



To: Member School Athletic Administrators & Public Address Announcers

From: Jon Ross, Director of Broadcast Properties

Re: 2023-24 Regular-Season Public Address Scripts

The pages that follow are scripts which may be read at your regular-season sporting events this spring. If you are hosting an MHSAA Tournament, please visit our website the week before Districts to download the appropriate scripts.

Public address announcers perform an important task at high school sporting events – to inform the fans in attendance and to help set an educational atmosphere for the game. You set that atmosphere in the following ways:

- Be being a welcoming, authoritative voice that fans from all schools involved can respect and appreciate.
- By being a source of information rather than a source of entertainment. Keep your calls about plays simple and straight forward. For example – “Jones the ball carrier...tackled by Smith and Taylor...five-yard gain on the play...ball on the 28-yard line...third and five;” “Falcon goal by number 35 – Keith Smith, assist by number 9 – Evan Jones...time of the goal, 12:22;” “Bulldog kill by number 4, Mellissa Manchester.”
- Treat both teams equally in terms of your inflection and enthusiasm. Do the same thing when your team or the opposing team makes a big play in terms of your call.
- Treat penalty calls and the officials with respect. If there was a flag on the play, simply follow the ball carrier and tackles with: “Penalty flag on the play.” Then describe the penalty and the remark of the ball after the penalty has been marked off. For example: “Holding on the Hawks. Penalty places the ball on the 15-yard line. Third and 20.”
- In football, never announce a Touchdown has been scored until you see the Referee’s (White Hat) arms go up – and never announce a penalty until the Referee gives the final signal. Do not jump the gun on penalties by saying “preliminary indication...” **ON PENALTIES AND SCORING PLAYS – ALWAYS WAIT FOR THE WHITE HAT!**
- Never talk while a play is in progress. A good rule of thumb to follow is the same rule that applies to bands in football where they cannot play from the time the offensive team breaks the huddle until the play is whistled dead.

While these examples primarily apply to football, you get the general idea of how your tone should be for other sports. If you follow these guidelines and apply them to your entire body of work during the course of the game, you will be contributing in a positive way to the educational nature of the event.

Also included in this packet are scripts to assist you in dealing with protective measures should inclement weather prevails or an emergency situation develops. Site management should review existing school district plans for emergency preparedness, and incorporate the provided materials or existing plans and scripts as appropriate.

NEW RESOURCE – There is a free online course provided by the National Federation and the National Association of Sports Public Address Announcer that would be helpful for new and experienced PA announcers. You can find free this course at - <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/p-a-announcing>

For more information about public address announcing, visit the MHSAA Website:

MHSAA.com > I AM > Administrators

<https://www.mhsaa.com/i-am/public-address-announcers>

MHSAA PUBLIC ADDRESS ANNOUNCEMENTS SPRING Regular Season, 2023-24 School Year

See Something-Say Something (You may wish to adjust reporting location – Pre-Game & Halftime)

Welcome to _____ High School. For your safety and security, the Athletics Department and School Administration encourage you to be aware of unusual activity. Please report any suspicious activity to us here at the announcer's stand ***immediately***. Enjoy the game and remember – Report Suspicious Activity – See Something – Say Something!

Welcome

Good _____, and welcome to _____ for today's game with our visitors from _____. School sports, driven by good sporting behavior, unites us regardless of our backgrounds. Remember, nothing beats good sportsmanship.

National Anthem Introduction

Ladies and gentlemen: The Star Spangled Banner recalls our past – and ongoing fight for freedom; freedom of diversity; and our responsibility to promote respect and equality for all. Let us be united in those efforts today, as we join together in the singing of our National Anthem.

Sportsmanship

We've always said that Sportsmanship is the Golden Rule in action. But why should it stop when the game is over? Now more than ever, we need to respect each other and treat each other with common decency not only between the lines – but outside the lines in our daily lives. In sports and in life – nothing beats good sportsmanship.

Mental Health Resources

Health concerns in high school sports go beyond physical injuries. The mental well-being of our young people is a hotter topic than ever before. The Michigan High School Athletic Association website has resources to help adults and students recognize potential problems and deal with them in a positive way. You can learn more about these mental health resources on the Health & Safety page of the M-H-S-A-A Website.

Watch MHSAA.TV

More live streaming of more games in more sports can be found on the MHSAA.TV website. Over 550 schools are now streaming every game at every level from their gym, stadium and other fields with Pixellot – the N-F-H-S Network’s automated production solution. To watch live high school action from all over the state and to learn more, visit the MHSAA.TV website.

MHSAA Social Media

Keep up with everything M-H-S-A-A on social media. Look us up on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tik Tok and YouTube for tournament updates, event announcements, video highlights and high school sports news from around the state. It’s the best way to connect with the M-H-S-A-A every day!

MHSAA Website

Looking for a score? A schedule? A story? MHSAA dot com has you covered with everything you need to follow high school sports in Michigan. And it works great on mobile devices and makes tournament information even easier to find. Plus, get all of the feature stories and Finals recaps right on the front page. Check out MHSAA dot com!

Michigan Athletic Trainers Society

Injury prevention along with proper identification and management of athletic injuries and illness are key components to safe sport participation. Certified athletic trainers are licensed healthcare providers working with many high schools across Michigan to help reduce the risk. Please check out At-Your-Own-Risk-Dot- Org to see how they work in this role.

Officials Recruitment

There’s always help wanted when it comes to high school game officials. Every year, over one thousand new officials are needed. Officiating is a great way to stay in shape, stay close to the game and so much more. Signing up is easy. To become a registered high school game official – log on to MHSAA Dot Com.

