

Coaching Portfolio



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Table of Contents

Coaching Philosophy	1
<i>Defensive Philosophy & Goals</i>	4
<i>Offensive Philosophy & Goals</i>	5
<i>Special Teams Philosophy & Goals</i>	6
Coaching Staff	7
<i>Defensive Coaches</i>	8
<i>Offensive Coaches</i>	9
<i>Special Teams Coaches</i>	10
Overview of Football Program	11
<i>Expectations of the Head Coach</i>	12
<i>Expectations of the Assistant Coaches</i>	13
<i>Expectations of Players</i>	14
<i>Expectations of Parents and Support Staff</i>	15
Development of Student-Athletes.....	16
<i>Academic Development</i>	17
<i>Physical Development</i>	18
<i>Mental Development</i>	19
<i>Emotional Development</i>	20
Meeting Philosophy.....	21
<i>Each Meeting Serves a Specific Purpose</i>	21
<i>All Participants Must Come to Meetings Ready to Learn</i>	21
<i>Meetings are Treated as a Practice</i>	21
<i>Effective Communication is Critical for a Successful Program</i>	21
Practice Philosophy.....	22
<i>Practices Should be More Difficult than Games</i>	22
<i>Practices are for Developing Physical Skills and Execution</i>	22
<i>Quality of Reps over Quantity of Reps.....</i>	22
<i>All Drills Should Implement Five Critical Aspects</i>	22
Major Fundraising Events	23
<i>Bike Ride</i>	23
<i>Dinner Auction</i>	23
<i>Passing Tournament</i>	23
<i>Coaching Clinic</i>	23
<i>Youth Camp</i>	23
<i>Individual Player</i>	23
<i>Fundraisers</i>	23
Season Checklists	24
<i>Offseason (Spring)</i>	24
<i>Preseason (Summer)</i>	24
<i>In Season (Fall)</i>	24
<i>Postseason (Winter)</i>	24

Appendix of Documents	25
<i>General Coaching Guidelines</i>	<i>I</i>
<i>Head Coach’s Responsibilities</i>	<i>II</i>
<i>Varsity Coaches’ Responsibilities.....</i>	<i>III</i>
<i>Junior Varsity Coaches’ Responsibilities</i>	<i>IV</i>
<i>Sophomore Coaches’ Responsibilities</i>	<i>V</i>
<i>Open Letter to Parents of Football Players</i>	<i>VI</i>
<i>What It Takes To Be Number One.....</i>	<i>VIII</i>
<i>“If” by Rudyard Kipling</i>	<i>IX</i>

Coaching Philosophy

Football Teaches Young Men About Life

“The game of life is a lot like football. You have to tackle your problems, block your fears, and score your points when you get the opportunity.” – Lewis Grizzard

Football is an accelerated version of life. It requires that young men demonstrate the traits of fully mature adults at a much younger age than would otherwise be necessary. Within each football game, there are ups and downs, emotional highs and lows, successes and failures, pain, and adversity. Being able to overcome all of these obstacles requires an emotional and mental toughness that is difficult to find, even in the adults of today’s world. Football allows coaches to use a game as a platform to teach the players about life. There are many critical life skills that players must use to be successful in life and in football. Some of these are discipline, work ethic, responsibility, accountability, teamwork, and leadership. It is the job of each coach to be more than just a football coach. They must be a life coach, as well. Many young men do not have positive adult role models in their lives. It is a coach’s responsibility to give them at least one of those people in their lives so that they will have an example of how to make it through the challenges they will face in life. A coach can teach his players much more about being a good person, a good friend, a good student, a good son, a good man, a good husband, and a good father than he ever could teach them about the game they play.

*“What you are as a person is far more important than what you are as a player.”
– John Wooden*

Football Teaches Discipline

“There are two pains in life. There is the pain of discipline and the pain of disappointment. If you can handle the pain of discipline, then you’ll never have to deal with the pain of disappointment.” – Nick Saban

There are always two ways to do things in life: the easy way and the right way. In today’s world, too many people teach young men to take the easy way, which cripples them for life. The easy way to make money or the easy way to complete a job often results in negative consequences. Teaching the young men to have the discipline to do the right thing, even when it is difficult to do so, will encourage them to not take shortcuts in life. Taking shortcuts in football and life will result in failure in both. Discipline is doing the right thing, even when you know that nobody is watching.

“Discipline is the foundation upon which all success is built. Lack of discipline inevitably leads to failure.” – Jim Rohn

Football Teaches a Good Work Ethic

“The dictionary is the only place that success comes before work. Hard work is the price we must pay for success. I think you can accomplish anything if you're willing to pay the price.” – Vince Lombardi

There is no other attribute that can carry a person further in life than a good work ethic. A good work ethic can overcome deficiencies in many areas. In a job setting, a worker who has a good work ethic will get promoted to better positions and obtain raises for better pay over employees who may have more skill or natural talent but a poor work ethic. In football, a player who has the work ethic to master their job and their technique can become a better player than a player who has more natural talent but a poor work ethic. Learning how to work your way through difficult situations through blood, sweat, and tears is possibly the most important thing a young man can ever learn. As a coach, I have an opportunity to teach young men this very ability.

“I never did anything by accident, nor did any of my inventions come by accident; they came by work.” – Thomas A. Edison

Football Teaches Responsibility, Accountability, and Teamwork

“Individual commitment to a group effort – that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work.” – Vince Lombardi

In a family, each member has their responsibilities to the group that they must fulfill in order for the family to succeed. The same can be said about the workplace. If each member of a company does not fulfill their responsibilities, the entire company suffers. Football is a great model for this. Every season, every week, every day, every play, each football player has a responsibility that they must fulfill for the team to be successful. Everybody from the starting quarterback to the last player on the roster has a responsibility for each and every play, and they must be accountable to their teammates for that responsibility. If each and every player has the discipline to take care of his responsibility and hold their peers accountable for theirs, then the entire team is working together for a common goal and is learning the ultimate form of teamwork. A player putting the goals of the team ahead of their own is the ultimate form of sacrifice on the football field, and when all of the players on the team do this, amazing things can happen.

“It is amazing how much you can accomplish when it doesn't matter who gets the credit.” – Harry S. Truman

Football Teaches Leadership

“Leaders are made, they are not born. They are made by hard effort, which is the price all of us must pay to achieve any goal that is worthwhile.” – Vince Lombardi

There are two types of people in the world: leaders and followers. Too often, young men will choose to be followers because it is the easy thing to do. Each time there is a group of people working together, there are always the individuals who rise to the occasion and lead the group. Football is no different. There are individuals on each football team who have the potential to be great leaders, but they need to have great leadership modeled for them. One potential problem with young men becoming leaders of the team is that they can lead the team in either a positive direction or a negative one. The responsibility to teach the young men who develop into leaders falls on the coach. His leadership will serve as a model for the young leaders on his team and in turn, will give those players the ability to be good leaders for the rest of the team. The more models of good leadership there are, the more leaders will develop within the group. As more leaders are developed, the entire group becomes more autonomous and can accomplish much more than they had ever imagined. Once those leaders develop and separate themselves from the followers, it is their responsibility to continue to develop into a better leader, and to not sink back into the roll of follower.

