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3-Dimensional Coaching Course (for Credit)

Final Paper

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My colleague, Jim Boehmer, and I, interviewed our secondary principal, James Scholbrock to discuss the three dimensional coaching framework and our athletic department at Lake Mills High School. In the first dimension, we agreed that we have a solid foundation to our framework. Over the last five years, we have revamped our strength and conditioning program that athletes of all sports use to train, both during the season and in the off-season. This has led to increased participation in the training program and better conditioned athletes that are injured less frequently and recover from injury faster. Mr. Scholbrock also felt that we had very knowledgeable coaches in place for each sport to teach sport-specific skills and strategies. While we feel secure in our sport-specific knowledge, we also acknowledge that there is always more to learn. This is why the school and athletic department allows us to attend sport-specific coaching clinics each year. We recognize that no single coach can possibly have all of the answers, and so we seek out new strategies and techniques to help us grow in the first dimension.

The second and third dimension of the three-dimensional coaching framework opened our eyes to many areas of improvement for our athletic department. Our interviewee, Mr. Scholbrock, commented that he feels our coaches are outstanding people that would agree with what the three-dimensional framework tries to accomplish. However, the understanding of how to execute the framework and becoming a three-dimensional coach is not being modeled in many areas. In the second dimension, coaching the mind, we discussed how some strategies we use for increasing motivation, confidence, and team cohesion are not very effective, or even counter-productive. We agreed that we need to be more explicit when working with our teams and individual athletes about why we are using certain strategies. This will help our teams and individual recognize the value and importance team cohesion, confidence, and motivation.

Much of the conversation for the second dimension applied to the third dimension. We spent time discussing the idea that sports will actually erode moral character if left to its own devices. This is something we were all blown away by when first encountering the idea. Like the second dimension framework, we recognize that we must be more specific and explicit in our discussion of coaching the heart and spirit.

To improve our athletic programs, Mr. Boehmer and I are going to facilitate our coaching inservice meetings this year around the four questions posed in the three dimensional framework:

(1) Why do I coach?

(2) How do I define success?

(3) What does it feel like to be coached by me?

(4) Why do I coach the way I coach?

We will spend the year discussing these questions through the lens of the three dimensional framework. Our goal is to develop codes of conduct for coaches, players, and parents.