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3D Coaching Course

Interview Summary

In my interview, I talked with John Thanos the Principal at Chatfield Senior High School. Some of the questions were hard for him to modify because he was answering in the role of a school principal and reflecting on the sports programs at the school. The unique part that will be shared in this summary is he compared and contrasted the two different entities that exist in the school and reflected as we talked.

Mr. Thanos emphasized many times that when looking to hire new coaches or teachers having them fit the culture of the school/athletic department is the number one factor in the hiring process. He wants people working with kids who walk the walk and look to generate that positive culture of preparing young people to be “good” and productive members of society. This is reflective of looking for leaders who display traits found in the second and third dimensions of 3D Coaching.

In some of the reflective questions about the foundations of the programs at the school, Mr. Thanos admitted that there are no structures in place at the moment like a mission statement or helping with continued education/certification outside of what the athletic department does currently. He believes that creating a common philosophy/mission would be beneficial for the entire coaching staff as well as provide some guidance for new coaching hires.

Mr. Thanos is proud of the development work in place that some coaches do partake in. Coaches in the building meet on a regular basis to discuss topics that fit more in the second and third dimensions. Also, the athletic director maintains an open door policy to be a sounding board for coaches who want to share ideas and reflect on their seasons and programs. There are no formal evaluations each year with coaches but there is a constant dialog with the athletic director to help build up coaches and have them be self-reflective throughout the year.

When I asked him about steps he takes for his own professional growth he admitted he wanted to do more but couldn’t with his current schedule. What he does do is look at data he collects from surveys with the staff on a regular basis and then looks for areas of improvement based on this feedback. He said this is his main form of reflection on how to improve himself and to help the school improve as much as possible.