“A leader can never close the gap between himself and the group. If he does, he is no longer what he must be. He must walk a tightrope between the consent he must win and the control he must exert.” – Vince Lombardi

Football’s Focus is on Doing the Right Thing

“Winning is important, but it is not as important as doing the right thing. If you will do the right thing you will win eventually and be respected by your team and change lives, which is what coaching is all about.” – Duane Silver

Football is a game that teaches young men about life. If we lose focus on that fact and allow ourselves to be caught up in thinking that winning is the most important thing, we take away the greatest thing about the game. Learning discipline, a good work ethic, teamwork, responsibility, accountability, and leadership are much more important than the final score of a game. If the young men can learn these things, then the wins will take care of themselves.

*“I try to do the right thing at the right time. They might just be little things, but usually they make the difference between winning and losing.”
– Kareem Abdul-Jabbar*

Defensive Philosophy & Goals

Defensive Philosophy

The philosophy of the Hillcrest defense is to be more aggressive, more physical, and execute better than the opponent's offense each and every week. We will be extremely relentless in our pursuit of the football and execute our assignments with aggression and determination. We will mentally wear down the opposing offense and put them into down and distance situations that allow us to eliminate their options and aggressively attack the few options they have left. Physically and mentally asserting superiority is a goal for each play.

Each and every snap, the goal of the defense will be to take the ball away from the offense. Football games are won by the team who takes the ball away from the other team the most. The aggressiveness, physicality, and execution of the defense will force the offense to make mistakes, which increases the likelihood of a turnover. Ripping and tearing at the football while it is in an opponent's possession, as well as flying and swarming to the football while it is in the air will create pressure and turnovers.

The defense will be sound in the fact that it will account for each and every gap in the run game, and every possible receiver in the pass game. Each player will have a specific responsibility to the defense, which if executed, will turn the defense into a force to be reckoned with. On first and second down, we will play almost exclusively zone coverage in order to stop the run. On third down, we will be aggressive in our attack which will include a variety of blitzes and stunts with man coverage to put pressure on the quarterback and stop the ability of the offense to pass the ball. In the red-zone, the defense will play a combination of man and zone, depending upon the offensive tendency to run or throw in the red-zone. We will turn up our aggression and physical play to not allow points to be scored in the red-zone against us. We want no touchdowns to be scored when we are in the red-zone. Forcing an offense to kick a field-goal each time they are in the red-zone is depressing and demoralizing to the offensive team. This feeds into our philosophy of physically and mentally wearing down opponents with our defense.

The Hillcrest defense will play relentlessly with aggression and execution for 48 minutes each night. Their tenacity and mental toughness will set the tone for each game and remind everybody that **DEFENSE WINS CHAMPIONSHIPS!**

Defensive Goals

1. Physically Dominate Each Game
2. Force at Least 3 Turnovers Each Game
3. Allow <25% of 3 Down Conversions
4. Shutout the Opponent Each Quarter
5. Allow <25% Touchdowns in the Redzone

Offensive Philosophy & Goals

Offensive Philosophy

The offensive philosophy of the Hillcrest offense will fit closely with our defensive philosophy. We want to physically and mentally dominate our opponent each week. A mentality of “WE ARE MORE PHYSICAL THAN YOUR DEFENSE!” is what we want each and every player on our offense to believe in and show on the field. Each position can do this by the offensive line, backs, and receivers throwing devastating blocks. Punishing potential tacklers when we have the football in our arms and making their defensive players feel like they are under physical and mental attack is critical each and every play. On top of physically and mentally dominating our opponents, we want to out-execute them, as well. Knowing our assignments and carrying them out with confidence allows us to demoralize the opponent by always being in the correct place at the correct time, and bringing our physical mentality with us when we get there. By executing on offense, we can keep their offense off the field, and we can demoralize the opponent. Executing on offense will minimize turnovers and bad yardage situations, which will improve our ability to dictate what the defense can do, rather than getting behind in down and distance, which allows the defense to dictate what we can do.

Our playcalling will be aggressive and will attack every weakness we can find in the defense. If a defense is too weak and allows us run the ball each and every down, we may not throw a pass the entire game. If they have a weakness in their pass defense, we may throw the ball 40 times that game. We will find and exploit a weakness in the defense the same way a predator would to its prey. Studying their movements and patterns will allow us to strike them with quickness and aggression. The running game will utilize the individual skills of the players on the team. This could be the employment of the I formation, the spread, the triple option, or the zone. Putting the athletes into the best situation to succeed will be emphasized, along with the physical and mental domination the defense.

The passing game will take advantage of the coverage employed by the defense. The receivers, backs, and tight ends will be aggressive and physical in the passing game. The use of play-action, quick screens, 3-step drop, and 5-step drop passes will be utilized.

Offensive Goals

1. Physically Dominate Each Game
2. 0 Turnovers Each Game
3. Convert >75% of 3 Down Conversions
4. Score at Least 6 Points Each Quarter
5. Score >75% Touchdowns in the Redzone

Special Teams Philosophy & Goals

Special Teams Philosophy

The Hillcrest special teams are an integral part of our success. The special teams have a huge impact on field position and the momentum of the game. There is no more important factor in an offense scoring or a defense stopping an opponent than the starting field position of the drive. Maximizing the change in field position to our benefit will have a positive impact on the likelihood of victory.

We are going to be aggressive in our philosophy on special teams, just as we are on both defense and offense. Attacking kickers and punters with disciplined and relentless block schemes, striking the kick and punt returners with violence, and aggressively defending our kicks will lead to positive changes in yardage, as well as big plays that will swing the momentum of the game in our favor.

Punt Team Goals

1. Do Not Allow a Blocked Kick
2. Do Not Allow a Return TD
3. No Return Yards Allowed

Punt Return Team Goals

1. Block a Kick
2. Return a Kick for a Touchdown
3. No Conversions on Fakes

PAT/FG Team Goals

1. Do Not Allow a Blocked Kick
2. Make 100% of Extra Points
3. Make >75% Field Goals

Field Goal Block Team Goals

1. Block a Kick
2. No Offside/Roughing Penalties
3. No Conversions on Fakes

Kickoff Team Goals

1. Do Not Allow a Return TD
2. Opponent Starts Inside the 25
3. Recover All Onside Kicks

Kickoff Return Team Goals

1. Return a Kick for a Touchdown
2. Start Outside the 35
3. Recover All Onside Kicks

Coaching Staff

Coaches are Leaders and Role Models

*"A good coach will make his players see what they can be rather than what they are."
– Ara Parasheghian*

To be successful in football, players must have knowledge, discipline, integrity, and a very good work ethic. Young men learn these attributes from observing adults demonstrate them. Each coach must have knowledge of their position, show the discipline to follow instructions, have the integrity to do the right thing, and demonstrate a work ethic that is second to none.

