Mike Amano

Interview Summary

After talking with Zac, I would say that the focus on making personal connections is there. He definitely knows the importance of the 2nd and 3rd dimensions, just as the demographic in our school and district started to shift. Being a teacher in the school and district, I think that Zac and WDMCS have always tried to find someone who wanted to help student athletes grow both in and out of their sports. All my students who wrestle, come up to me at the end of class to shake my hand and tell me to have a good day. This would be an example, and they have been doing this for years.

Some could say that Zac has just been lucky with hiring, but I think there was the understanding of the power a coach has and the potential to change students lives. I feel like this class has helped my district take this intuitive approach, and make it more intentional and guided. Zac has been doing this unconsciously, because this is how he treats his teachers. He supports us, he wants to know about us in a considerate manner, but he also expects us to support each other and do what is best for our students. The way he models this, makes it clear that he has the same expectations that teachers and coaches treat students the same way.

One of the greatest obstacles for my district, and Zac, to transition is the reputation that we have built. We are a winning district, and this makes things very extrinsically motivating for students and parents. It will take awhile to get some more fix-mind set coaches to buy in, but I do think one of the ways is to reach out to families. I think turning this obstacle into a strength of 3D coaching is a great way to start the transition. With Zac in particular, I think the hard part for him would be supervising all the coaches. He makes appearances at all the sporting events, but also all the fine arts event, and trying to balance his own personal life. He does a great job when he is with teachers or coaches, but he is definitely stretched thin being and AD and a principal in the building.

Overall, I think our district’s success will be one of the most major obstacles to overcome to become a 3D program. We have a priority, and some would argue obligation, to win and really focus on 1st dimensions. The transition to a full 3D program will be even more vital for our changing demographic. Our district wants to make students successful and competent adults, and our strong athletic department is a great resource to drive this change. Having a caring adult to support them and teach them to manage their emotions is vital for the future of our students.