Instruct and supervise student athletes to reduce the risk of injuries

Coaches have the duty to provide proper instruction to students so they can learn how to play a sport and how to participate safely. Therefore:

- Know the activity. Study the sport before you teach it.
- Be a knowledgeable source of information. Document your previous experience and training.
- Select appropriate activities for the age group and skill level of the students. Teach only district approved or WIAA approved sports and activities.
- Read and know the official rules for each activity. WIAA has rule books for WIAA sponsored sports. Rules for other activities should be approved by your district.
- Provide students with step by step instructions. Teach progressively more challenging skills after players have mastered easier ones.
- Make use of educational media to help teach students athletic skills as well as safety procedures.
- Be aware of the students you are teaching; their ages, skills and sizes. Be conscious of students with special needs and plan accordingly.
- Match students with similar size and skills in competitive activities.
- Require appropriate attire for each sport.
- Include safety procedures along with curriculum instruction.

The responsible coach also supervises students at all times. Common sense supervision guidelines that keep athletes active and safe include:

- Be there. Don’t let students warm-up or play until you are present.
- Be sure there are enough supervisors for each activity.
- Inspect the equipment before allowing students to use it.
- Don’t allow horseplay.
- Restrict students from participation without proper attire.
- Know your players, their strength and weaknesses so they are not placed in positions that overly increase the potential for injury.
- Review rules as needed, before, during and after practice and games.
- Use, but don’t rely on warning signs.
- Monitor the site to be sure it is free of potential hazards.
- Be seen, in control and available.
- Show participants you care about them.

If your athletes know you are present, in control, available and care about them, they will be less likely to question your supervision, and that increases safety.