"I don't know any other way to lead than by example." – Don Shula

Each coach is expected to learn the entirety of each system of the Hillcrest football program. The defensive coaches are expected to know and understand how the different positions on the field work together and how their responsibilities complement each other. The offensive coaches are expected to know and understand the purpose behind the blocking schemes, pass routes, protections, as well as the assignments and responsibilities of the players at all of the offensive positions. On special teams, each coach must know and understand the scheme of whichever team they are helping with.

Each coach must ask himself this question... "If the coaching staff doesn't know what is going on, how can we expect 14-18 year old young men to execute what is supposed to happen?" We are leaders and coaches of young men. They must learn through our good examples, not through our bad ones.

"Young people need models, not critics." – John Wooden

Each coach has the responsibility to the group of players he coaches to try to be the best coach for that group in the entire world. Striving for perfection and falling short is far better than reaching an imperfect goal.

*"Perfection is not attainable, but if we chase perfection, we can catch excellence."
– Vince Lombardi*

Coaching Positions

<u>Varsity</u>	<u>Junior Varsity</u>	<u>Sophomore</u>
Head Coach	Head Coach	Head Coach
Coordinators (3)	Coordinators (3)	Coordinators (3)
O. Positions (5)	O. Positions (5)	O. Positions (5)
D. Positions (4)	D. Positions (4)	D. Positions (4)

Defensive Coaches

At the discretion of the head coach, the defensive coaches must learn and contribute to the development of the defense, as well as teach and implement the fundamentals of the defense. Each coach needs to buy-in to the philosophy of the defense, as well as implement block destruction and tackling into each and every practice. Every good defense has the ability to get as many players to the football as possible and to make sure tackles when they get there. A defense that does not miss tackles will be very successful, while a team that misses tackles will be unsuccessful.

Missed tackles are the number one thing that has to be eliminated in order to succeed on the defensive side of the ball.

Defensive Coordinator (DC)

- Scheme – Develop, teach, and implement a fundamentally sound defense to both the defensive assistants and the players. This includes organizing and having meetings with both the coaches and the players.
- Film – Analyze the technique and responsibilities of the entire defense, as well as delegate additional responsibilities to the defensive assistants.
- Scouting – Scout the offense and develop a defensive gameplan to defeat the offensive scheme of the opponent.

Defensive Line Coach (DL)

- Scheme – Learn and contribute to the development of the defense, as well as teach and implement the fundamentals of the defense.
- Film – Technique and responsibilities of the DL.
- Scouting – Personnel, scheme, and technique of the OL.

Linebacker Coach (LB)

- Scheme – Learn and contribute to the development of the defense, as well as teach and implement the fundamentals of the defense.
- Film – Technique and responsibilities of the LB's.
- Scouting – Personnel, scheme, and technique of RB's and TE's.

Defensive Backs Coach (DB)

- Scheme – Learn and contribute to the development of the defense, as well as teach and implement the fundamentals of the defense.
- Film – Technique and responsibilities of the DB's.
- Scouting – Personnel, scheme, and technique of QB's and WR's.

Offensive Coaches

At the discretion of the head coach, the offensive coaches must learn and contribute to the development of the offense, as well as teach and implement the fundamentals of the offense. Each coach should buy-in to the philosophy of the offense and teach each player how to play their position with aggression and execution.

Aggressiveness and execution are the most important things that the offense must do in order to succeed.

Offensive Coordinator (OC)

- Scheme – Develop, teach, and implement a fundamentally sound offense to both the offensive assistants and the players. This includes organizing and having meetings with both the coaches and the players.
- Film – Analyze the technique and responsibilities of the entire offense, as well as delegate additional responsibilities to the offensive assistants.
- Scouting – Scout the defense and develop an offensive gameplan to defeat the defensive scheme of the opponent.

Quarterback Coach (QB)

- Scheme – Learn and contribute to the development of the offense, as well as teach and implement the fundamentals of the offense.
- Film – Technique and responsibilities of the QB's.
- Scouting – Personnel, scheme, and technique of the whole defense.

Running Back Coach (RB)

- Scheme – Learn and contribute to the development of the offense, as well as teach and implement the fundamentals of the offense.
- Film – Technique and responsibilities of the RB's.
- Scouting – Personnel, scheme, and technique of the DL and LB's.

Wide Receiver Coach (WR)

- Scheme – Learn and contribute to the development of the offense, as well as teach and implement the fundamentals of the offense.
- Film – Technique and responsibilities of the WR's.
- Scouting – Personnel, scheme, and technique of the DB's.

Offensive Line Coach (OL)

- Scheme – Learn and contribute to the development of the offense, as well as teach and implement the fundamentals of the offense.
- Film – Technique and responsibilities of the OL.
- Scouting – Personnel, scheme, and technique of the DL and LB's.

Special Teams Coaches

At the discretion of the head coach, the special teams coaches must learn and contribute to the development of the special teams units, as well as teach and implement the fundamentals of the special teams. Each coach is responsible for their team and assigning other members of the coaching staff to coach positions on their specific special team.

Punt Team Coordinator (PT)

- Scheme – Work with assistant coaches of the punt team and develop a gameplan to dominate the opponent’s special teams groups.
- Film – Technique and responsibilities of the punt team.
- Scouting – Personnel, scheme, and technique of the opponent’s PR.

Punt Return Team Coordinator (PR)

- Scheme – Work with assistant coaches of the punt return team and develop a gameplan to dominate the opponent’s special teams groups.
- Film – Technique and responsibilities of the punt return team.
- Scouting – Personnel, scheme, and technique of the opponent’s PT.

Kickoff Team Coordinator (KO)

- Scheme – Work with assistant coaches of the kickoff team and develop a gameplan to dominate the opponent’s special teams groups.
- Film – Technique and responsibilities of the kickoff team.
- Scouting – Personnel, scheme, and technique of the opponents KR.

Kickoff Return Team Coordinator (KR)

- Scheme – Work with assistant coaches of the kick return team and develop a gameplan to dominate the opponent’s special teams groups.
- Film – Technique and responsibilities of the kick return team.
- Scouting – Personnel, scheme, and technique of the opponent’s KO.

Field Goal & PAT Team Coordinator (PAT)

- Scheme – Work with assistant coaches of the field goal team and develop a gameplan to dominate the opponent’s special teams groups.
- Film – Technique and responsibilities of the field goal team.
- Scouting – Personnel, scheme, and technique of the opponent’s FGB.

