

2018-2019 Linn-Mar Girls Basketball



I'm with you.

Linn-Mar Girls Basketball

Welcome to the 2018-2019 Linn-Mar Girls Basketball Season!

The following packet of information is designed to introduce players and parents to the guidelines and expectations of the Linn-Mar Girls Basketball program. While at first glance this packet may seem a bit overwhelming, I have found that the more information provided at the start of the season, the fewer road bumps we will experience along the way. To that end, this player manual is an attempt to orient our players, parents, and coaches to our program standards for the 2018-2019 basketball season.

COACHING STAFF INTRODUCTIONS

Nate Sanderson, Head Varsity Coach

This season will mark my 16th full season as a varsity girls' basketball coach, and my second here at Linn-Mar. Prior to my arrival, I was the head coach at Springville for seven seasons where my wife and I continue to live with our two young daughters. Before moving to Springville I spent seven seasons as the head coach at Louisa-Muscatine High School.

In addition to coaching basketball at Linn-Mar, I work for Breakthrough Basketball where my position is undergoing a transition from producing basketball coaching DVDs to overseeing that process (while others do most of the legwork). I also do some work with Thrive On Challenge, a company that consults with coaches to help their team and program cultures. In August, I started co-hosting a weekly podcast called "Coaching Culture" with Thrive On's founder J.P. Nerbun.

My wife Donita and I live just outside of Springville with our 4-year old daughter Adelaide and her year-old sister McKinleigh. Adelaide is in all day preschool this year but loves being at basketball games and practices where she can spend time with her best friend Macey Miller and the other basketball girls.

Brittany Robinson, Assistant Varsity Coach & JV/V Reserve Coach

This is Coach Robinson's first year with the Linn-Mar girls basketball program. She will be our full-time Varsity Assistant Coach and will coach the JV/V Reserve team. Coach Robinson works for a small company called Hot Shots Nuclear Medicine. She is also actively involved Iowa Preps, an AAU organization that has recently relocated to Hiawatha.

Prior to joining the Linn-Mar staff "Coach Rob" worked for two years as a varsity assistant basketball coach at Decorah High School. During her two years in Decorah she also worked as a para-educator for the district. She graduated in 2016 from Waldorf University located in Forest City, IA with a bachelors degree in Sports Management where she also played basketball and ran club track.

Chad Tompkins, Head Junior Varsity Coach

Coach Tompkins enters his fourth year at Linn-Mar where he teaches math and is the head JV coach. He also serves as an assistant freshman football coach. Prior to coming to Linn-

Mar, Coach Tompkins taught and coached at Jefferson High School in Cedar Rapids for 12 years. During that time he coached basketball for eleven years at multiple levels including head freshman girls, assistant varsity girls, head JV girls, head sophomore boys, assistant varsity boys and head JV boys. He also coached nine years on the football staff at various levels.

Coach Tompkins and his wife Melissa live in Marion with their two sons Tyler (8) and Kellen (5). In his free time he enjoys spending time with his family, and passing on his passion for golf and hunting to his two sons.

Kelsey Rastetter, Assistant Junior Varsity Coach

Coach Raz is entering her seventh season as the JV Assistant for the Lions. For the last five years her role during the day is serving as a Student Support Associate at Westfield Elementary. She is also a mentor for students at the elementary. You'll also find her working at numerous other sporting events at Linn-Mar throughout the year.

Coach Raz is a huge supporter of the University of Iowa special teams program and their punter / touchdown-thrower Colten Rastetter.

Stephanie Hasken, Head Freshman-Sophomore Coach

This is Coach Hasken's fourth year with the Linn-Mar girls basketball program. During her first two seasons she served as a varsity assistant. This year will be her second as the Head Freshman-Sophomore Coach. Coach Hasken teaches health & fitness at the high school and coaches girls soccer in the spring. She is also actively involved in Linn-Mar's Fellowship of Christian Athletes group.

Prior to being at Linn-Mar, Coach Hasken taught PE & health at Grundy Center where she was an assistant varsity coach for both girls basketball and girls soccer. She graduated in 2013 from Central College in Pella, IA where she played both soccer and basketball. She is working on an online Master of Arts degree in Coaching and Athletic Administration through Concordia University in Irvine, California.

