Interviewing Coach Atwell was very enlightening for me as to how the athletic department looks from his side. Coach is spread very thin and works hard to do the best job he can with the little resources he is provided. However, the interview solidified my feelings towards many needed changes for the athletic program at Kewanee High School in all three dimensions.

The problems start off for KHS in the 1st dimension. Coaches are encouraged to expand their knowledge of their sport, but there is no follow through from the administration to make sure this happens. The 1st dimension abilities of the coaches at Kewanee vary greatly. Some coaches try to learn more about the skills and strategies of their game, but many are complacent and comfortable with their current knowledge. All coaches should continue to learn about their sport and encourage their assistants to do the same.

All coaches at KHS are introduced to a 2nd dimension issue when they are hired. Strategies aren’t necessarily provided, but the administration does warn everyone about the poverty level and how this impacts our kids. Coaches are told not to use sarcasm with the athletes because they will not respond well to it. The 2nd dimension seems to be thought of at Kewanee, but there is nothing that will actually teach a coach how to demonstrate 2nd dimension strategies.

The 3rd dimension is completely missing in the athletic programs at Kewanee HS. Coaches might be doing some of their own things, but there are no intentional steps given by the administration. This is understandable because there aren’t any 2nd dimension strategies given, so it’s hard to go into the 3rd dimension, if you haven’t done anything in the 2nd.

There is no “why” for the athletic program and this makes it difficult to get all the coaches on the same page. A clear mission and vision would help the coach’s guide their programs towards a common purpose. Once the “why” is defined by the entire athletics program, then coaches could use that to help them focus on their own why.

Coach Atwell should ask all of the coaches the simple question, “why do you coach?” Once coaches know their why, they will be able to focus on it and be intentional in their coaching. Coach Atwell could provide the 3D framework to help guide the coaches by suggesting strategies that fit their why. By doing these things, athletics at Kewanee HS would become much better.

Kewanee is a tough place for a lot of our athletes. Many come from broken homes and a life filled with poverty. We have athletes who go home at night and have no direction until they come back to school the next day. The 3D framework would be a God send for our school and community. The coaches here care about their athletes, but they don’t necessarily know how to best serve them. Coaches everywhere need to be equipped with strategies in all three dimensions, but the need in Kewanee is glaring.