision at the lower level can not be appealed to the next level. If the chain of command is compromised on a regular basis, the system is in jeopardy of failure.

The thoughtful establishment and maintenance of a solid athletic chain of command will not eliminate conflict but will provide a tool for consistent management of communication. The integrity of the process is paramount to the success of resolving conflict.