

Slinger Owls Baseball

Communication Protocol

Slinger baseball coaches care deeply for our athletes – not only as students of the game but as responsible young men who are growing and evolving into the future of our community. We truly want the best for each athlete and team so the experiences within our program can prepare them for life ahead.

As coaches, we work hard to establish a supportive and close bonded culture where athletes can feel safe, understood, and appreciated – **NO MATTER THEIR ROLE**. We have built an environment where communication is open and honest with our athletes.

When making decisions regarding any of our teams, we, as coaches, take into consideration things like the impact on a particular athlete to the entirety of the team. This includes, but is not limited to, team goals, circumstances, coachability, improvement, demeanor, recent performance, academic standing, and statistics.

Please assume, be assured, and understand it is never a coach's intent to make a decision that negatively impacts how an athlete feels. Decisions are never made with any intent to punish a particular athlete. In the unlikely event a situation arises where the athlete is unsure of or does not understand a particular decision or situation that affects them as a player, as a player, parent and/or guardian of a player in the Slinger baseball program, you agree to the following Communication Protocol when reaching out to the coaching staff to discuss.

Communication Escalation Process:

1. *Request Direct Coach – Athlete Meeting:* Athlete or direct coach may request an in-person meeting with each other no earlier than 24 hours following the event in question.
 - a. The parties will make every effort to find a mutually agreeable time. All meetings will take place at Slinger High School.
 - b. Athlete or direct coach may request for another program coach to witness conversation depending on the nature of the conversation (Disciplinary action, documentation of meeting needed, ongoing concerns).
2. *Request a Direct Coach – Parent/Guardian – Athlete Meeting:* If the direct coach and athlete cannot come to an understanding on the matter, the athlete may request a follow-up meeting to include their parent/guardian or parent/guardian may request a meeting with the direct coach (which will still include their athlete).
 - a. Again, the parties will make every effort to find a mutually agreeable time. All meetings will take place at Slinger High School.
 - b. Athlete, direct coach and/or parent/guardian may request for another program coach to witness conversation depending on the nature of the conversation (Disciplinary action, documentation of meeting needed, ongoing concerns).
3. *Request a meeting with Head Coach – Direct Coach – Parent/Guardian – Athlete:* If the issue has not been resolved or understood in the foregoing steps and the head coach for the baseball program has not been directly involved with conversation between the direct coach, athlete and parent/guardian to date, the parties will meet to discuss with the aim to resolve.
 - a. Again, the parties will make every effort to find a mutually agreeable time. The meeting will take place at Slinger High School.
4. *Involvement of the Athletic Director:* Although highly unlikely through the following of the foregoing. A meeting with the Athletic Director will be necessary if the parties are unable to come to an understanding of the decision or situation affecting the athlete, the parties may meet with the Athletic Director.

Communication Expectations:

1. There will be **NO COMMUNICATION** for 24 hours from an event or a decision.
2. All communication will be respectful and professional – at all times and in all forms and between all parties. Both parties assume the best of intent and faith in the decisions made.
3. Coaches reserve the right to not respond to any written communication regarding decisions or situations regarding a particular athlete and, in such instance, will initiate this **Communication Protocol** at the necessary step in process.
4. Facts will be discussed. In the unlikely event an athlete is unsure of a situation or decision, there can understandably be many emotions. Please come with facts regarding the situation or decision to discuss. Please take time to evaluate the decision or situation from all angles and, if applicable, you may be asked to share considerations for how to resolve a matter.
5. Under no circumstance do we foresee a situation where a parent/guardian of an athlete may need to make the first connection with the coach or supersede the **Communication Protocol** established in this policy to discuss a particular situation or decision.