

Tips for Planning a School Sports Tournament

Contributed by admin
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School sports are popular with everyone: from the players, the parents, fellow classmates and even rival schools. A school sports tournament is a wonderful way for kids to show school spirit while participating in a favorite activity. But running a school sports tournament takes a lot of effort. Volunteers and sponsors are so important to your success. There are some things you can do to make your school sports tournament run smoothly and be an event that everyone will want to participate in, year after year.

1. **Plan Ahead.** The more time you have to plan for your event, the more time you can take care of every necessary detail. This can also help you find needed volunteers, sponsors for donations and publicity for the event. Time is your friend.
2. **Assign Jobs.** Give each volunteer specific tasks to accomplish. Most school volunteers are parents that often have a full or part-time job, along with other responsibilities. Making your assignment specific and measurable will help them accomplish the tasks that need to get done. When people accomplish things they often feel good, making them want to do even more. Give volunteers tasks that they will enjoy doing, match tasks to personalities and to skill levels.
3. **Obtain Sponsors.** Sponsors can often be an important part of a sports tournament for a school. Some items you may want to find a sponsor for include refreshments and trophies. You may also want to get sponsors for "giveaway" items such as visors or sunscreen for the crowd. Sponsors for a school event are best found in your school community: ask parents and ask local businesses for sponsorship. A great way to find sponsors is for parents to go with a child from the sports team to ask for sponsorship.
4. **Organize Meetings.** If you are holding a sports tournament, you may find it necessary to meet with your volunteers to discuss the many details from time to time. It is best that you keep your meetings well-organized and running smoothly. Volunteers will remember an event that has meetings that start on time and end on time and stay on task. Take time at the meeting to thank everyone for their part in the event and thank them personally. This also encourages future participation, and keeps everyone enthusiastic for the event.
5. **Thank Sponsors.** It is important to thank any sponsors that are involved with your event. Sponsors will remember if they are thanked or if this is neglected, and this may determine their participation for the coming year. Make a telephone call and write a letter thanking them for their participation. Writing a letter is important because many businesses like to hang them up in their store to show that they support their local community. This also benefits you, as it advertises your sports tournament for the coming year.
6. **Publicize.** Your event should be publicized through the local newspaper, cable television and local radio station. Utilize every type of media available to you. Getting your event seen in the media is a time to "pump up" school spirit and it is exciting for the kids to be seen in the school paper. It is also a great opportunity to thank your sponsors for your event. Get a copy of the newspaper, television show or radio broadcast and share this with your sponsors so they know that they were mentioned. This will encourage them to be involved for the future.
7. **The Kids.** The focus of the school sports tournament is all about the kids learning about good sportsmanship and having the opportunity to participate in an event that encourages school spirit. When planning a large event, sometimes small details go awry. But if you focus on the kids having a good time at their event, focus on the bigger picture, everything else will matter less. Be sure to thank everyone involved for their participation, with the kids having a good time and your enthusiasm they are sure to participate next year!