

# **BIGFORK HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

## **PARENT HANDBOOK**



***Being a Supportive Parent of a Student Involved in  
Bigfork High School Athletics and Activities***

***A Guide to a Positive Experience!***

## **A LETTER FROM THE ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR:**

Dear Parent:

Thank you for supporting your son or daughter in their extra-curricular activities at Bigfork School. It is a proven fact that students who participate in extra-curricular activities are more successful in later years. In addition to promoting health and wellness, school activities create bonds of friendship that last a lifetime. Without your support, it would be difficult for your child to participate in activities outside of the normal school day.

Being a supportive parent is a challenge in today's world. Demands on your time, finances and emotions may cause parents to wonder if having their son or daughter on the team is really worth it. I challenge you to think back to your school days and ask: What do you remember most about that time in your life? Chances are that you recall the times spent with friends participating in an activity or sport—especially memorable are those times when coaches, team members, parents, school and community all came together and experienced something that changed lives for the better.

Achieving a quality experience does not happen by chance. It is important that each stakeholder understands their role. This handbook outlines the expectations, requirements and responsibilities for Bigfork Huskies coaches, team members and parents.

Please feel free to contact me anytime you have a question regarding activities at Bigfork School. You can reach me at my work phone: 218-743-3444 ext 42525; or, e-mail me at [spatrow@isd318.org](mailto:spatrow@isd318.org).

I look forward to seeing you supporting our teams this coming year. Thank you, once again, for your support of Bigfork School. And, GO HUSKIES!!!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Scott Patrow".

Scott Patrow  
Bigfork High School Activities Director

## **BIGFORK ACTIVITIES & COACHES**

### ***“COMMITTED TO A QUALITY EXPERIENCE”***

Bigfork Activities is committed to developing quality programs for student-athletes, coaches, parents and community. This commitment results in a program that believes in continuous program improvement through reflection, planning, performance and assessment. Head coaches in ISD 318 are involved in a rigorous development program that answers the following questions:

- 1) Why do I coach?
- 2) Why do I coach like I do?
- 3) What is it like to be coached by me?
- 4) How do I define success?

ISD 318 head coaches are required to:

1. complete continuing education requirements as prescribed by the Minnesota State High School League
2. prepare purpose statements for their programs
3. prepare a written document for parents and student-athletes identifying the expectations and guidelines for their programs
4. prepare emergency action plans for their program
5. be formally observed in practice and game settings by district administration
6. complete a survey of players, staff and parents once every three years
7. participate in a formal assessment with the local activities director once every three years
8. prepare a personal professional development plan once every three years

This extensive commitment by Bigfork coaches and administration stems from wanting to provide a quality experience for your son or daughter. While no one person can be outstanding in all areas of coaching, you can count on Bigfork coaches planning to improve themselves and their programs for the benefit of your son or daughter.

## **BIGFORK TEAM MEMBERS**

### ***“COMMITTED TO QUALITY PERFORMANCE”***

Bigfork student-athletes and team members are the reason for extra-curricular activities. There are numerous benefits that come with extra-curricular participation; however, the demands of a student-athlete in today’s world are daunting. Team members are required to perform better academically, behave more responsibly and represent their school and community at higher levels than students not associated with extra-curricular activities.

Bigfork team members must meet requirements set by the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL), ISD 318, and Bigfork School in regards to academic performance. The state league states in bylaw 108: *“Students must be making satisfactory progress towards the school’s requirements for graduation. The school where the student is fully enrolled and regularly attends shall determine satisfactory progress.”* Bigfork School has developed an intervention plan to monitor all student performance twice each month and provide intervention supports for failing students. This may involve temporary suspension of practice and game time for team members to get back to meeting academic expectations.

The Minnesota State High School League, ISD 318 and Bigfork School have developed policies and requirements for team members to complete and uphold. Please take the time to become familiar with these expectations.

### **MINNESOTA STATE HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE REQUIREMENTS**

The Minnesota State High School League requires all team members to complete an annual eligibility agreement; an annual health questionnaire; and a physical examination every three years.

Additionally, MSHSL participants must adhere to all bylaws as described in the annual eligibility agreement. Bylaw violations carry prescribed penalties that increase in duration with consequent violations. MSHSL forms can be found under the Activities & Athletics menu at the school web site [www.bigforkhuskies.org](http://www.bigforkhuskies.org) and all bylaw information can be found under the “Handbook” menu at the MSHSL web site [www.mshsl.org](http://www.mshsl.org).

### **ISD 318 REQUIREMENTS**

All paperwork for activities and activity fees must be turned into the school office by the first day of practice. Team members will receive a white receipt for personal records and a gold receipt to turn in to their coach. Team members who do not have all paperwork completed and activity fees submitted will not be allowed to participate. Forms and fee payment information can be found under the “Activities & Athletics” menu at the school web site [www.bigforkhuskies.org](http://www.bigforkhuskies.org).

## **BIGFORK HIGH SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS**

**Attendance.** A student must attend a full day in order to be allowed to participate in or attend after-school activities that day. A team member may be allowed to participate if the absence was approved in advance AND permission was received from the principal. Students who are suspended—in school or out of school—are not eligible for participation on the day(s) of suspension.

**Academic Eligibility.** Bigfork High School is committed to high student achievement in both academics and activities. Students will be expected to perform to the best of their ability in both areas. Coaches, parents/guardians and staff will have the opportunity to refer any student-athlete to the Teacher Assistant Team in order to identify poor academic performance. The Teacher Assistance Team is authorized to implement strategic interventions to increase academic and behavior performance. This may include declaring students ineligible from extra-curricular activities.

**Good Standing.** A student must be in good standing academically, behaviorally, and in attendance to participate in sports. In addition to meeting the MSHSL eligibility requirements, for participation, the administration reserves the right to limit participation by students deemed not to be making adequate progress toward graduation.

Policies regarding students at Bigfork School may be reviewed in the Bigfork Student Handbook. This is posted on line under “Families” at the school web site:

[www.bigforkhuskies.org](http://www.bigforkhuskies.org)

## **BIGFORK PARENTS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS** ***“COMMITTED TO QUALITY SUPPORT”***

Bigfork is blessed with outstanding parent and community support. Our teams are able to participate at a high level due to the unwavering level of support—emotional and financial—shown to our programs. While all provide great resources, coaches, parents and community members must remember that our programs are all about the kids.

It is important for parents and community members to understand the philosophy of the Minnesota State High School League, ISD 318 and Bigfork School with regards to extra-curricular activities. Below is the MSHSL mission and belief statement:

### **Mission Statement**

The Minnesota State High School League provides educational opportunities for students through interscholastic athletics and fine arts programs, and provides leadership and support for member schools.

### **Beliefs**

We believe that...

- Participation in school activity programs is a privilege and not a right.
- Sportsmanship needs to have a constant presence in all school-based activity programs.
- Students should have an equal opportunity to participate in all activities offered by their school.
- Ethical behavior, dignity and respect are non-negotiable.
- Student participants who choose to be chemically free must be supported.
- Collaborative relationships with parents enhance a school's opportunity to positively impact student success.
- Academic priorities must come before participation in athletic or fine arts activities.
- Positive role models and an active involvement in a student's life by parents and others are critical to student success.
- High school activity programs are designed for student participants, and adults must serve in a supportive role.
- The success of the team is more important than individual honors.
- Compliance with school, community and League rules is essential for all activity participants.
- Participation in school-sponsored activities must be inclusive, not exclusive.
- Ethical behavior, fairness, and embracing diversity best serve students and school communities.

Below are some important facts and expectations for those supporting our teams:

## **MINNESOTA STATE HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE PARENT RESOURCE GUIDE**

### **Why Kids Participate in Sports**

1. Have fun
2. Improve skill
3. Develop fitness/exercise
4. Be with friends
5. Experience thrill and excitement
6. Be on a team
7. Opportunities for personal accomplishment
8. Stay in shape
9. Do something I am good at
10. Win

### **Top Reasons Why Kids Quit**

1. Not having fun
2. Too much pressure from parents and peers
3. Too much emphasis on winning
4. Concerns about coaching
5. Not enough playing time

## **What Parents Can Do**

### **Before the Game**

- Tell your child you are proud of him or her regardless of how well he or she plays.
- Make a commitment to honor the game no matter what others may do.

### **During the Game**

- Cheer good plays by both teams
- Mention good calls by the officials to others
- Encourage others to respect the game
- Remember to have fun. Enjoy the day.

### **After the Game**

- Ask your child open-ended questions:
- What was the most enjoyable part of the game for you? Least enjoyable?
- Do you feel you gave it your best effort?
- How did you respond to any mistakes you made?
- What did you learn from playing today?
- Tell your child you are proud of him or her – especially if the game didn't go well.
- Thank the officials for doing a difficult job.
- Thank the coaches for their effort.

### **What if**

- The official makes a “bad” call against your team? Respect the game – be silent!
- Another spectator on your team begins to berate the official? Ask them to respect the game. The officials are human and will make mistakes!
- Your child does not get to play in the game? Review the reasons why kids play sports.

