

Welcome Letter from Thad Gabrielse, Athletic Director

To the parents/guardians of Port Washington High School Athletes:

As Director of Athletics, I would like to welcome you to the Port Washington High School Department of Athletics. I look forward to getting to know you as you progress through our athletic programs.

Successful athletic programs have specific goals. They include: a positive experience for every athlete and a great sense of camaraderie and unity within their team; an environment that ensures high ethical standards and expectations for fairness, equity, and sportsmanship for all of our student-athletes and coaches. Here in Port Washington, we pride ourselves in demonstrating that “Character Counts.”

A successful athletic program also includes dedicated coaches, active support from the student body, outstanding leadership from school administrators, and most importantly, a great sense of pride fostered by the entire community. It will be our mission to facilitate all those facets together to create the best athletic programs possible. Athletes: Play hard, play fair, and dedicate yourself to be the best you can possibly be, but most importantly, have fun! The rewards will stay with you for the rest of your life.

Did you know that research shows that the greatest influence upon our student athletes is NOT the coach? By far, you as a parent or guardian have the greatest influence upon your child. Research has shown that parents can influence a child’s motivation, perceived competence and their enjoyment of the sport. The feedback and behavior of a parent will affect how long an athlete stays involved in a sport and how the athlete perceives their abilities. I am asking all Port Washington High School parents to take a positive approach to your child’s upcoming season. Provide a motivational climate prior to, during and after all games. You will be amazed with the results.

In creating a positive athletic experience, we must understand that both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. In establishing an understanding of each other’s position, we are better able to understand and accept the actions of those involved in high school athletics. By being better able to accept the actions of each other, we will provide greater benefit to our athletes.

As a parent, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of the respective team. Communication from your child’s coach that you should expect is:

- Philosophy of the coach
- Location of practices and events
- Team requirements
- Team discipline and behavior

Communication that coaches can expect from parents/guardians:

- Concerns expressed directly to the coach and in a professional manner.
- Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance
- Use of the athletics website provided, in securing the information readily available to parents/guardians and their child.

As your child becomes involved in the programs at Port Washington School, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments in their life. It is important that your child understands, that just like life, there may be times when things do not go the way they expect. At these times, discussion with the coach by your child is highly encouraged.

There may be times that it is very difficult to accept your child's lack of playing time or the position(s) they have been asked to play. The coaching staffs at Port Washington High School are professionals. They make judgments based on what they believe to be best for all athletes involved. Certain things can be discussed with the coach but other things, such as team strategy, other players, etc., should be left to the discretion of the coach.

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and parent. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the athlete's position. The following procedures should be followed to help promote resolution following communication between player and coach:

- Contact the program head coach to set up an appointment. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before, during, or after a game. This time can be emotional for all. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution.
- If the meeting with the coach did not provide satisfactory resolutions, then a meeting with the Athletic Director and Coach is the next step.

I hope that you are excited as we approach another year of Pirate Athletics. This privilege extended to your son or daughter will lay the foundation for future success in life. I am honored to be associated with Port Washington High School Athletics. And I will work hard on your child's behalf to promote and strengthen the values of our programs.

Respectfully,

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