Field Goal Block Team Coordinator (FGB)

- Scheme – Work with assistant coaches of the field goal block team and develop a gameplan to dominate the opponent’s special teams groups.
- Film – Technique and responsibilities of the field goal block team.
- Scouting – Personnel, scheme, and technique of the opponent’s PAT.

Overview of Football Program

Each Level has a Purpose within the Program

Sophomore Football

- Purpose – Teach players the basic rules and strategies of football. Build the players' knowledge of football to a level that will allow them to progress to the junior varsity or varsity level, depending upon physical ability.
- Emphasis – Learn the basic techniques, schemes, and thinking-habits to develop mentally into a player prepared for high school football. The difference between youth football and high school football is a huge jump for most players. They must learn about the mental aspect of the game that is often absent in youth football.
- Winning sophomore games is not an emphasis.
- Emphasize preparing players to win varsity games.
- Weightroom – Learn the proper technique for lifts and the necessary work-habits to develop physically into a player prepared for high school football. Sophomore year is the foundation for a strong varsity team the next three years. Getting players to love the weightroom and lift correctly will directly impact the number of wins in the program for the next three years.

Junior Varsity Football

- Purpose – Teach players the intermediate rules and strategies of football.
- Emphasis – Prepare the players, both mentally and physically, for varsity football. The largest difference between a junior varsity player and a varsity player is their aggressiveness. Junior varsity players tend to be timid for one of two reasons: they do not understand the game and they play confused or they do not have the size, strength, and agility to play aggressively. The focus of junior varsity football is to overcome those shortcomings and develop players ready for varsity.
- Winning junior varsity games is not an emphasis.
- Emphasize preparing players to win varsity games.
- Weightroom – Develop strength, agility, quickness, and endurance through a structured lifting, agility, and conditioning program designed to make the players bigger, faster, and stronger so that they can handle the physical demands of playing high school football. Increasing strength, speed, and agility of the junior varsity players will improve their ability to prepare for varsity.

Varsity Football

- Purpose – Teach players the advanced rules and strategies of football.
- Emphasis – Win games by fielding the best team of players possible, who are both mentally and physically prepared to play football at the varsity level. Prepare potential college athletes for the college level.
- Weightroom – Continue to improve strength, agility, quickness, and endurance to physically dominate opponents.

Expectations of the Head Coach

Develop the Best Program Possible

Run an Organized Program

- Have both short-term and long-term goals for the program that everybody knows and understands so that everyone can work towards those goals.
- Have a hierarchy of communication so that all program communication is efficient and clearly understood.
- Be prepared for every meeting, drill, practice, day, week, month, and season.
- Keep an inventory of all equipment that is used by the program.
- Be prepared for almost every contingency.

Be a Good Leader

- Have clear and demanding expectations of coaches, players, and support staff.
- Treat everyone in the program with honesty and respect.
- Delegate responsibility and authority when appropriate.
- Open door policy for all aspects of the program.
- Conduct all hiring and firing of coaches and support staff.
- Develop excellent assistant coaches. A head coach is only as good as his staff.
- Motivate the young men to want to play for the program.

Rigorous Work Ethic

- Work hard with the administration, assistant coaches, players, boosters, and community to build support for the school and program.
- Demonstrate the hard work and determination that is expected of the coaches, players, and support staff each day.
- Develop academically, physically, mentally, and emotionally strong players.

Be the Face of the Program

- Respond to all media inquiries.
- Communicate with administration.
- Deal with all parent issues and concerns.
- Develop relationships with colleges and universities for player advancement.

Expectations of the Assistant Coaches

Build and Support the Program from the Ground-Up

Be a Positive Influence on Players

Remember we are here to teach the players how to become good men. To do this, they need positive influences by positive role-models. Too often, they do not have anyone in their lives helping them to make good choices and teaching them how to think and act like an adult. The players have to trust us and know that we are on their side and support them in their journey toward becoming good men.

Loyalty to the Program

Each coach must be completely committed to the program and must maintain unwavering support of the program in public. All disagreements, problems, and concerns with the program are to be brought up at appropriate times and behind closed doors. This does not mean that the assistants are to be “yes-men” but are to completely support the program in public and work behind closed doors to make any changes they feel are necessary for the program.

Hard Work & Dedication

The coaching staff must model the hard work and dedication to the program that they demand of the players. Coaches must be on time for all meetings, complete all tasks in the appropriate amount of time, and work above and beyond the time spent in practices and meetings with the players. Coaches are expected to be present and on time for all team events.

Know & Understand the Schemes

Each and every coach must know and understand the offensive, defensive, and special teams’ schemes so that they are all teaching the same concepts to all levels of the program. Nothing can confuse and cripple a player more than being told multiple things by different coaches. The players must be coached with the same language, the same responsibilities, and the same concepts in order to succeed on the field. It is the coaches’ responsibility to be able to explain their position player’s role in the scheme in which they are playing.

Grow and Develop as a Coach

Each coach has a responsibility to the program and their players to become the best coach possible. Learning different points of view and techniques to teach the players will improve the coaching ability of each coach, which will in turn improve the skill and knowledge of the players they coach. The better the coaches are within a program, the better the program is.

Expectations of Players

Become the Best Man You Can Possibly Be

"What I said was that wearing the uniform did not entitle them to anything, but it obligated them to be always aware of what they were doing and how it reflected on our team. I meant every word...we should demand that our kids strive to achieve a level of excellence on and off the field, grades, behavior, community service, etc."
– Jason Skidmore

Treat Everyone with Respect

The best thing a young man can learn is how to treat everyone with respect. Each and every person has the right to be treated with respect at all times. Players will treat their teammates, classmates, coaches, teachers, administrators, and their parents with respect at all times.

Succeed in the Classroom

We are not a football vocational school. Players are here to get a good education. The level of their education is completely their responsibility. The teachers are here to help. The administrators, coaches, and support staff are here to help. Football is a privilege that they earn through hard work and success in the classroom. Their schoolwork is more important than football.

Accept Responsibility

Nobody is responsible for a player's actions except himself. Passing blame onto another person is not what a responsible adult does. They will not be perfect, but players will take responsibility for your mistakes and work to correct them. Their ability to fulfill their responsibilities in class, at home, and later with their spouses and children will make them better men.

No Excuses

There is no need for excuses in football or life. Passing the blame onto someone or something else reinforces the negative action that has happened. Players need to fix problems and issues, not excuse them. At the end of the day, they are the one who did or did not do the things needed to succeed.

Develop Mental and Physical Toughness

Learning how to succeed through mental and emotional distress will make them winners in both football and life. They will be taught to not let anybody be tougher than them.

Work Hard to Improve in All Aspects of Your Life

Football is a tool that can guide a player to be a better student, son, brother, and person. The purpose of our program is to build good men, not just good football players. They will be encouraged to strive to be the best men they can be.

