

Parental Support is Key to an Athlete's Success

As parents, you can be a tremendous asset to the attainment of the Athletic Department's goals and the goals of your child. Ridgefield parents have traditionally provided support, loyalty and encouragement to the teams and the school staff. The school system believes that only through a close level of cooperation and communication between the parents and the school can the necessary guidance, leadership, concern, and encouragement, so important during your son/daughter's teenage years, be provided. All parents are encouraged to support our teams by attending as many athletic contests as possible.

When your child becomes involved in our program, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed upon your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program. It is essential that parents and athletes demonstrate respect for coaches. The coach has been appointed to a leadership and decision making position. His/her responsibility is to the individual participant, the team, and the school system. As a result, all coaches have been instructed to make the best decisions they can and not to bow to parent or fan pressure relative to athletics and/or coaching decisions.

In all instances, an environment of mutual respect and civility should prevail and the appropriate steps for a solution should be followed.

Communication Your Child Should Expect From His/Her Coach	Communication Coaches Expect From Students
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Philosophy of the coach○ Expectations the coach has for your child as well as the players on the squad○ Locations and times of all practices and contests○ Team requirements; i.e., fees, special equipment, off-season conditioning○ Procedure should your child be injured during participation○ Discipline that results in the denial of your child's participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Concerns expressed directly to the coach○ Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance (planned vacations)○ Specific concerns with regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations

As your children become involved in programs at Ridgefield High School, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way you or your child wishes. At these times respectful discussion with the coach is encouraged.

Appropriate Concerns to Discuss with Coaches	Issues Not Appropriate to Discuss with Coaches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The treatment of your child, mentally and physically ○ Ways to help your child improve ○ Concerns about your child's behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Playing time ○ Team strategy ○ Calling plays ○ Other student-athletes ○ Selection of captains ○ Special awards

It is difficult to accept your child's not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches are professionals. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be best for all students involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain things can be and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other things, such as those that follow, must be left to the discretion of the coach.

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. These are encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the others position. When these conferences are necessary, please follow the steps outlined in the Chain of Communication, to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern.