



Española Public Schools

Striving for Excellence

IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Subject: Sportsmanship, Respect, and Safety at District Elementary Basketball Games

October 22, 2026

Dear Families, Parents, Guardians, and Community Members,

Our district is committed to providing a safe, positive, and supportive environment for all students participating in extracurricular activities, including our elementary basketball programs.

Unfortunately, a recent series of incidents at elementary basketball games within the district has raised serious concerns regarding the behavior and conduct of some spectators and adults in attendance. These incidents are unacceptable and do not reflect the values, expectations, or standards of sportsmanship that our district strives to uphold.

We want to remind everyone of one very important fact: THESE GAMES ARE ABOUT OUR KIDS.

Elementary athletics are intended to provide our students with opportunities to learn teamwork, discipline, respect, responsibility, and good sportsmanship. At this age, the focus should be on developing skills, building confidence, making memories, and enjoying the game—not on winning at all costs or dealing with unnecessary conflict created by adults.

As parents, guardians, family members, coaches, and community supporters, we have a responsibility to lead by example. Our children are watching how we behave, how we respond to disagreements, how we treat officials and opposing teams, and how we handle both victories and defeats. The example we set today influences the individuals they will become tomorrow.

While we understand that emotions can run high during competitive events, there is absolutely no excuse for threatening behavior, verbal abuse, intimidation, harassment, physical altercations, or any other conduct that jeopardizes the safety and well-being of our students, staff, officials, or spectators.

Effective immediately, the district will take appropriate action against individuals who engage in disruptive, aggressive, threatening, or inappropriate behavior at district athletic events. Such actions may include immediate removal from games, suspension or banning from future athletic events, and restrictions or bans from district school campuses, consistent with applicable district policies and law. Law enforcement will be contacted when circumstances warrant, particularly when threats, violence, or other safety concerns arise.



Española Public Schools

Striving for Excellence

These measures are not intended to discourage family or community participation. Rather, they are necessary to protect our students and preserve the positive environment they deserve.

We ask every individual attending our elementary basketball games to demonstrate respect toward student-athletes, coaches, referees, school personnel, opposing teams, and fellow spectators. Cheer for our students, encourage their efforts, celebrate their accomplishments, and remember that mistakes, disagreements, and losses are all part of learning and growing.

No basketball game, no referee's decision, and no final score is worth compromising the safety of our children or setting a negative example for them.

Our students deserve better, and as adults, we must hold ourselves to a higher standard.

We take pride in our schools, our student-athletes, and our community. Let us work together to ensure that every district athletic event reflects that pride through positive encouragement, mutual respect, and responsible behavior.

At the end of the day, it is not about the adults in the stands. It is about the children on the court. Let's make sure they remain our priority.

Thank you for your understanding, cooperation, and continued support of our students and district athletic programs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JCF'.

Juan Carlos Fulgenzi
Assistant Superintendent of Operations
Española Public Schools

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karen Sanchez Griego'.

Dr. Karen Sanchez Griego Ed.D
Interim Superintendent
Española Public Schools