

Effective Communication Between Officials and Coaches

Coaches and game officials must demonstrate respect for one another by implementing a foundation of appropriate and professional communication. Football is an emotional game which potentially leads to intense interactions between coaches and game officials. Both sides must work together and strive to manage verbal and nonverbal exchanges to avoid escalating conflict. Coaches are role models for their players and parents. If a coach disrespects officials, their players and players parents will behave in the same manner.

Positive interaction between coaches and officials begins with the pre-game conference. The official will ask a particular set of questions and then allow the coach to ask any questions he may have. This pre-game conference is a way to set the tone for the game. Both sides need to be respectable to each other and focus on positivity as the game begins. During the game, the best time to have extended conversations or ask questions on specific calls is in between quarters, half-time or timeouts. It is difficult to have a conversation or discussion about rules or calls in-between plays. This disrupts the flow of the game, and we all want the official to focus on the game on the field, not the sideline. Remember, yelling at officials is not a conversation.

Players will make mistakes, coaches will make mistakes, and yes, officials will make mistakes. Even though we may all be striving for perfection during the game, it is highly unlikely we will reach that lofty goal. We are all learning and want our young players to have good experiences, so they will continue playing in years to come. There will be young officials also learning the game. We want them to have the same good experience so they too will have the desire to return.

Please remember the three “Ps. **Profanity** directed at an official – no real discussion here, never acceptable. **Prolonged** – Can’t get past a play, or continuous comments about the officiating or towards an official. **Personal** – Never make it personal. Statements like “you’re terrible”, “you’re blind”, “how did you miss that call”, are not permissible. Finally, let’s address the conclusion of the game. I don’t know any official that would not appreciate some positive feedback or a simple thank you at the end of the game. However, I would advise that displaying frustration after the game toward an official will help no one, ever. If you can’t say something nice, just walk away. Give it time, calm down, and then direct any questions or frustrations to your director who will contact the Grid Kid Official Commissioner with your concerns.

Each coach needs to sign showing an acknowledgment that coaches have read this letter and will commit to effective communication with game officials throughout the season. Here’s a great season for all involved!

I have read the attached letter and commit to effective and productive communication with officials during the 2025 Grid Kid Football Season.

All coaches must sign:

Coaches Names: (Print)	Signatures	Date

Area, Grade, and Team Name