Expectations of Coaches

- Christian Character
- Relationship Between Coaches and Players
- Teaching/Coaching Philosophy
- Positive Reinforcement in Coaching

Christian Character

Coaches must demonstrate Christian behavior at all times as required by our faith. Our coaches will conduct themselves at all times according to the requirements of the MPCS Employee and/or Volunteer Handbooks.

Relationship Between Coaches and Players

Our coaches are expected to develop an enthusiastic spirit and a positive relationship with every student-athlete under their charge. Each team within MPC athletics should foster an environment where mutual respect and admiration are established between coaches and players. This will result in players who work hard, perform well in practices/games, and exhibit strong moral character due to the leadership and genuine trust in their coaches.

Teaching/Coaching Philosophy

When created within an academic setting, a coaching philosophy is derived from an educational philosophy, as coaches are teachers first. Although many athletic programs today de-emphasize academics in favor of the team's interests, our athletic program will always be composed mainly of faculty members whose primary position is that of teacher.

Educational Philosophy of Coaches
Teachers, by educating society's young people, are professionals who embrace their responsibility in cultivating the leaders of tomorrow. A teacher's responsibilities encompass that of *educator, leader*, and *role model*. A teacher cannot merely disseminate information, but must be a living example of these three traits. A teacher's end result must be to accomplish their objectives while having a positive impact on the lives of every student.

Teachers must *educate* their students on the subject matter. They must *lead* their students in life lessons such as civility, humility, respect, and responsibility, all while demonstrating these qualities as a *role model* and person of strong moral character in their everyday life.

Teachers who accomplish the above will inevitably create a positive classroom environment of interested students who are excited about learning. Coaches, as teachers of sport, must embody these traits and use them as the cornerstones in building their programs. By establishing high expectations for the team and the players involved, a coach can create an environment where student-athletes are prepared for success and free from distraction, where players exhibit strong moral character and show respect for their game and their opponent, thus setting the standard for sportsmanship. It is here that our student-athletes truly become ambassadors of the MPCS mission.

Positive Reinforcement in Coaching

In creating an environment for success, it is understood this setting must be a positive one. Our coaches have to be a living example of Christ's presence in sports through their actions and words. By leading teams in this way, we not only establish expectations of conduct for our student-athletes, but also for our parents, spectators, opponents, and others. In accomplishing this, we are always representing MPCS in the most positive light. References to our players should always be in terms of we and us, not you or them. This is especially important when speaking to the team as their coach or to the media. Vulgar or otherwise inappropriate language by a coach during practice or a game in unacceptable and will not be tolerated at Mount Paran Christian School.

Four Concepts in Coaching Positively and Effectively

1. Each player is an individual – Have a plan for the success of every student-athlete; team unity will be stronger when every player feels that their coach is personally interested in helping to reach their goals.

2. Positive Reinforcement – Communicate on the positive; remove negativity by using praise and encouragement whenever possible. student-athletes need to focus on what they *have to do* for success instead of what they *shouldn't do*, which will almost certainly bring failure. Phrases such as the following are inappropriate:

- "WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!?"
- "HOW COULD YOU LET THAT HAPPEN?!?"
- "DON'T WALK HIM/HER!"
- "DON'T MISS ANOTHER FREE THROW!"

None of these responses will help a student-athlete overcome the adversity they are currently facing and if said publicly or in earshot of spectators can have even more detrimental results. Implementation of positive reinforcement and communicating with key phrases that players can rely on will enable them to perform more consistently at a higher level. The phrases above could be replaced with

1. "Tell me what you were trying to do."
2. "What could we have done differently? Was there another option that could have worked better for us?"
3. "Finish the hitter!" or with a pitcher facing a 3-0 count, "All the way back."
4. "Knock this one down; you're a good shooter!"

Eliminate the negative tense and replace it with a positive one, shifting the focus onto what we ***want*** to do versus what we are trying ***not*** to do.

3. Make a difference – Be the role model and authority figure that our players need; being a role model and mentoring young people isn't easy. Accept the challenge.

4. Build respect – Develop within your players the ability to congratulate teammates and opponents alike on great effort and play. Being an intense competitor doesn't require hating our opponents, as we should compete to strive toward excellence, set the standard for sportsmanship, and lead our players to it.