

# PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parent participation in any sport is important, but in the sport of wrestling it is essential. Parents need to be aware of the many pressures put upon their sons. To be able to meet one's opponent alone in front of hundreds, even thousands of people, requires a tremendous amount of courage, class, commitment and character, but sometimes even this may not be enough. Most, if not all, of our children require and want a great amount of parental approval in their lives whether they acknowledge it or not.

Parent participation should not be confused with parents being disruptive or intrusive into the workings of the team or in the individual wrestlers, coaches, parents, or fans at practices, duals, or tournaments. We encourage parents to be enthusiastic and passionate about the sport. We also encourage parents to be supportive and energetic in their actions to not only their son's accomplishments, but the other wrestlers, as well. Parent participation should always be constructive and helpful. Sadly, in recent times we have all seen a growth in violence and poor sportsmanship from spectators and participants alike in all sports and at all levels. The sport of wrestling is not immune from this disruption and violence. Disruption and violence has all too often been tolerated and to some degree encouraged by small but usually vocal groups of individuals. Violence and disruption of any nature has absolutely no place in youth sports or any other age group as well. It is only allowed because people are willing to tolerate it. The wrestling program believes that inappropriate behavior is unacceptable and therefore will not be tolerated.

We not only expect but also demand that spectators and participants associated with the wrestling team always be on their best behavior at all times before, during, and following any wrestling event, regardless of the actions of others. Anything less than your total cooperation should not and will not be tolerated. **You** are the one responsible for setting the example for your son or daughter. **You** are the one they will learn from and will try to emulate. It is your absolute responsibility to present yourself in the best possible light. You not only represent yourself and your family, but also our city, the School District, and the coaches, wrestlers, other parents and fans of the wrestling team.

Parents of wrestlers have the responsibility to see their sons have **ALL** of the tools necessary to have a successful high school wrestling career. This may mean many sacrifices on your part. It may mean changing your schedule around to attend meets and tournaments. It will mean a great amount of time and energy going to and from meets locally and across the state. It will mean living with someone who resembles your son, but has the personality of a Frankenstein or King Kong. It means spending long hours and days sitting on uncomfortable bleachers. It means the heartache of watching your son being defeated. It will mean seeing him dejected and alone in a large auditorium filled with people. And then there is the volunteer work at the concession stands and other events!!! What a joy!

But it also means being with parents who have or are going through the same things you are. It means being with some of the greatest parents and families in the School District. It means sharing problems and ideas with each other. It means sharing in meet and

tournament victories. It means watching your son win that very important or “He’ll never do it!” match. It means watching him being surrounded by a group of great young men who are as excited about his win as you and he are.

Parents are an intricate part of the wrestling team. For some, their participation begins in youth wrestling and extends to high school alumni parents. Parents are “requested” to work tournaments and concession stands. Parents should always be willing to give ideas and time to the coaches and booster club. Your participation in fund-raising events is very important. Your help, enthusiasm, and participation towards the entire club activities are reflected in how much can and will be accomplished for the wrestling teams from the freshman team through the varsity squad. Parents are encouraged to attend practice sessions to get a first hand look at what these young men are being put through to be a member of the High School wrestling team.

Youth wrestling parents have an important role to play in the development of the team. They are the ones who may be handed control of the club and its future. These parents should be encouraged to begin looking forward to that time and start becoming involved in club activities and attending the high school meets as their sons reach the junior high level. It is a time to get to know parents and coaches. It is, also, a time to become acquainted with many of the demands that will be put upon high school wrestlers and their parents. High school wrestling is a whole new world. It will require some adjustments for parents, as well as the wrestlers.

Alumni parents have a special place in the wrestling family. They are the experienced “elder” members. They are needed for those “special projects” that they may have come up with and want to contribute to the team because of what the team has given to them and their son. They are some of the people other members may look to for leadership and new ideas. Some of these ideas are ones they may have had and wanted to implement when their sons were involved in the program, but did not have the resources or time to do so. These parents are the ones that the coaches can look to for help in areas that other parents cannot or may not want to spend time doing during meets and tournaments.

All in all, the wrestling team is **FAMILY**; parents, coaches, alumni parents, managers and, above all, those special young men of the Wrestling Team, with each member having his or her own place in that family. To make this family work, we must all come together for the benefit of your son and the sons of the other great parents.

This is a very important time in their lives – **DON’T MISS IT!!!**