

The text of an email from WIAA executive director Dave Anderson, sent Tuesday afternoon to athletic directors at WIAA member schools:

Subject: An Opportunity

Please let me begin by offering a sincere apology for any distress or dissatisfaction which may have come your way as a result of a sportsmanship email from Todd Clark dated December 22, 2015. The intentions of that email have become much scrutinized and misunderstood.

From our perspective, the email was simply a reminder in advance of the many holiday tournaments held every year across the membership. Nothing more, nothing less, than what has been shared across the membership via the Sportsmanship Manual since 2005.

To be clear, there has been no new directives, no new rules, no new mandates, no new enforcement expectations associated with the email.

We know that the challenges of keeping interscholastic athletics a fun, safe and educational experience for our athletes, students and fans are never ending. We see and respect the everyday efforts of individual members and conferences in striving to create the positive environment you are proud of — and we appreciate those efforts. Carry On! Please keep up the great work, just as you have been doing.

Background:

The WIAA's interest in promoting good sportsmanship is deeply rooted within the membership's history. It is woven into our Mission Statement:

Article II – Purpose

Section 1 – The purpose of this Association is threefold:

- A. To organize, develop, direct, and control an interscholastic athletic program which will promote the ideals of its membership and opportunities for member schools' participation.
- B. To emphasize interscholastic athletics as a partner with other school activities in the total educational process, and formulate and maintain policies which will cultivate high ideals of good citizenship and sportsmanship.
- C. To promote the uniformity of standards in interscholastic athletic competition, and prevent exploitation by special interest groups of the school program and the individual's ability. WIAA Senior High Handbook.

The Opportunity:

The past several days have certainly brought a light to shine on the many opinions that exist about sportsmanship. I consider it to have presented us with the time and opportunity to review and assess our membership's desires and expectations in this area. Our Sportsmanship Committee is scheduled meet again on April 8, 2016. I invite you to share your updates to our current publication with me or with Todd Clark, who oversees this committee.

Perhaps with your input, the committee will be able to identify new ways to capture the interests and intentions of the WIAA membership in and around the topic of education-based athletics. Perhaps they will find that those things which were identified in the Manual in 1997 or in 2005 are, in fact, outdated in 2016. But either way, this presents our membership with an opportunity to revisit our goals, objectives and expectations surrounding sportsmanship.

Thank you for your time and support on this matter.

David J. Anderson  
Executive Director  
WIAA