Joni Witzel, Assistant Fresh-Soph Coach

This is Coach Witzel's first year with the Linn-Mar girls basketball program. Coach Witzel and her husband, Larry, have lived in the Linn-Mar School District for over 15 years. Both of her children graduated from Linn-Mar. Coach Witzel is a substitute teacher in the Linn-Mar School District. She is a board member of Fellowship of Christian Athletes and is actively involved with the Linn-Mar huddle.

A LOOK AHEAD AT 2018-2019

This season we will continue to work on establishing a strong foundation for the Linn-Mar Girls Basketball Program by focusing on creating a memorable and meaningful player experience.

This season we expect to have between 35-40 girls out for the high school program this year. As we entered Year Two this summer we have seen the girls become much more comfortable in our systems and our culture. The process of improvement continues, but we had numerous players invest a lot of time and energy in our off-season program, and we are excited to reunite and continue our growth together.

Though the conference graduated some outstanding players from a year ago, I expect a number of conference teams will be ranked in the preseason including City High, West High, Cedar Falls, Prairie, Washington, Xavier, and Western Dubuque. In addition, our non-conference schedule includes three teams in the upper tier of the MAC (Pleasant Valley, Bettendorf, and Muscatine). As was the case last season, there will not be any nights off for us at the varsity level this year.

As we continue to move the program forward, our expectations will focus exclusively on the experience we create for one another as a team. The players have been quite clear in describing the type of experience they want to have this season. Above all else, they want to have fun, to feel like a family, and to get better as basketball players. Much of our effort will be focused on helping them to create that type of experience on a daily basis. If we can get that right we will absolutely continue to improve as a team throughout the year.

BASIC EXPECTATIONS FOR PLAYERS AND PARENTS

This packet of information is designed to make you familiar with the rules and expectations we have for our players this season. We also have high expectations for our parents because we know you play a vital role in the success of our program. We understand that we cannot succeed without the service and support of our parents.

We hope the DNA of our program is based on our two core values: Love & Effort. While we spend a significant amount of time talking about these values with our team, we also want to invite parents to participate in our culture by finding ways to be supportive of your daughters.

Love – Love is a word that is not typically used in a sports context, but it is the best word to describe how we expect our players and coaches to interact with one another. The way we encourage, support, and appreciate one another is what makes the basketball experience special. It is what we want our teams to be known for. What does that look like as a sports parent?

- Support your daughter's effort, commitment, and sacrifice. Support her investment in the process, her growth and character as a person, and her dedication to the team regardless of what she can do with a ball.
- Be kind to the media and thank them for their coverage.
- Introduce yourself to others and thank them for coming to our games.

- Celebrate the effort and contributions of every player, not just your own.
- Find ways to serve by helping when needed (scorebook, laundry, snacks, etc).

Studies show that what players want most from their parents is to hear these words:

- “I am so proud of you.”
- “I love to watch you play.”

Studies also show that a player’s most dreaded time with their sports parent is the car ride home and the coaching that comes with it. In the preseason survey with our players they were nearly unanimous in their response to the best way their parents can support them this season:

- 1) Be there
- 2) Be supportive
- 3) Be positive

Finally, research indicates that an athlete’s inner dialogue is shaped by the voices they hear most frequently and most intensely. In a basketball context, that means the voices that are most likely going to impact their inner dialogue (and consequently their confidence, mistake response, etc.) are those of her coaches and parents. This is not a responsibility that we take lightly. In fact, it’s an opportunity to enhance your daughter’s performance by helping her positively react to pressure situations.

*Your child’s success or lack of success in sports does not indicate what kind of parent you are. But having an athlete that is coachable, respectful, a great teammate, mentally tough, resilient, and tries their best **IS** a direct reflection of your parenting.*

Effort – When our players hear this phrase they understand that we expect them to do everything with great effort. Whether we are watching film, lifting weights, practicing, eating, or playing some of our team games – we expect to give our best effort at all times.

