



October 6, 2026

A Joint Message from Poolesville and Clarksburg High Schools

Dear Poolesville and Clarksburg High School Communities,

We are writing together following a serious incident that occurred Monday evening after the girls' flag football game at Poolesville High School between our schools.

An investigation is continuing, and we want to be careful not to draw conclusions about individual responsibility before that work is complete. What we do know, however, is deeply concerning. Following the game, disrespectful behavior involving students and adults escalated in the parking lot. There was taunting, arguing and ultimately a physical altercation that resulted in an adult being transported to the hospital for treatment. As an element of expected process when de-escalating a situation such as this, staff did summon the police, who quickly came to Poolesville to support.

This is not how we expect members of either of our school communities, students and adults alike, to represent themselves, their schools or MCPS athletics.

To be clear, athletic competition can be spirited and emotional, but respect for one another is expected at all times—on the field, on the sidelines and after the game is over. That expectation applies to everyone: student-athletes, students, coaches, families and spectators. MCPS athletics is grounded in the R.A.I.S.E. Core Values: Respect & Sportsmanship, Academic Excellence, Integrity & Character, Spirited & Safe Competition, and Equity & Access. The Athletics Handbook makes positive sportsmanship a central part of the MCPS interscholastic athletics program and establishes expectations for conduct and behavior at athletic events.

That did not happen last night.

Administrators from both schools continue to investigate what happened and the actions of those involved. Where appropriate, consequences will be assigned in accordance with the MCPS Student Code of Conduct and the expectations of the MCPS Athletics program and its R.A.I.S.E. Core Values.

We also ask families to reinforce an important message with students: competition never excuses disrespect, and especially never excuses violent and physically harmful behavior. Walking away from a confrontation is not weakness. Instead, showing restraint, treating an opponent with dignity and helping de-escalate a difficult situation is a strength and, more importantly, is expected. As the principal of each school, we are extremely dismayed that this did not occur.

Poolesville and Clarksburg are proud school communities, and one difficult evening does not define any of us, but equally does not absolve us from following through, investigating and taking appropriate action.

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