Jeffco Youth Football

First, a brief history of my experience with Jeffco Youth Football and Mr. Jeff Glenn. In 2003, Jeff and I started coaching a 2nd grade football team. Two years later we joined our area board, and two years after that we were together on the Jeffco Board. I left the Board in 2010 when I started coaching high school football. During our interview last week, Jeff and I reflected on our seven years of coaching and our time on the board. Both of us agreed that if we had it to do over, we would change our coaching philosophy. We agreed, that we were pretty good in the 1st dimension, as our players were in great shape, fundamentally sound, and well prepared with X’s and O’s. Unfortunately, we measured success by winning, thus stifling the overall development of both our lesser talented players in all areas and the talented players in the 2nd and 3rd dimension.

With regard to the 1st dimension, I feel that the organization does well. Coaches are able to attend clinics such as Glazier that have speakers dedicated to youth football. Also, with areas based on high school boundaries, coaches can attend clinics put on by the high schools. High school coaches have a vested interest as these players will some day attend their school. Finally, most areas have experienced coaches who mentor young coaches on the physical aspects and fundamentals of the game. Even with these resources, it is still very difficult to train over 500 coaches. I think I would require the areas to develop basic training for new coaches that requires a certificate of completion.

The 2nd dimension has improved dramatically since my time on the board. The training through USA football covers safety issues with regard to the 1st dimension, but also covers 2nd dimension issues that focus on goal setting, and team cohesion. Coaches are also tasked to think about the emotions of players by following minimum play requirements and not allowing hazing and bullying. In addition, all coaches are required to attend an annual meeting, where only 2nd dimension issues are discussed such as motivating all players, building confidence in all players, and developing a team concept as opposed to individual accomplishments. Finally, they have had guest speakers such as Rod Olson speak to the whole organization. I remember attending this event and Rod gave great suggestions on improving the mind of our players. While, I think the organization has made progress in this area, I think they need more. The way to accomplish this would be more guest speakers like Rod Olson, another meeting with coaches at the end of the season to discuss the parent survey’s and where the teams came up short, and a person like me who has taken this course to talk to each area. The areas meet once a month and the audience is smaller. I could share my journey from being a transactional coach to a transformative coach.

The 3rd dimension is the most difficult for this organization because of its large size. As stated in the survey summary, the organization really has no strategies here. My recommendation in this area, is to once again get a person like me to go to the individual areas and give them strategies from this course. I really like the service part. Teams should do a team volunteer project helping non-profit organizations in their area. Coaches should find ways to develop ways in practice and on game day to increase self-worth of players. This can be accomplished by increasing minimum play requirements and taking time to recognize all players during or after practice.