Expectations of Parents and Support Staff

Be Supportive of the Program

The goal of the program is to make each of the young men a better person and to become the best they can be. Each and every member of the program should be completely supportive of that aspect of the program. The coaches, parents and support staff should help each other in the positive development of the young men in the program.

Be Involved in the Program

A common thread in each successful program is strong parent involvement. There is much that needs to be done to run a successful program, so the more people involved in the program, the better. The larger the involvement of parents, the more meaningful experience the players have with the support staff.

Understand the Role of Parents

The role of a parent in a program is to cheer for their son and contribute to the positive development of the athlete academically, physically, mentally, and emotionally. This does not include speaking negatively about other players in the program, coaches in the program, playcalling, or gameplanning.

Too often, parents think that it is part of their responsibility to “coach from the stands.” Any parent who feels as if they would like to help with the coaching aspect of the program is more than welcome to apply to become a coach in the program.

Guidelines for Parent Communication

- All meetings must be scheduled by appointment.
- No meetings, conversations, or communications on game day.
- All communication must be professional and respectful.
- The following items may be discussed:
 - Treatment of their child
 - Safety of their child
 - Work habits of their child
 - Improvement of their child
 - Opportunities for their child
 - Attitude and behavior of their child
 - Academics of their child
- The following items may not be discussed:
 - Playing time
 - Game strategy
 - Play calling
 - Other players

Development of Student-Athletes

The key to every successful program is the development of the players within the program. A program can have a small stretch of success with transfer players or just inheriting talent, but in order to win games consistently each and every year, a program must develop the players within the program. Getting those kids who did not have the ability or talent to get on the field as freshmen or sophomores to a level that makes them contributors on the varsity team as a junior or a senior is critical. There are four major areas of focus in the development of the student-athletes in the Hillcrest football program:

Academic Development

The number one thing that causes athletes to not participate in athletics is academic standing. The development of good academic skills in the program will ensure that there is greater participation due to grades not eliminating any potential student-athletes.

Physical Development

Once the number of athletes has been increased due to academic standing, the next important factor towards becoming a contributor on the varsity level is the physical ability to play at that level. The size, strength, and speed it takes to contribute at the varsity level are not born into every player. These things need to be developed in the majority of them.

Mental Development

Once the number of active participants and players that are physically able to participate at the varsity level have been increased, developing an aggressive and confident mental toughness to match their physical toughness will improve the ability of the players to perform under pressure when it matters. The more players who can perform under pressure, the more players can be relied on to make an important play in a critical situation during a game. This makes the program win a majority of those close games that the great teams seem to always win. Until we can get the program to a point where they will mentally win those close games, we are not an elite program.

Emotional Development

Having emotional maturity allows the student-athletes to have perspective and to deal with adversity. In life, the ability to deal with adversity and to put things in proper perspective will allow them to overcome obstacles, as well as have the ability to not dwell on their failures. These things will also have a positive impact on the football field.

Academic Development

Importance of Academics

Players are student-athletes, not athlete-students. Their education is the most important thing that they can obtain in their lives. An academic support program will be developed, run, and maintained where students can receive help in any academic classes in which they may be struggling. Many times, poor grades are a result of tardies and/or absences. A strict attendance policy will be enforced on the football team. Missing class will be counted as missing a practice with appropriate discipline for each transgression. Developing good academic skills is a priority in the program.

Academic Requirements

At the high school level, grades are mostly determined by attendance, following directions, and hard work. If a student fails a class, it is because they failed at least one of these three things. If a student attends each day, follows the directions given by the teacher, and works hard to complete all assignments, a minimum of a C grade will be obtained. With that in mind, the Hillcrest football program will have a few requirements above and beyond the normal academic requirements of other programs:

- **No F's**
 - Failure is not an option in the program. An academic grade of F says that the player is not committed to their academic progress and should therefore not be allowed the privilege of playing in football games. This will be enforced until the player is no longer failing any of his classes.
- **2.5 GPA**
 - Players should not be happy with the minimum requirement of a 2.0 GPA set for all athletes. We want to be a superior football program over all of our opponents. This includes academics. We will be better academically than our opponents by requiring a higher minimum GPA to be eligible to play in football games. This requirement will also help to ensure a better future for each player.

Procedure for Academic Problems

Players who do not meet the academic requirements of the program will enter the academic improvement program that will be run through the head football coach, teachers at the school, and the support staff.

- **Cannot Participate in a Game Until He Fulfills Academic Requirements**
 - Player will enter the academic improvement program and will remain in the program until he meets the academic requirements of the team.
- **Player Must Continue to Attend all Football Functions**
 - Player must continue to fulfill his obligations to the football team.

Physical Development

“There are only two options regarding commitment; you're either in or you're out. There's no such thing as life in-between.” – Pat Riley

Importance of Physical Development

The game of football is the most physically demanding sport today. Players must have the strength to move opponents around the football field, the speed and the agility to make the opponents miss, and the conditioning necessary to outlast the opponents throughout the course of the game. These aspects must be improved through a physical development program designed to improve strength, speed, agility, and conditioning.

Physical Development is Year-Round

To develop to the best of the athlete's ability, he must train his body year-round. Too often, players are under the impression that lifting weights and physically training their bodies will “harm” them for other sports. This is not true. Every single sport requires size, strength, agility, endurance, and conditioning. Basketball is an explosive sport, track and field is an explosive sport, and even baseball requires explosive movements in the batter's box as well as when fielding and throwing the ball. Each and every athlete, and in turn, each and every program in the school can benefit from a good year-round physical development program for the athletes.

Building a Bigger, Faster, and Stronger Athlete

There are many factors that contribute to the optimal physical development of an athlete. First and foremost is an education on sleep, diet, and nutrition. It does not matter how much training an athlete does, if they do not have the proper nutrition to promote the physical development of their body, they will not get stronger. An expert on diet and nutrition will educate the athletes in the program each year about the sleep and diet they need to put their bodies through the physical demands of the sport of football.

Developing College Level Athletes

Many parents and students do not have an understanding of the size, speed, strength, agility, and explosiveness needed to receive a scholarship to play football at the next level. In the Hillcrest football program, the coaches will expect athletes who wish to play football at the next level to train and develop their bodies in a rigorous manner necessary to prepare for college football. Every opportunity will be provided for the athletes to develop to the best of their physical ability.

Mental Development

Importance of Mental Focus

The ability to be mentally focused must be developed in the players. Training them to be able to use their minds to overcome their bodies is an important skill to develop. In life, many people are unsuccessful due largely to the fact that they cannot mentally force themselves to do something because they don't want to, they are tired, or for some other reason. Developing the players mentally so that they will be able to make themselves do things the right way instead of the easy way will make them better students, better athletes, and better people throughout their lives.