As parents we greatly appreciate all that you do to support our team and this program. Here are ways that your efforts can contribute to our players experience:

- Be a crowd-builder. Invite people to our games – bring people to road games.
- Host or help provide a team meal.
- Communicate when things are going outside of basketball that are affecting your daughter (sickness, struggles at home, in the classroom, etc)
- Volunteer in the concession stand, at the youth tournament, etc.
- Positively promote the program through social media. We will continue to post updates, stats, and videos on our social media outlets:
 - [Facebook.com/LinnMarGBB](https://www.facebook.com/LinnMarGBB)
 - [Twitter.com/LinnMarGBB](https://twitter.com/LinnMarGBB)

You are the most influential voice representing our program to the public. Please be good representatives of your daughters’ efforts to excel at her role. We encourage you to celebrate her commitment to the TEAM regardless of what her role may be.

Keep in mind that basketball is an imperfect game, played, coached, and officiated by imperfect people. We trust that everyone is giving their best effort to succeed, but mistakes will be made! Therefore we ask that even when we miss a layup, call a bad play, or an official blows an “obvious” call that we give our best effort to accept it and move on. In Julian Edleman’s biography he describes Tom Brady at being the greatest ever at moving on immediately after a disappointment to whatever is next. I hope we can do the same.

All parents, players, and coaches are representatives of Linn-Mar and the Girls Basketball Program. Our every word and action reflects upon the school, your daughter, this team, and the community of Linn-Mar. Please choose to represent us well!

As coaches we will strive to demonstrate our commitment to this basketball team by building positive relationships with our players, by taking an interest in their lives outside of basketball, and by being organized and prepared for every practice and every game. We will be committed to our athletes to the extent that we expect them to commit to our program. And in the process we will enjoy the greatest reward of any profession – helping our young players develop into successful adults and encouraging them to use their unique qualities to make a positive difference in the world.

If you have any questions or concerns as the season progresses, please don’t hesitate to contact us. As a coaching staff, we would ask that any conversation about your daughter’s playing time be conducted respectfully, and at the appropriate time. These conversations should not take place on a game night, or in the midst of a practice. Our preference is to first communicate with the athlete directly on how to best improve her skills. Please remember that our role as coaches is to make decisions that are best for the team. We will do our best to be consistent and fair with all athletes and stakeholders.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions, concerns, or celebrations as the season progresses. Hopefully we can work together to encourage our athletes to accomplish their very best.

Looking forward to the start of something special!

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"Greatness is not about someone who has the ability to be great. Greatness shows up when someone might not have that ability but finds a way to succeed."
- Mike Singletary, former NFL Head Coach

Be a Crowd-Builder

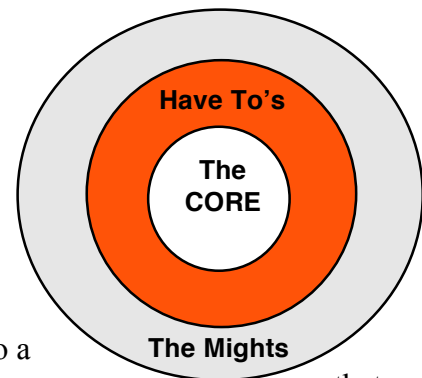
As a coaching staff we are committed to pursuing a compelling vision for our program that creates an authentic basketball community. Our goal is to play a style of basketball that our friends, families, relatives, and neighbors will enjoy coming to see. We strive to create a basketball community brought together by their support for our TEAM. We hope that every player within our program, from first grade through 12th grade, will play and conduct themselves in a manner that makes both the “Have To’s” and the “Mights” proud.

A Basketball Community

If we were to look at a basketball community as a series of concentric circles, at its center would be **The Core**. The core of the community is the players and coaches. They are the ones who are directly involved in the game itself.

Surrounding The Core are the **Have To’s**. These are the fans who, due to their association with a member of The Core, may feel an obligation to attend our games. They may be

parents and family, band members, friends, etc. Their loyalty to a particular member of The Core keeps them in the stands for as long as that player or coach is on the team. Finally, we have **The Mights**. The Mights are a loose association of individuals who *might* come to a game sometime to see a member of The Core play. They are not as devoted as the Have To’s, but share at least a minimal interest in the team’s results. Together, these groups form a basketball community.



