



26th Annual Sportsmanship Essay Contest

The Stands Standards: Honoring the Game as a Spectator

CONTEST THEME:

High school sports are defined by more than the score – they are shaped by the culture and atmosphere created in the stands. The MIAA Sportsmanship Committee invites student leaders to reflect on the intersection of positive school spirit and mutual respect. This year's contest theme challenges you to examine how spectator behavior impacts the integrity of high school athletics. Specifically, share why the [MIAA Sportsmanship Expectations](#)* are important and how you can support this initiative in your school.

**Over the past few years, the MIAA Sportsmanship Committee hosted a series of workshops with school administrators, athletic directors, and student leaders to gather feedback on spectator behavior at high school athletic events. Insights from these sessions directly informed the creation of the updated [MIAA Sportsmanship Expectations](#).*

GUIDELINES:

- **PARTICIPANTS**
Contest is open to students in grades 9-12 at MIAA Member Schools
- **ESSAY ENTRIES**
Must be typed, double spaced, and contain no more than 500 words
- **CONTEST JUDGING**
The contest will be judged by the MIAA Sportsmanship Committee using [this rubric](#).

PRIZES:

- First Place (\$400) and Runner-Up (\$200) prizes will be presented.
- Contest winners will present their entries as honored guests during the 32nd Annual MIAA Sportsmanship Summit on November 20, 2026.

CONTEST DEADLINE AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS:

- All entries must be received by **12:00 pm on Thursday, October 15, 2026.**
- All entries must be emailed to dharrington@miaa.net.

EDUCATIONAL ATHLETICS



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