“All right Mister, let me tell you what winning means... you're willing to go longer, work harder, and give more than anyone else.” – Vince Lombardi

Emphasis on Details

The details in football are the difference between winning and losing games. The tackle in the open field for a five yard gain instead of a ten yard gain on 3rd and 7, the completed twelve yard comeback against tight coverage on 3rd and 9, or even that extra yard on 1st and 10 that the running back gets because of a good cut to make it 2nd and 6 instead of 2nd and 7. Focus on the details for each and every play is the difference between a two-win team and an eight-win team.

“Little things make the difference. Everyone is well prepared in the big things, but only the winners perfect the little things.” – Bear Bryant

Learn to Love the Process of Winning

Too often, coaches and players will settle for the end result of a play rather than how the result was accomplished. The process of winning is to “love the grind.” Developing a mentality and focus within the program so that the players will consciously strive to work hard and focus on the details on each and every play is the process of winning. Winning teams love the day-to-day work required to win games on Friday nights, while losing teams do not love the day-to-day work required to win games. Teaching the players to love the process, rather than the results will help them be successful in not just football, but in everything else they do for the rest of their lives. Focusing on the details in school will improve their grades, focusing on the details in their relationships will improve their personal growth, and focusing on the details at their jobs will ensure job security and help them be successful in their life.

“When you become result-oriented, you lose the focus on the process of what it takes for you to improve and get better and play your best. You're always playing to a standard; you're not just playing to win the game.” – Nick Saban

Emotional Development

Importance of Emotional Strength

Being able to overcome failure is a critical skill in life. Every day, each person will experience failure in one aspect of their lives. The ability to be emotionally strong enough to recognize the source of failure and then work to turn that failure into success is a crucial skill to have in life. Teaching young men how to use failure to their advantage could possibly be the greatest skill that anyone can teach them. One of the obstacles that is difficult for a coach to overcome is the emotional crippling that occurs when young men are never taught to take responsibility for their failures, learn from them, and turn them into positives. Too often, parents will make excuses for their children when they make mistakes. This leads to a child or young man with a sense of entitlement and one that does not have the emotional strength to handle the amount of personal failure that each and every player faces in this sport. Football requires that young men have the skills and maturity of adults at a time in their lives where their peers are often emotionally unstable. If a player can learn to control his emotions and emotional impulses, he will be more likely to succeed under pressure, respond appropriately to failures, and have the ability to make good decisions in his life.

“Nothing gives one person so much advantage over another as to remain always cool and unruffled under all circumstances.” – Thomas Jefferson

Building Emotional Strength

The ability to emotionally overcome past mistakes will prevent losing streaks and will also prevent complacency during winning streaks. By teaching the players to control their emotions, they can learn to will themselves to victory.

*“Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it.”
– George Santayana*

Developing Emotional Strength

- Maintain high intensity during practice at all times.
- Focus on the process instead of the results.
- Recognize personal failures and take responsibility for them.
- Teach players to listen to the message being relayed, not the tone or the volume.
- Develop self-reliance in the players, assistant coaches, and support staff that enables each member of the program to be able to do their job despite any distractions that may occur over the course of the season.

“The first rule is to keep an untroubled spirit. The second is to look things in the eye and know them for what they are.” – Marcus Aurelius

Meeting Philosophy

Each Meeting Serves a Specific Purpose

Meetings are for relaying important information to a group of people in a short period of time. In meetings, players and coaches will acquire the mental aspects of the game, such as scheme and position responsibilities. Therefore, it is critical that everybody attend all meetings and focus on the information presented. This goes for offensive, defensive, special teams, and position group meetings. Each individual is expected to *know* the information from the meetings and will be held accountable for that information.

All Participants Must Come to Meetings Ready to Learn

Assistant coaches should have binders or notebooks where they write notes and information from meetings, as well as keep track of important information that they will need for later. Players must also bring a binder or notebook that they will use to create their own playbooks for offense, defense, special teams, and their position. Large amounts of information will be relayed, and players are expected to study, learn, and know the information presented to them. There will be quizzes and assignments given to players to ensure their learning of the information needed to succeed in football.

Meetings are Treated as a Practice

Missing meetings is even more detrimental to the program than missing a practice. Meetings relay large amounts of critical information, and missing a meeting puts a person far behind the rest of the group in terms of accomplishing the goals of the program because they are missing critical information to do so. Coaches are expected to be an example to the players of the importance of meetings. They need to be prompt, prepared, and focused during meetings, asking questions, and helping out with information when needed.

Effective Communication is Critical for a Successful Program

Just like an effective business needs every employee to communicate effectively within the company to be successful, the same is true with a football program. Having every assistant coach know and understand the vision of the head coach ensures their ability to coach the players in the way desired by the head coach. This will then ensure that every player in the program is being coached in the direction needed for the program to succeed. Nothing will tear a team apart faster than having coaches working against each other.

Practice Philosophy

Practices Should be More Difficult than Games

By the time players step onto the field at game time, they should be mentally, physically, and emotionally prepared at a level above what they will encounter during the game. The game should be an opportunity for the players to show how much they have improved and should be less demanding than their preparation.

Practices are for Developing Physical Skills and Execution

Meetings are for the installation of scheme, but practices need to have as many players physically involved as possible. Sitting around for 10 minutes at practice while a coach explains something is 10 minutes of wasted reps and wasted time. This time could have been used to improve the players' physical skills and/or execution of responsibilities.

Quality of Reps over Quantity of Reps

Practice time is limited, and there are few opportunities for players to improve each and every day. Each coach will emphasize the importance of getting the most out of each and every rep because there is a limited amount of them.

All Drills Should Implement Five Critical Aspects

- Fundamental Skills
 - Each drill should specifically teach one or more fundamental skill that every player involved in the drill needs to work on to make the team successful.
- Physical Development
 - Every player needs to develop their speed, acceleration, jumping ability, balance, and agility.
- Aggressive Contact
 - In order to develop the aggressive mentality wanted in the program, each drill must include aggressive contact and a development of the mentality desired.
- Cardiovascular Conditioning
 - In order to win football games against quality opponents, we must be able to outlast them in the 4th quarter and overtime. Each drill should improve each player's cardiovascular endurance to ensure that we are the best conditioned team each and every week.
- Schematic Connection
 - Drills must be a step or sequence of steps in the progress of the overall scheme. Breaking down the whole scheme and teaching it in smaller pieces so that the players can perform each of the small steps needed to make the scheme work is a most critical aspect of each drill.

Major Fundraising Events

Bike Ride

- Raise money through pledges for riding a bike for 50 miles.

Dinner Auction

- Raise money through tickets, live auction, silent auction, and drink sales.
- Have a positive social interaction between coaches, parents, boosters, friends of the program, and the community.

Passing Tournament

- Raise money through concessions.
- Increase exposure to the school and program.
- Evaluate players through competition.
- Develop team chemistry.
- Improve on passing offense and pass defense.