We believe that the following characteristics will make our basketball team attractive to all those within the community, regardless of how well they may, or may not, understand the game of basketball. We believe that HOW we play can turn the Have To’s and the Mights into “**Want To’s.**”

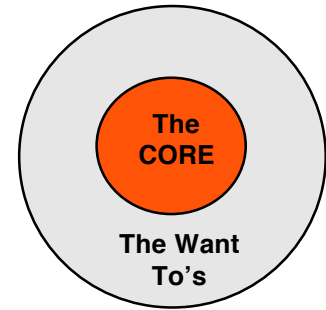
One coach described these various stakeholders and community members coming together in this way, “***When we have become theirs, and they have become ours.***” This is our desire – to conduct ourselves in a way that the community will embrace, and to seize a purpose that is greater than making a ball go through a circle. We strive for a *significance* that transcends the game of basketball in the values that we teach, the legacy that we leave, and the difference we make in our school, the community, and the world.

We believe the following values will bring our community together:

Play Hard. When C. Vivian Stringer was building the women’s basketball program at the University of Iowa in the 1980’s, she noticed that Iowa fans turned out for games despite the team’s modest record during her first few years. In her autobiography she wrote, “***Even before our results were really there, Iowans showed that they appreciated the effort we were giving to it.***” Effort is something that is recognizable by fans of all ages. One does not need an intimate understanding of the game to recognize when a team is playing hard. It is a characteristic that earns the respect of opponents, officials, and fans on both sides of the gym.

Love Each Other. A second characteristic of an attractive team is that its members play together. There is a traditional African proverb that says, “***To go fast, go alone. To go far, go***

together.” It is possible for five individuals to play basketball at the same time, without ever playing together. Togetherness is evident in how team member interact while on stage. Are they encouraging? Do they talk? Do they grab each other when they are down? Do they high-five after great plays – do they go to one another after mistakes? Do they acknowledge when their teammates create opportunities for others to score? Sherri Coale, Head Women’s Basketball Coach at Oklahoma University, calls this ***Championship Behavior***. All great teams demonstrate togetherness on the court. It is obvious when togetherness is present, and when it is not. We desire to be a team where The Core cares for one another. As Jerry Staton, Head Football Coach at Albia High School says, **“Success on the football TEAM is not that hard to figure out:**



Players Who Care About Players
Players Who Care About Coaches.
Coaches Who Care About Players
Coaches Who Care About Coaches.

Play with Passion. Playing with passion simply implies that the participants care deeply about their activity. They want desperately to succeed, to compete, to win. Not everyone will eat, breathe, and sleep basketball as I do. However, when players are committed to doing whatever is necessary to accomplish a goal - great things are possible.

Passion is also contagious. As Kevin Eastman, Assistant Coach of the Boston Celtics said, ***“People see passion. People feel passion. People follow passion.”*** No one will care more about our basketball team than those in The Core. By making basketball the most important thing that we do, when we are doing it, we have the opportunity to attract people to our basketball community.

Play for FUN. An extension of playing with passion is playing the game to have fun. We want basketball to be an experience that our kids and our fans will enjoy. As a program, we assume the following about FUN:

- 1) Playing basketball is FUN.
- 2) Improving is FUN.
- 3) Competing is FUN.
- 4) Winning is more FUN than losing.

Sports offer a different kind of fun than hanging out a friend’s house, or messing around in the driveway. We hope that our players experience an intrinsic reward from simply playing such a great game. We will enjoy improving as players, and as a team. We will enjoy competing regardless of outcome, and we hope this will be satisfying for both players and fans. We will enjoy how we play – five players working together as one.

We also recognize that winning is more fun than losing, yet we will never compromise our purpose in pursuit of our objective.

Pete Carril, former Head Coach at Princeton University described building a basketball community this way: ***“You have to turn on the fans. They will not accept a slovenly effort, or players who don’t care. But they will root for guys who work hard. Through your effort and intelligence, you get people into the gym.”***

Our Ultimate Goal... “Close Down the Town.” Ultimately, we want to create a culture that will enable us to play in the state tournament in Des Moines. We hope that when we go productivity will decrease at local businesses because people are either in Des Moines to watch us live, or are watching online while they “work”. During those years when our talent level is weaker, we hope that our culture will still allow us to be a competitive, well-respected team that inspires others by how we play.

However, regardless of our record we want these values to permeate everything we do.

