I interviewed Matt Westerhaus, the athletic director at Junction City High School. I have worked with Mr. Westerhaus for the last 16 years as an assistant coach in football, basketball, and tennis at JCHS. Mr. Westerhaus has always promoted an environment that wasn’t just focused on winning, but also building a culture that promotes building character and positive attributes in all of the young men and women that participate. Mr. Westerhaus has done a great job facilitating growth among coaches during my time working with him. I have not been a head coach, but I know he has worked hard at building a common vision among the head coaches at JCHS and worked hard to get them on the same page.

Collectively, the coaches at JCHS promote solid 1st dimensional strategies for strength and conditioning. They realize that we have a lot of students who are multi-sport athletes, so working together and keeping the workload reasonable is important. Our coaches have a solid base for fundamentals and skill for their respective sports and do a good job with assistant coaches and training them in areas where they might be deficient, but also encouraging them in the areas where they are knowledgeable and can really grow fundamental skills in our athletes.

JCHS has many military families coming from Ft. Riley army base, which is part of our school district. As a result, many of our athletes have not been in the district their entire lives, so 2nd dimensional strategies are key for our programs. Mr. Westerhaus sees the value and promoting team building and relationships among our athletes because “being a Blue Jay” isn’t inherit in many of our athletes since they are not from Junction City. Coaches are constantly seeking training and new ideas to promote many of the 2nd dimensional strategies outlined in this course, especially in team building. Mr. Westerhaus also does a good job providing resources and encouraging new ways to work with motivational strategies while growing confidence and working with emotional issues. Not only are our athletes dealing with the cultural issues talked about in this class, but also parent deployments and moving to a new school that for many might be occurring for the 6th or 7th time in their lives. The 2nd dimension is an area where JCHS needs growth, but coaches here see the value and work toward improvement.

For the 3rd dimension, JCHS is a work in progress. Mr. Westerhaus implemented 3D coaching with all of our coaches this year, which is a step in the right direction. We also have local FCA rep Ty Zimmerman around our school often and he meets with several of our coaches. Many coaches are working through the concept of why they coach and the importance of being able to answer that question honestly and accurately. JCHS has a long way to go here, but I believe we are moving in the right direction and the fact that Mr. Westerhaus is promoting 3D coaching is encouraging.