



## Newsletter Coordinator



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## Athletic Programs

*Leadership, NAD Principals' Handbook (excerpt)*

Principals need to be sensitive and responsive to the expectations of constituents when initiating, implementing, monitoring, or eliminating athletic programs, either intramural or interscholastic. The principal should be aware of the policies of the school board, conference, and union.

### Ways to Promote Good Sportsmanship

Good sportsmanship must be evident in both intramural and interscholastic programs. This is demonstrated by coaches, athletes, and spectators. Ways to promote good

sportsmanship include:

- Holding preseason meetings to encourage students to exhibit proper conduct.
- Conducting clinics for parents and others to discuss playing, contest rules, ethics, and good sportsmanship.
- Adopting a code of conduct and enforcing it.
- Developing sportsmanship award programs and recognizing those individuals who exhibit outstanding sportsmanship, ethics, and integrity.

Read more <http://adventisteducation.org/principals-handbook/>

## Running an Athletic Program

*Murray Cooper, Associate Superintendent  
Florida Conference*

The athletic program must support and enhance the mission of your school. Coaches, players, and parents are school ambassadors, and more importantly, may be the only “Christians” that a member of the public may ever see. As an administrator, you need to work with your athletic director to ensure that coaches, players, and parents are made aware of their responsibilities and expectations in order to continue to enjoy participating in interscholastic and intramural sports. Regular update meetings should be scheduled with your athletic director so that you are aware of what is happening with the program. It is a must for you or another member of your administrative team to be present for all activities. This will ensure that you see first-hand what is occurring at the events and that they are building the mission of the school.

When planning an athletic program, safety for all must be a priority. Do you have a designated person who is trained in first aid and attends all athletic events in order to provide immediate assessment and care for an injury to a player or someone in attendance at an event? Do you have a concussion protocol in place? Are first responders in your community familiar with your campus so they know

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## God Found Me on the Soccer Field

*Juan Leon, PE Teacher and Girl's Varsity Soccer Coach  
Greater Miami Adventist Academy*

It was a clear Sunday morning on a high school soccer field in Alberta, Canada. A soccer match was being held and I was invited to play. During the game, a player from the opposing team accidentally kicked my teammate. I got angry, pushed him, and a fight began. My brother, who was playing goalie, ran from his goal and dragged me out of the fight. I was ejected from the game. Yet, in the midst of my anger and frustration, God was working. A kind girl came over and helped me calm down. As a result, a friendship developed between us, and she introduced me to Jesus. Soon after, I was baptized. Since then, I have used the platform God has given me through athletics to minister to young people.

GMAA, a K-12 academy, is part of the Independent School League (ISL), a local private school league, and the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA). I believe that through the GMAA sports program, student athletes are given the opportunity to grow, both as individuals and as members of a team. Students receive meaningful and real-life lessons in fair play, ethics, and leadership. The coaches provide guidance, model good sportsmanship, and demonstrate a Christ-like attitude.

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## A Unique Opportunity

*Frank Jones, Principal  
Forest Lake Academy*

Forest Lake Academy (FLA) has the unique opportunity to provide a very involved and encompassing sports program. With 420 students to consider, we have developed an athletic program that gives all who want to participate a chance to do so. The team motto for the Panthers reflects our goal for this program at FLA: "Victory is in Christ" (1 Corinthians 15:57).

The first program we offer is our Interscholastic Program, which gives over 300 students the chance to try out and take part in Golf, Girls' JV and Varsity Volleyball, Guys' and Girls' JV and Varsity Soccer and Basketball. We are classified as Independents, but we join in our local league to play games, and then we play in a few tournaments.

Ministry, sportsmanship, and fun are our top priorities.

The second program offered at FLA is our Classics, recreational/open gym time. The Classics, competitions between the classes and faculty, which include boys and girls, in four different sports—volleyball, flag ball, futsal, and basketball, run on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:05-1:05. During the same time period on Mondays and Wednesdays, we have an open gym program that rotates from volleyball to futsal and basketball. Lastly, on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 4:00-5:15, we offer Rec, involving a variety of sports from badminton to basketball. Teams are picked upon arrival and everyone is encouraged to take part, including faculty members. This is FLA's attempt to involve as many students and faculty in some type of physical activity outside the classroom. ☩

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## Running an Athletic Program (continued)

exactly where to go in case of a medical emergency? What are your school's policies regarding supervision before, during, and after practices? Unsupervised students or a single adult left alone with a single student, either male or female, places your school at risk. What is your policy for transporting students to and from games off campus? Does your PE department regularly inspect the athletic fields, gym, or ball diamonds to meet safety standards? Negligence in safety could be very costly to your school.

When determining the cost of your athletic programs, go beyond the dollar expenses incurred by the school and the parents of the players. What is the cost to your PE teacher or teachers in terms of time spent organizing and carrying out a comprehensive athletic program? How much does this impact the teachers' actual PE classes and other instructional responsibilities? What about cost in terms of stress to the athletic director in dealing with coaches, referees, fundraising, transportation, scheduling, and dealing with upset parents. Do you have clear policies relating to academic requirements for participation in athletic activities? Unclear academic expectations cause unnecessary stress for students, teachers, and even parents. How much time do students spend in practices, games, and traveling? As the administrator, stay connected and in-the-know regarding the athletic costs to your school personnel and students, as well as actual dollars spent.

In conclusion, a question to ponder: do you run your athletic program or does your athletic program run you? When kept under control and in balance with the rest of your school's curriculum, intramural and interscholastic sports can be a blessing to all involved. ☩

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## God Found Me on the Soccer Field (continued)

When we pray at the start and end of every practice, the players and coaching staff acknowledge that God's presence is on the court and on the field. At GMAA, we hold pre-season meetings to guide and remind parents of our mission, as well as the expectations and objectives of our extracurricular activities. GMAA attends tournaments held at Walla Walla University, Union College, and South Western Adventist University, which promote outstanding sportsmanship and Christ-centered fellowship.

My daughter has been playing interscholastic sports at GMAA since the 1st grade. Whether she continues to play at the high school level or not, I am certain that she will be taking with her life skills like integrity, respect for team members and others, and good sportsmanship. This will help her grow and show a Christ-like character. Paul writes: "For while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come" (1 Timothy 4:8). Our student athletes are not only preparing for the next game; they are being taught to prepare for eternity. ☩

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**ONE PERSON PRACTICING  
SPORTSMANSHIP IS FAR  
BETTER THAN A HUNDRED  
TEACHING IT.**

**-KNUTE ROCKNE**