### **The Fundamentals of Sportsmanship**

One thing needs to be remembered: Many people haven't had Good Sportsmanship explained to them. Hopefully, the following will help everyone to understand their responsibilities at an athletic contest.

#### **1. Gain an Understanding and Appreciation for the Rules of the Contest.**

The necessity to be well informed is essential. Know the rules. If you are uninformed, refrain from expressing opinions on officials, coaches, or administrative decisions. The spirit of Good Sportsmanship depends on conformance to a rule's intent as well as to the letter of a given rule.

#### **2. Exercise Representative Behavior at All Times.**

A prerequisite to Good Sportsmanship requires one to understand his/her own prejudices that may become factors in his/her behavior. The true value of interscholastic competition relies upon everyone exhibiting behavior that is representative of a sound value base. A proper perspective must be maintained if the educational values are to be realized. Your behavior influences others whether you are aware of it or not.

#### **3. Recognize and Appreciate Skilled Performances Regardless of Affiliation.**

Applause for an opponent's good performance displays generosity and is a courtesy that should be regularly practiced. This not only represents Good sportsmanship, but also reflects a true awareness of the game by recognizing and acknowledging quality.

#### **4. Exhibit Respect for the Officials.**

The officials of any contest are impartial arbitrators who are trained and who perform to the best of their ability. Mistakes by all those involved in the contests are a part of the game. We should not rationalize our own poor or unsuccessful performance or behavior by placing responsibility on an official. The rule of Good Sportsmanship is to accept and abide by the decision made. This value is critical for student s to learn for later applications in life.

#### **5. Display Openly a Respect for the Opponent at All Times.**

Opponents are guests and should be treated cordially, provided with the best accommodations, and accorded tolerance at all times. Be a positive representative for your school, team, or family. This fundamental is the Golden Rule in action.



## **6. Display Pride in Your Actions at Every Opportunity.**

Never allow your ego to interfere with good judgment and your responsibility as a school representative. Regardless of whether you are an adult, student, athlete, coach, or official, this value is paramount since it suggests that you care about yourself and how others perceive you.

### **Resolving Conflicts**

Invariably throughout the course of a season, there will be differing of opinions on how to create a quality experience for our programs. It is important that coaches, team members and parents all strictly abide to fulfill the requirements of their role. Coaches cannot play; players cannot officiate; and, parents must not coach the team (Supporting your own son or daughter within alignment of team guidelines is always considered supportive.)

There may be a time, however, when a problem or concern must be resolved for the good of the team. ISD 318 Activities has established the following procedure for addressing such concerns:

If there is a problem:

1. Have your son/daughter talk directly to the coach, one on one – this is part of growing up. A good rule to follow is to allow a 24-hour cooling off period before having your son or daughter meet with the coach

If the problem is not resolved:

1. Call the school and request a returned call or a face to face meeting with team member, parent(s) and coaches.

If the problem is still not resolved:

1. Call the school and request a meeting with team member, parent(s), coach(es) and activities director.

Parents must never:

1. Confront the coach immediately before or after a practice or game.

Coaches are teachers. A parent would not walk into a classroom during class time and yell at the teacher about a poor grade, so please do not confront the coach in a public setting. There are proper ways to communicate and have your concerns addressed.

Practices and games are highly emotional times for everyone involved: players, coaches, and parents. Meetings and concerns do not get resolved during emotional times.

Also, please be aware that coach decisions on playing time or strategy are almost never conflicts, but rather matters of opinion.

## **Respectful Conversations**

Perhaps the most powerful way in which you can support your son or daughter is in how you choose to engage in conversations with other parents, community members and your son or daughter. Your opinions are very powerful. Sharing your opinion with others will be viewed as either supporting the program or tearing it down. Please carefully consider the words you share with others when speaking of Bigfork Activities.

As you can see, parents and community members have an important role in a successful program. Your support is critical to a quality experience for all. Likewise, you have great ideas about how to support our programs—ideas that have not been considered by our administrators, coaches or team members. Please feel welcome to contact the school if you have an idea that you think would improve our programs. And, please give careful consideration when completing program surveys. The responses gathered from these surveys will drive changes in programs.

There are many resources for parents available under the Welcome to Activities & Athletics page at the school web site: [www.bigforkhuskies.org/page/2471](http://www.bigforkhuskies.org/page/2471)

### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

Minnesota State High School League  
2100 Freeway Boulevard  
Brooklyn Center, MN 55430  
763-560-2262  
[www.mshsl.org](http://www.mshsl.org)

National Federation of State High School Associations  
[www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org)

Center for Sports Parenting  
[www.sportsparenting.org/cspl](http://www.sportsparenting.org/cspl)