NOTES

- If video of the game is being broadcast or streamed, be sure to provide that information.
- When saying the MHSAA acronym, say each letter – M-H-S-A-A. Do not say M-H-S-Double A or try to say MHSAA as a word.

Emergency Preparedness & The PA Announcer

In response to a changing world around us, schools are implementing emergency action plans – not just for the school day – but for after-school activities where large groups of people can gather and which present a variety of different security challenges – especially for outdoor events.

For the Public Address Announcer, this means having and knowing when to utilize scripts that go beyond telling spectators to stay off the floor and how to address injuries which delay the action on the playing surface (We have included examples for such situations here). The PA Announcer can be the key vehicle in delivering critical messaging as part of an entire team of team of game management personnel.

It should **not** be the responsibility of the PA Announcer to develop scripts, or for that matter, make the final decision of when a script is read in an emergency. Those should be the responsibility of the school administration.

There can be preset protocols for things like a lost child or paging someone to a specific location. But some emergency situations that affect the entire crowd, possibly prompting the evacuation of the venue, must be triggered at the top of the game management chain and should be included in the school's emergency action plan. Those situations include: Weather, Bomb or Terrorist Threat, Fire, Medical Incidents, Gas Leaks, Drive-By Shooter or Active Shooter in Vicinity, Power Outage.

The first thing the PA Announcer must do is be calm; and present clear information to move people to safety. Providing visual references to direct people as opposed to directions is important (i.e. "Proceed to the gate near the scoreboard," instead of "Go to the gate at the North end of the field.")

The bottom line is to be prepared. Know the action plan. Have scripts for various situations prepared in a binder by your side at all times.

The information that follows comes from the MHSAA's Athletic Activities Emergency Preparedness Planning Strategy document, which can be found on the MHSAA Website. The document provides encouragement for schools to develop an emergency action plan to be prepared for enhancing the safety of game participants and spectators when a critical incident occurs.

Special thanks as well to the National Association of Sports Public Address Announcers, which also covers emergency readiness in its book, *The Voice Above The Crowd*, a training manual used by PA Announcers across the country.

Pre-Game

It is recommended that an announcement encouraging people to be aware of their surroundings and to report things they may think suspicious to the game management. Here's an example of such a script, which should be read once or twice during pre-game and once at halftime:

See Something-Say Something (You may wish to adjust reporting location)

Welcome to _____ High School. For your safety and security, the Athletics Department and School Administration encourage you to be aware of unusual activity. Please report any suspicious activity to us here at the announcer's stand ***immediately***. Enjoy the game and remember – Report Suspicious Activity – See Something – Say Something!

During pre-game, the announcer may wish to consult with the game manager regarding potential severe weather or other known threats. It may be decided to use one of the following scripts prior to the start of the game to inform spectators of the protective plans in place:

Weather Threat

May I have your attention please. We have been watching the potential of approaching inclement weather. If it arrives during the game, activity will cease until we have determined it is safe. If we need to evacuate the stadium/gym/arena/field, we will advise you to seek appropriate shelter in the school and follow directions from staff. If you wish, seek shelter in your vehicle. Thank you for your cooperation.

Safety Plan

May I have your attention please. The (school district name) has an emergency plan to keep our students, staff, parents and visitors as safe as possible. If an emergency should occur during the game/event and we need to stop the event to evacuate or take shelter, we will advise you to seek appropriate actions and follow directions from staff and/or event volunteers. If you wish, seek shelter in your vehicle. Thank you for your cooperation and enjoy the contest.

During The Event

During outdoor competition, once the official signals to suspend activity because of weather, the announcer could announce:

Weather Delay

May I have your attention please. We have been notified of approaching inclement weather. Activity will cease until we have determined it is safe and the risk of lightning is diminished. We advise you to seek appropriate shelter in the school, follow directions from staff. If you wish, seek shelter in your vehicle. Thank you for your cooperation.

If during an indoor event, host management determines an evacuation is appropriate, the announcer could announce:

Building Evacuation

May I have your attention please. Due to an emergency situation in the school, we are evacuating the building. Activity will cease until we have determined it is safe and the risk has been resolved. Please follow directions from staff, exit the school and move away from the building. Responding police/fire personnel will provide further instructions. Thank you for your cooperation.

If host management determines Shelter-In-Place is appropriate, the announcer could announce:

Shelter-In-Place

May I have your attention please. Due to an emergency situation in the school, (approaching inclement weather, hazardous materials incident, etc.) activity will cease until we have determined it is safe and the risk has been resolved. We will be taking shelter inside the school, please follow directions from staff:

- Remain in the building; you are free to move around or,
- Quickly move to shelter areas in the building.

Responding police/fire personnel will provide further instructions. Thank you for your cooperation.

Keeping Spectators Off The Floor

A “Stay Off The Playing Surface” announcement should be a script the PA Announcer always has at the ready. Here’s a good example to use when it appears fans may be preparing to rush the playing surface:

Stay Off The Playing Surface

Ladies and gentlemen, for your safety and the safety of the participants, we ask your cooperation in not going on the playing surface before, during or after the game. Violators will be removed from the premises and risk prosecution. Thank you.

Injured Players

An injured player down on the playing surface during a game should only be identified by the PA Announcer. The Announcer is in no position to speculate about the injury and should not talk while being attended to by medical personnel. Do not fill the time with music or announcements. Here’s an example of an appropriate acknowledgement of an injured player if you can positively identify the student:

Injured Player

The injured player on the field is #2, Dylan Lewis.

And when the player is recovered and leaving the field, an announcement encouraging support from the fans is not necessary. This will take place naturally. Again, any announcement speculating about the injury is inappropriate.