LOVE & EFFORT

“Great teams are made of great teammates.”
- Brad Stevens, Butler University

SCHAIPE: The Player's Responsibility

All successful athletes have certain characteristics in common. They are usually the ones who work the hardest in practice. They are usually the ones who work the longest and the hardest in the off-season. They often receive most of the attention from the outside world, and they are usually the ones looked to as the “leaders” of their teams. However, experience tells me that being expected to lead can be an uncomfortable situation for many. Few players are comfortable telling others what they're doing wrong, or what they should be doing right. Few players want the responsibility of making sure their teammates are doing what they are supposed to do, when they are supposed to do it. Yet this is the most valuable ingredient every successful TEAM must have – bold, vibrant, intentional players leading AND following.

The very nature of SCHAIPE provides a framework for individuals to mentally prepare to be successful in each day's challenges. SCHAIPE emphasizes the individual's daily responsibilities. They are:

- To play with **Spirit** and enthusiasm.
- To **Communicate** with teammates and coaches at all times.
- To **Hustle** in ALL games and practices.
- To have a positive **Approach** to everything we do.
- To **Imagine** game situations and future goals.
- To be **Precise** – doing everything exactly right every single time.
- To **Enhance** the experience of those around them.

Without these attributes a player cannot succeed. It is simply impossible to achieve our best when any of these values are neglected. To make the most of every opportunity we must commit ourselves to SCHAIPE'ing at all times. SCHAIPE is a mental approach that must permeate everything we do on and off the court. It is having a certain philosophy of how the game should be played, and how to interact with all of our teammates in life.

SCHAIPE requires an individual's best effort. It requires individuals to talk, to work together, to encourage, and to celebrate one another. It requires players to do things the correct way. It requires players to monitor their attitude, their demeanor, and their tone of voice. It requires players to intentionally attempt to improve the experience of everyone around them. SCHAIPE is a formula for individual accomplishment and TEAM success.

We will SCHAIPE everything we do on the basketball court. Hopefully as we experience success on the court we will begin to adopt these values outside the gym as well.

As members of this basketball program, we must believe that for us, the best way to conduct ourselves is to be SCHAIPE'd. It is the ONLY way we will become the very BEST that we can be. SCHAIPE'ing is not always easy, but it is worthwhile. We must believe that other teams will not be willing to work as hard as we will, that they will not know as much as we do, and that they will not be as committed to each other as we are to one another. This will give us the advantage in the game of basketball. We acknowledge that we cannot make everyone act this way, believe this way, or feel this way. Only our players can make that choice for themselves. However, if we all choose to SCHAIPE ourselves, and others, we

will have a better TEAM, a better program, and in the long run, a more fulfilling and successful life.

When players are allowed to “do their own thing,” too often they succumb to human nature. Most of us are lazy by nature. We’d rather not run extra sprints, or shoot more free throws after practice, or call Suzy to make sure she wakes up for morning practice. Most of us are content doing only what is required (and often only when the coach is watching). Most athletes simply try to get through practice instead of getting something from practice. However, to be a *special* player, and to be a great TEAM, players must expect to do more than their share – they must expect to do more than what is required.

In our basketball program, we will teach our players to SCHAIPE themselves and others by emphasizing the following values on a daily basis. These values comprise the core of who we are and how we will be successful on and off the court.

Spirit

Good teams practice with enthusiasm and zest; bad teams practice with a feeling of drudgery and monotony. To perform at our best, we must intentionally manufacture a contagious enthusiasm throughout the gym. This must be a daily occurrence. It must become a habit, *even when you don’t feel like it!* In fact, it’s when we don’t feel particularly enthusiastic that we need **spirit** the most. Players should play and practice in such a way that demonstrates to everyone that they enjoy what they’re doing.

Spirit comes in many forms, including:

- Using your voice to make noise
- Clapping
- Giving reminders
- Giving constant encouragement (Goal: 2 positive comments per minute)
- Celebrating your teammates. Celebrating victories. Celebrating doing things right.
- Giving high-fives
- SMILE ☺

“You can tell by the way she shoots the ball, the joy she takes from each play, that SHE LOVES THE GAME.”