Coaching Clinic

- Raise money through entry fees.
- Increase exposure to the school and program.
- Network with college and professional coaches.
- Network with possible assistant coaches.
- Develop coaches within the program.

Youth Camp

- Raise money through entry fees.
- Expose future athletes to program.
- Expose future parents to the coaching staff and program.
- Improve player fundamentals of youth players.

Individual Player Fundraisers

- Selling of Gold Cards
- Advertisements in Football Program
- Selling of Mini Helmets
- Purchases of Highlight Video

Season Checklists

Offseason (Spring)

- Run Academic Program
- Recruit the Hallways
- Run Strength Program
- Run Conditioning Program
- Plan Fundraisers
- Register for Passing Leagues
- Program Newsletter
- Program Promotion
- Scheme Development
- Playbook Development
- Recruit Junior High
- Solicit Boosters for Funds
- Solicit Businesses for Donations
- Spring Team Meetings
- Spring Football
- Fundraiser: Bike Ride
- Attend Coaching Clinics
- Recruiting Information on Athletes
- Meet with College Coaches
- Design Coaching Attire

Preseason (Summer)

- Summer Newsletter
- Revisions to Calendar
- Fundraiser: Passing League
- Fundraiser: Coaching Clinic
- Fundraiser: Youth Camp
- Summer Strength Program
- Summer Conditioning
- Summer Passing Leagues
- Preseason Schedules
- Feeder Program Coaching Clinic
- Weekly Coaches Meetings
- Summer Team Meeting
- Inventory New Equipment
- Spirit Packs and Coaching Attire
- Organize In-Season Responsibilities

In Season (Fall)

- Final Newsletter
- Coaches Meeting
- Strength Program
- Conditioning Program
- Academic Program
- Individual Fundraisers
- Spirit Packs
- Locker & Gear Issue
- Parent Meeting Two-a-Days
- Ground Crew Gear
- Promotional Materials
- Scrimmage
- Letter to Faculty
- Student Progress Reports
- School Issues
- Parent Issues
- Player Issues
- Media Issues
- Game Issues

Postseason (Winter)

- Collect Equipment
- Inventory Equipment
- Equipment Maintenance
- Determine Awards
- All League/State Meetings
- Team Banquet & Awards
- Meet with AD
- Coach Evaluations
- Player Evaluations
- Support Staff Evaluations
- Academic Support Evaluation
- End of Season Meetings
- Order New Equipment
- Playbook/Scheme Review
- Hire New Coaches
- Work with AD on Budget
- Booster Changes
- Thank You Letters
- Academic Support for Finals
- Recruit the Hallways
- Plan Strength Program
- Plan Conditioning Program
- Plan Academic Program
- Yearly Calendar

Appendix of Documents

Document #1 – General Coaching Guidelines

Document #2 – Head Coach’s Responsibilities

Document #3 – Varsity Coaches’ Responsibilities

Document #4 – JV Coaches’ Responsibilities

Document #5 – Sophomore Coaches’ Responsibilities

Document #6 – Open Letter to Parents of Football Players

Document #7 – “What it Takes to be Number One” by Vince Lombardi

Document #8 – “If” by Rudyard Kipling

General Coaching Guidelines

- Have passion for learning the game.
- Be yourself.
- Be consistent, fair, and available.
- Care for the kids, but expect excellence.
- Be responsible for yourself and your players.
- Know and fulfill your responsibilities.
- Be totally committed to the development of your players.
- Maintain proper perspective by reminding yourself that this is a game played by kids. We are here to use the game to teach the players about life.
- Know the abilities and limitations of your players, and use them to try and become the best position group on the field each and every day.
- Make sure to teach the players WHY they do things.
- Remember to have fun and be human.

Head Coach's Responsibilities

Oversee the Entire Football Program

- Make sure all aspects of the program are run smoothly.
- Develop better coaches through training and experience.
- Develop better players through training and teaching.
- Create a top-tier football program.

Develop and Maintain a Positive Relationship Between the Program and the Community Supporting the School

- Plan and organize fundraisers with boosters.
- Involve alumni and local businesses in events and activities.
- Interact positively with the media at events and activities.

Develop and Maintain a Positive Relationship Between the Program and the Other Athletic Programs at the School

- Encourage players to play other sports at the school.
- Have the team attend events of other programs as a group.
- More involvement in other activities leads to more involvement in football.

Develop, Organize, and Assign Locker Room and Weight Room Duties

- Ensure that there is adult supervision before, during, and after all team events.

Practices & Equipment

- Plan, organize, and implement all aspects of practices.
- Oversee issuance, keep an inventory, and organize the storage of all equipment.
- Repair and replace field equipment in need of repair or replacement.

Coach/Player Evaluation & Development

- Evaluate coaches/players each week, game, season, and year.
- Hold meetings with coaches and players to discuss areas of strength and weakness.
- Help assistant coaches develop into better coaches, which will lead to better development of the players.

Recruitment of Feeder Programs & School

- Attend all Sophomore and JV games possible.
- Attend at least two 9th grade games each year.
- Attend at least one sub-9th grade game each year.
- Recruit in classes and hallways for possible players.

Varsity Coaches' Responsibilities

Meetings & Planning

- Attend all meetings called by the head coach and coordinators.
 - Plan and organize meetings and drills to teach necessary information and skills to position players.

Practices & Equipment

- Plan, organize, and implement all aspects of practice with the head coach.
- Help with issuance, inventory, and storage of all equipment.
 - Keep field equipment in good condition and help with repair and/or replacement.

Weight Room & Locker Room Duty

- Know the weight program and lifts.
- Supervise the weight room and locker room when scheduled.

Player Evaluation & Development

- Evaluate players each week, game, season, and year.
- Meet with position players to discuss areas of strength and weakness.
- Develop each player at their position to maximize their abilities.

Recruitment of Feeder Programs & School

- Attend all sophomore home games.
- Attend at least two 9 grade games each year.
- Attend at least one sub-9th grade game each year.
- Recruit in classes and hallways for possible players.

Junior Varsity Coaches' Responsibilities

Meetings & Planning

- Attend all meetings called by the varsity coaches.
 - Plan and organize meetings and drills to teach necessary information and skills to position players.
- Carryout game day responsibilities assigned by varsity coaches.

Practices & Equipment

- Plan, organize, and implement all aspects of practice with the varsity coaches.
- Help with issuance, inventory, and storage of all equipment.
 - Keep field equipment in good condition and help with repair and/or replacement.
- Assist the varsity coaches during drills, demonstrations, and meetings.

Weight Room & Locker Room Duty

- Know the weight program and lifts.
- Supervise the weight room and locker room when scheduled.

Player Evaluation & Development

- Evaluate players each week, game, season, and year.
- Meet with position players to discuss areas of strength and weakness.
- Develop each player at their position to maximize their abilities.
- Communicate with and help the varsity coaches with all player evaluation and development.

