

DERRY TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT – ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY

MISSION:

The Derry Township School District interscholastic athletic programs will provide learning experiences in a positive environment for student-athletes while helping them achieve both their academic and athletic goals to become champions in life.

Interscholastic athletic activity will serve as a vehicle to supplement and reinforce educational objectives and what is taught and modeled will be planned, developed, uniformly delivered and assessed. Athletes will be provided a safe, non-threatening and respectful environment that provides students with equitable opportunities to learn and develop skills. As teachers first, interscholastic coaches will create the most optimal learning environment to help facilitate success for all participants and be committed to the academic, social, emotional and physical development and well being of all student athletes.

VISION:

Interscholastic athletic programs provide opportunities to enhance the overall school experiences of student participants at both the Hershey Middle School and Hershey High School communities in general. Though winning is an instinctive objective in athletics, engaging and challenging student-athletes to help them discover and develop their talents, achieve skill mastery and reach their greatest potential will be our highest priority. With the exception of safety concerns, all student-athletes will be provided with opportunities to perform in competitive situations. Through participation in our interscholastic athletic programs, student-athletes will adopt positive lifelong habits that will enhance and enrich their daily lives now and in their future endeavors and become champions in life.

PRINCIPLES THAT GUIDE US:

First and foremost, the interscholastic athletic programs will support the academic mission of the school and shall be aligned fully with and support Our Mission, Our Vision and Our Beliefs. Although winning is a natural goal in the pursuit of excellence, the principles of good sportsmanship take precedence and enhance the educational value of interscholastic athletics. The interscholastic athletic programs will strive for Mid Penn Conference Sportsmanship Awards and Championships as well as District 3 and Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association Championships.

The Derry Township School District will set high expectations for its coaches and student-athletes. We will hire and retain the best coaches who regard themselves first and foremost as teachers.

It is our goal to teach respect, commitment, accountability, teamwork, sportsmanship, strong work ethic, acceptance of victory with humility, acknowledgement of defeat with grace, and the development of a positive attitude towards competition both on and off of the athletic playing fields.

The school athletic department and administration believe strongly in being accessible to parents and supportive of the coaching staff.

To support the mission and vision of the Derry Township School District Athletic Philosophy, we will:

- Comply with Derry Township School District, Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association, Mid Penn Conference and other governing associations' missions, policies and regulations.
- Provide a safe and positive experience that will help develop Derry Township School District students physically, mentally, socially and emotionally.
- Recognize that interscholastic athletic participation and competition is a privilege that carries definite responsibilities among student- athletes, coaches, administration and parents.
- Expect that all decisions are student-centered, positive and educationally sound.
- Provide quality athletic programs with a "student first" philosophy which outweighs the zeal to win at "any cost."
- Facilitate development of student-athletes' character traits such as resiliency, commitment, self-advocacy, sportsmanship, work ethic, teamwork, and goal setting.
- Provide opportunities for students to learn selected sports and improve playing skills to the best of their abilities to reach their potential with a goal of life-long participation in sports and other fitness-related activities.
- Provide opportunities to practice self-discipline and emotional maturity while making decisions under pressure.
- Provide proper and gender equitably resourced programs with respect to facilities, uniforms, equipment, scheduling, coaching, and administrative oversight.
- Provide opportunities to observe and exemplify good sportsmanship.
- Minimize the loss of instructional/classroom time. Consider student educational needs by keeping practices within reasonable time limits.
- Provide for balanced competition with area schools to the maximum extent possible.
- Provide for cooperation among athletic teams and among high school, middle school, and youth township programs.
- Maintain open communications and collaboration within and among athletic programs. Encourage multiple-sport athletes.
- Recognize the differences in the physical, mental and emotional maturity of students, particularly during their middle school years.
- Emphasize participation above winning at the middle school level.
- Promote and resource, within budgetary constraints, coaching professional development, student-athlete leadership workshops, and parent-focused educational presentations.
- Ensure inclusive opportunities for students to participate in District sponsored and booster club related skills development activities in the off season.
- Strive to continuously improve the quality of interscholastic athletics by establishing expected outcomes and through ongoing program evaluation designed to measure the achievement of its mission and expectations, including ongoing and regular surveys of athletes, parents and coaches.