“Success is going from failure to failure with no loss of enthusiasm.”
Winston Churchill

Communication

Communication is a skill that must be learned and practiced. For many it does not come natural. In fact, by nature most of us are too preoccupied with our own thoughts and responsibilities to talk on the basketball court. For us to be most effective, we must work together as a unit. That togetherness is cemented by our communication with one another.

We teach communication with the word **N.I.T.E.**:

Names - Use them over and over. People love to hear their names. A name is like a spotlight; put others in the spotlight as often as possible. To be most effective, names should be followed by reminders, encouragement, etc. Names alert and capture attention, especially when they precede the statement.

Information – Provide relevant, specific information about what’s about to happen. Information and chatter are not the same thing. Giving information is communicating with Meaningful Talk. Meaningful talk can be as simple as speaking what you are doing, what you see the defense doing, etc.

Tone of Voice – People often respond to tone over the actual message. *How* you say something is just as important as *what* you say. Therefore speak with an encouraging tone of voice. This will help your teammates reach their potential.

Eye Contact - This is especially important with your coaches. Coaches will coach better if you give them eye contact. Eye contact builds trust. Good coaches will demand eye contact from their players. Players should always position themselves to give their coach eye contact. Coaches will trust players more if they demonstrate listening. This powerful tool can have the same affect on teammates, teachers, parents, friends, etc.

Reminders – Are critical ***BEFORE they are needed***. Help one another remember responsibilities, tendencies, etc. Reminders should include specific, concise information and be delivered using NITE strategies.

What’s being said when nothing is said? Silence can be wonderful at times, but athletes and coaches must always remember that non-verbal communication can have a powerful affect on others, both positively and negatively. Spirit and approach are often communicated non-verbally. That is, the player’s face will reveal feelings she would never verbalize (I’m bored, I don’t care, etc.). A joyful smile energizes teammates and can become infectious. Similarly, a frustrated, bored, or indifferent expression can deflate a teammate, a drill, or even an entire gym when left unchecked. The athlete must take responsibility for her non-verbal communication to ensure that she is contributing to our environment, not contaminating it. And yes, sometimes you need to fake it ‘til you make it!

Hustle

Hustle simply put is “*doing more than what is required.*” When required to get from Point A to Point B you have a choice as to how quickly you will get there. Hustle is sprinting, even when you’re not “on the clock.” Hustle means competing in everything you do, regardless of what the scoreboard may say. Hustle means **NEVER** walking on the gym floor. Hustle is more than just playing hard. It’s more than a floor burn, or diving for a loose ball. Even lazy, selfish athletes will “hustle” in games. True hustle is an attitude about life. It is a leadership requirement. It is the conviction that you will do more to make life better for others. You cannot lead if you do not hustle. People won’t respect your words if they don’t respect your effort. Hustling is contagious, just like loafing is contagious. If you hustle, your teammates don’t have an excuse not to hustle.

Most people are content to do only what is required of them. *Special players* constantly look for ways to do more. Leaders and SCHAPE’rs don’t just hope for great teammates, they intentionally search for ways to make their teammates better. They organize drills, they invite people to open gym, they help somebody struggling in a class. In short, hustlers and leaders expect to do more than their share for the benefit of all. True hustle is an all-the-time thing.

“If we only do what’s required then we are slaves. It’s only when we do more that we truly become free.” Martin Luther King, Jr.

Approach

Approach is your method of doing something. It is your mental outlook on an impending task or event. We have an approach to everything we do. Your approach is evident in your demeanor. 93% of what is communicated is done without words. How you carry yourself all the time reveals your approach, and consequently your character. Therefore, you must learn to master your body language so that you are communicating confidence and joy. You should carry yourself in a way that makes other people want to follow you or be like you. This is especially true when things aren’t fun, or things aren’t going well. During these times your approach reveals your mental toughness. Can you overcome the challenges, conflicts, and difficult circumstances? Your approach says more about you than anything else you do or say. It says more than your stats, your grades, your resume, etc. This is why recruiters want to see you in two revealing places: on the bench and in your least favorite class because it is here that YOU will be revealed.

Some Approaches to Choose From...