Recruitment of Feeder Programs & School

- Attend all sophomore home games.
- Attend at least two 9 grade games each year.
- Attend at least one sub-9 grade game each year.
- Recruit in classes and hallways for possible players.

Sophomore Coaches' Responsibilities

Meetings & Planning

- Attend all meetings called by the varsity coaches.
 - Plan and organize meetings and drills to teach necessary information and skills to position players.
- Carryout game day responsibilities assigned by varsity coaches.

Practices & Equipment

- Plan, organize, and implement all aspects of practice with the varsity coaches.
- Help with issuance, inventory, and storage of all equipment.
 - Keep field equipment in good condition and help with repair and/or replacement.
- Assist the varsity coaches during drills, demonstrations, and meetings.

Weight Room & Locker Room Duty

- Know the weight program and lifts.
- Supervise the weight room and locker room when scheduled.

Player Evaluation & Development

- Evaluate players each week, game, season, and year.
- Meetings with position players to discuss areas of strength and weakness.
- Develop each player at their position to maximize their abilities.
 - Communicate and help the varsity coaches with all player evaluation and development.

Recruitment of Feeder Programs & School

- Attend all 9 grade home games.
- Attend at least two sub-9 grade games each year.
- Recruit in classes and hallways for possible players.

Open Letter to Parents of Football Players

*

Coaching is a high-pressured job. Whether the pressure to win is coming from the school or community or whether it is self-induced by the coach doesn't lessen its effect. Every coach wants his team to be successful. Every coach worth his whistle is a student of the game he coaches. The coach has probably spent years developing a philosophy and a "teaching style." The average workweek for a high school coach is 25-35 hours on coaching duties alone. Out-of-season (there is never an off-season) the good coaches attend clinics, read books, watch videos, and attend college spring practices. Many coaches, because of their competitive natures, are emotional and intense. Fans see these coaches as "screamers" who spend too much of their time yelling and chastising players. But the great majority of these coaches are completely loyal to their athletes. They are strong advocates and willing mentors for all of their players.

Parents, in particular, can be critical of coaches. A coach has perhaps 50 players and 10 assistant coaches to consider with every decision he makes. The greater good of the football program itself is a prime consideration. Parents, on the other hand, are concerned about only one athlete. When their son is unhappy or the parent believes that he isn't being treated fairly, conflicts can occur. Too many fine coaches have left the sidelines because of parental interference.

Parents would do well to remember a few simple facts:

- The coaches are in a better position and certainly more knowledgeable in determining who plays and how much.
- The best players play.
- Even the players who do not start or play many minutes are important to the team.
- Hard work and discipline have their own rewards.
- Commitment and self-discipline are not "bad" words.
- Parents, not coaches, set the standard for their son's behavior.
- Unless you have actually spent time studying the game (and not just watching it on TV), don't presume you know enough to be critical of the coaching staff.

Coaches are visible, and their work is put on public display weekly. Many people watch football on television and think they understand the sport. How many parents would like people going to their place of work, observing their performance, and then publicly and privately criticizing the job they do? When players complain to parents, and parents react by being negative about the team or the coach, they are undermining team cohesiveness and discipline. In our "Me First" society, some parents seem to prefer being their son's friend rather than his parent. Your son has plenty of friends. He needs a parent to provide discipline and guidance.

Parents who really wish to be a positive factor in their son's athletic experience would be best served making sure their son does his part. Understand that few players will be "scholarship" athletes. Don't overestimate your son's potential and form unrealistic expectations. Help reinforce that in a team sport, the team is the top priority and personal goals come second. I am always confounded when players make a bad decision, are punished, and parents complain or try to intervene on their son's behalf. Parents often make excuses or point out other players in an attempt to justify the behavior in question. Why not make your son accountable for his decisions and help teach him that in life he will be judged by his actions? Know who your son's friends are and what they are doing. When your son does make a mistake, hold him accountable for his actions. Making excuses or ignoring unwanted behavior only encourages it. Being strict with your son now will save much regret later. Reinforce the coach's philosophy and encourage your son to get involved in all team activities. Understand that football is a hard game with intense physical and mental demands.

Under no circumstances should you allow your son to quit! Once a person begins the process of quitting whenever he is challenged, quitting becomes a habit that gets easier and easier to repeat. Have a house rule that if your son starts an activity he must finish it.

Anytime a problem has to be addressed by the parent and the coach, make an appointment to see the coach personally. Find out the coach's view of the situation. The story you heard from your son may or may not be completely factual. Parents and coaches should act in concert to help in the development of the athlete. As a parent no one has a bigger role to play or a better opportunity to affect positive behavior from a son than you do.

Sincerely,

Casey Miller
Head Football Coach
Hillcrest High School

*Letter Originally Drafted by Jeff Shutter

What It Takes To Be Number One

Winning is not a sometime thing; It's an all the time thing. You don't win once in a while; you don't do things right once in a while; you do them right all the time. Winning is a habit. Unfortunately, so is losing.

There is no room for second place. There is only one place in my game, and that's first place. I have finished second twice in my time at Green Bay, and don't ever want to finish second again. There is a second place bowl game, but it is a game for losers played by losers. It is and always has been an American zeal to be the first in anything we do, and to win, and to win.

Every time a football player goes to apply his trade he's got to play from the ground up – from the soles of his feet right up to his head. Every inch of him has to play. Some guys play with their heads. That's O.K. you've got to be smart to be number one in any business, but more importantly, you've got to play with your heart and with every fiber of your body. If you're lucky enough to find a guy with a lot of head and a lot of heart, he's never going to come off the field second.

Running a football team is no different than running any other kind of organization – an army, a political party, or a business. The principles are the same. The object is to win – to beat the other guy. Maybe that sounds hard or cruel. I don't think it is.

It is a reality of life that men are competitive and the most competitive games draw the most competitive men. That's why they are there – to compete and to know the rules and objectives when they get in the game. The object is to win fairly, squarely, by the rules – but to win.

And in truth, I've never known a man worth his salt who in the long run, deep down in his heart, didn't appreciate the grind... the discipline. There is something in good men that really yearns for discipline and the harsh reality of head to head combat.

I don't say these things because I believe in the "brute" nature of man or that man must be brutalized to be combative. I believe in God, and I believe in human decency.

I firmly believe that any man's finest hour, the greatest fulfillment of all that he holds dear, is that moment when he has worked his heart out in a good cause and lies exhausted on the field of battle – victorious.

– Vince Lombardi

“If” by Rudyard Kipling

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or, being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or, being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise;

If you can dream - and not make dreams your master;
If you can think - and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with triumph and disaster
And treat those two imposters just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools;

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breath a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on";

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with kings - nor lose the common touch;
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you;
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run -
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And - which is more - you'll be a Man my son!