

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE
HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS



NEWS RELEASE

NFHS Adds Resource for Parent Behavior at Events with “The Parent Seat”

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Dan Schuster

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (October 28, 2019) — To help parents navigate emotions when watching their kids compete in high school sports, the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) developed “The Parent Seat” – a short video that suggests 10 tips parents can use to develop and maintain a calm, respectful demeanor.

“The Parent Seat,” which is the first non-course offering on the NFHS Learning Center (www.NFHSLearn.com), is a tremendous addition to the more than 70 online education courses for administrators, coaches, parents and students covering topics from music adjudication to NCAA eligibility to heat illness and concussion prevention.

“We know it’s an emotional situation,” said Dan Schuster, NFHS director of educational services. “Whether you’re a parent, guardian, grandparent, aunt, uncle or neighbor, you have an emotional attachment to someone playing in that contest or performing on that stage. We wanted a relatable, quick-hitting video that gets people to think about their actions before they attend an event and creates expectations for how they should behave.”

Unlike the courses, “The Parent Seat” video can be shared on many different platforms. Downloaded directly from the NFHS Learning Center website, the piece can easily be shared on

social media, shown as part of a welcome message at events, or discussed as a point of emphasis at parents' meetings.

"We were looking to do something different," Schuster said. "The NFHS Learning Center has always really been about courses, and it's been a very successful initiative for us. But in today's world, where brevity and social media sharing are crucial aspects of communication, we wanted something for parents that fit that profile."

The video's list of suggestions consists of both mental and physical activities for preparing for an event, as well as ways to avoid negative outbursts while attending a game or contest.

Trying to "understand the benefits" of participating in high school activities and "embrace the growth and development of your student" headline the thoughts parents can reflect on to promote a healthy, positive mindset for events. Getting some pregame exercise or "participating in a relaxing activity" can be useful methods of relieving stress or pent-up energy, which are often manifested in foul behavior.

"The way parents conduct themselves creates teachable moments for their children – and those go both ways," Schuster said. "They can be examples of what to do or what NOT to do at events. We want to make sure kids have a positive and memorable experience while competing and sometimes you must show people what that should look like first. Using the items on the list as guidelines starts to create the environment we're looking for."

The successful launch of "The Parent Seat" has encouraged Schuster and his staff to begin working on additional videos that address other areas of need within the culture of high school athletics and activities.

"The Parent Seat' was intended as a pilot for a larger series of parent videos, but I believe this idea will go beyond parent education," Schuster said. "We think the interscholastic community will continue to support these offerings whether they are focused on students, coaches, administrators or any other associated group."

Schuster hopes viewers will take the video's messages to heart, and then lead by example for everyone else.

“If we can educate some of these parents, they can rub off on the others,” he said. “If we can eliminate some of those ‘bad actors’ and replace them with ‘good actors,’ suddenly the scene in the bleachers is going to start looking and sounding a lot better. And most importantly, kids can just go out and play without worrying about what mom and dad are doing.”

To watch the full video on “The Parent Seat,” visit:

<https://nfhslearn.com/library/videos/478>.

###

About the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)

The NFHS, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is the national leadership organization for high school sports and performing arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and performing arts activities that help students succeed in their lives. The NFHS sets direction for the future by building awareness and support, improving the participation experience, establishing consistent standards and rules for competition, and helping those who oversee high school sports and activities. The NFHS writes playing rules for 16 sports for boys and girls at the high school level. Through its 50 member state associations and the District of Columbia, the NFHS reaches more than 19,500 high schools and 12 million participants in high school activity programs, including almost 8 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; offers online publications and services for high school coaches and officials; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, speech and debate coaches, and music adjudicators; serves as the national source for interscholastic coach training; and serves as a national information resource of interscholastic athletics and activities. For more information, visit the NFHS website at www.nfhs.org.

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Bruce Howard, 317-972-6900
Director of Publications and Communications
National Federation of State High School Associations
bhoward@nfhs.org

Chris Boone, 317-972-6900
Assistant Director of Publications and Communications
National Federation of State High School Associations
cboone@nfhs.org