

Philosophy of Coaching High School

I view high school athletics as an integral part of the curriculum for those who choose to participate. Athletics teach numerous skills and lessons and develop many valuable traits. Some examples include communication, working with others, mental toughness, time management, dealing with success, dealing with failure, handling pressure, respect, importance of attitude, perseverance, self control, discipline, etc. High school athletics can be great preparation for college, career, family, and life in general. With participation in high school athletics having so much potential it is imperative to have knowledgeable coaches of character.

Often athletics are one of if not the most motivating tools in a student-athlete's life. This gives a coach a tremendous opportunity and a tremendous responsibility. Young people need structure and accountability. They also need love and grace. It takes wisdom, discernment, hard work, consistency, planning, clear expectations, communication skills etc. to be an effective coach. It is also important to have the ability to get players to buy into what a coach is teaching. All of this is tough to do and coaches will make mistakes in the process of trying to figure out how to best push each player's buttons. Players need to know how much a coach cares in order to care how much a coach knows. If a coach can accomplish this he can get that player to accomplish a great deal without having to be perfect.

Setting clear expectations and being consistent regarding those expectations is extremely important. Coaches and administrators need to be on the same page regarding these expectations. Parents and players need to be clearly made aware of these expectations. Clarity and consistency can prevent most issues.

When issues do arise there is a right way to go about trying to resolve them. This process is best laid out in Matthew 18 in God's word. I will do my best to follow these principles as well as expecting them to be followed by those in our program.

Athletics are a voluntary activity and should be fun. Balancing fun with giving your absolute best effort can often be challenging. One of my favorite verses is 1 Corinthians 9:24 "run in such a way as to get the prize." I believe we should give our best effort in any commitment. It is going through a process in this way that molds and shapes us not the end result. This is why it takes not only talent to be a successful student-athlete but also mental toughness and a positive attitude to maintain this approach over the long haul. Most commitments include some elements that are not fun. This is normal and to be expected.

I believe there is no substitute for hard work but the hard work needs to be part of a well thought out plan. Different programs have different resources, different levels of talent, and different goals and all of these things need to be considered. I am passionate about helping young people grow and achieve. However, I am also passionate about winning. If a program is not committed to improving in hopes to reach championship

caliber at some point it is probably not a “fit” for me. To work towards this goal we will strive to be as fundamentally sound and well conditioned as possible.

I will also encourage parent involvement in specific ways. I would like to create a family atmosphere within the baseball program that extends throughout the athletic department and rest of the school. A strong partnership with parents of players is helpful to accomplish this type of setting but parents need to know the specific expectations.

Many players will have the goal of playing in college. I would be glad to offer guidance during this process. However, I will not do the parts of this process that need to be done by the player and nor should the parents of the player.

Many baseball players have the ability and desire to participate in other sports in high school. I will not pressure an athlete to play or not to play another sport. If a player or family asks me my advice regarding a decision I will let them know the pros and cons of each scenario and then I will support their decision.

Regarding travel baseball I have mixed feelings. In theory travel baseball sounds great. In reality it has many factors to consider that may or may not make it the best fit for every player. I strongly encourage baseball players to participate in offseason programs. Ideally this means on a school team but I am open to players participating on a travel team. There are several things to consider when making this decision and I would expect to be in the communication loop with a player who is considering playing on a fall or summer team outside of the school.

Also regarding communication, I believe that being a student-athlete creates numerous opportunities to communicate with teachers, parents, and coaches. That being said, I believe the student-athlete should take advantage of the opportunity to develop communication skills when appropriate. There are definite times when parents should be involved but players should communicate directly to coaches in most cases.

A student-athlete in a baseball program I coach represents himself, his family, his school, and me. For this reason I expect my players to set the example regarding effort in the classroom and respect for teachers, conduct off campus, and work ethic and sportsmanship on the field. Win or lose I want people to notice a positive difference about our program.

It is important for coaches to teach, mentor, and talk about being a good person, but also to model it to their players. Players will absorb some of what you say to them but they will absorb a great deal more of what they see you do and it will stay with them throughout their lives.