Introduction:
Today we’re going to talk about “PLAY with purpose.”
P – stands for “Playing safe.”
L – stands for “Leading the students.”
A – stands for “Always being focused.”
Y – stands for “You are responsible for your safety.”

We all know physical education promotes overall health and wellness. We encourage students to explore their abilities and interests through physical activity.

But often times, with physical activities comes risk to the teacher, para or coach. Engaging in play or coaching beyond instruction can and does lead to serious injuries to staff.

That is why it is critical to “PLAY with purpose.”

Play safe.
Playing with students is NOT encouraged. Your goal is to show students how to play the sport, not play the sport yourself. Actively playing beyond encouraging participation and teaching skills is dangerous to you.

For your safety, avoid actively playing in activities like:
- Running
- Dodge ball
- Floor hockey
- Roller skating or roller blading
- Skiing, snowboarding or sliding
- Volleyball, kickball or basketball
- And the list goes on….

Lead students
Be a leader in safe play. Demonstrate the appropriate level of competition and sportsmanship. You will lead most effectively if you are the teacher, rather than a teammate. You are not playing to win. It’s not appropriate for you to engage in play beyond instructing and showing interest in the student’s abilities. Any effort beyond that is putting you at risk of serious injury.

Always focus
Always focus on “playing with purpose.” If you focus on teaching, you and your students will be safe.

You are responsible
You are responsible for your own safety. The district’s goal is to have you remain injury free. So, tone down your play to the appropriate coaching or teaching level. Playing might be fun, but the risk of injury is too great to justify unnecessary involvement.

Conclusion
- Recognize the risk involved with actively playing.
- Play with purpose.
- Be a leader, not a teammate.
- Take personal responsibility for safety.

Remember, working is less painful than recovering from an injury. Play with purpose.

Now let’s take a moment to discuss any comments, questions or concerns you have regarding this topic.