- Do everything to improve, to master, to create good habits, to get better
- Do everything to impress those who watch you (in your hustle, precision, etc)
- Play everything to win
- Always make a positive statement in how you do things
- Do everything to get something out of it so that it’s not a waste of your time
- Know the purpose behind everything you do
- Do everything to demonstrate that what you are doing truly matters
- Decide to make up for mistakes by playing harder (animating) immediately

Imagination

We must engage our brains to visualize success. Average athletes often overlook this skill. However, *special players* understand the importance of imagination.

Here are four ways imagination can make a significant difference:

Remember – Remember games, plays, and emotions from seasons past. Don't forget the pain of an embarrassing loss. Don't forget the jubilation of a big win. Let these memories motivate your efforts.

Rehearsal – Athletes can fool their brains by visualizing their play. Find time during the day to daydream about doing everything exactly right – maybe before bed, in the car, etc. Your brain can get “repetitions” without ever setting foot in a gym!

Practice – In practice it is essential to imagine your opponent. With every serve you should imagine an opponent preparing to receive. You should visualize what this serve or shot will look like, feel like, in competition even when you are in practice.

Dream – Set BIG goals. Dream about what you want to accomplish. Tell someone. Dream with your teammates. Strive to be our best!

*"When you're throwing against Bailey and Williams, that's why you work in April, May and June," Manning said. "That's why you throw a lot in the off-season, with nobody covering. **You pretend it's Champ Bailey covering.** You have to throw a perfect throw and run a perfect route." - Peyton Manning*

Precision

Precision is doing everything exactly right, every single time. It is a quest for perfection. To do things precisely means to do them the correct way. Too often players settle for something that is “close enough.” However, to be successful we must be constantly working to improve the way we do the little things. We want to master proper techniques and fundamentals so that they become the natural habit. We must constantly seek to learn from our mistakes, and improve our execution. *“Repeating the same behavior but expecting a different outcome is the definition of insanity.”* *Special players* pay attention, not only to the details of their own assignment, but also to the details of others. Leaders are constantly reminding and encouraging teammates to do things right, 100% of the time.

“Develop a ridiculous attention to detail, to doing the right thing, to making every practice count, and to concentrating on every shot.” – Dick DeVenzio

Enhancement

Literally means to improve or to make better. Great players make their environments better for everyone around them. Their goal is to leave their environment better than the way they found it. In life you are always affecting your surroundings. You are either contributing or contaminating. "Minding your own business" is NOT contributing! Minding your own business, or letting others do their own thing, is contaminating because it breeds selfishness and self-centeredness. Mark Twain once said, *"There are people that bring joy when they enter a room & there are people that bring joy when they leave the room."* You should strive to be someone people look forward to seeing, to sitting next to on the bus, to playing with on the court. Enhancing the life and experience of another is one of life's greatest joys. In basketball there are countless ways to enhance your coaches and teammates. If you want to be a special teammate, a *special player, a special person* – look for ways to enhance the experience of others. Here are a few examples...

Ways to Enhance

- Put someone before yourself
- Serve someone else
- Give constant encouragement
- Give sincere compliments
- Notice others doing things right
- Introduce competition into drills
- Help organize players
- Explain instructions so the coach doesn't have to repeat them
- Demonstrate kindness, patience, and care for others
- Give eye contact and nod
- Show interest in your teammates outside the gym
- Celebrate your teammates doing the right thing, doing things right, not just for the special plays (that's what fans are for)

A story about enhancement... Two games into the 2010-2011 Chicago Bulls basketball season, starting small forward Luol Deng was struggling at the offensive end. He was missing easy shots, layups, free throws, almost everything. However, he was working hard defensively and on the glass. His teammate, Derek Rose, noticed and sent him a text message before their next game:

"I let him know we've got his back," said Rose. "He's one of the leaders of our team. I said, 'We don't care if you miss shots. As long as you play defense and hustle, we're going to be a good team.'" Deng went on to score a career-high 40 points in the Bulls' next game.

The Challenge is this...

You want to have the approach that your teammates are having a better practice, a better experience, because YOU are in practice with them today. You want to carry yourself in such a way that their experience would be worse if you weren't there.

Leading and Following

Athletes are responsible for SCHAIPE'ing themselves. If it is easy for the player to be SCHAIPE'd that day, then they must actively seek out a teammate this is struggling to SCHAIPE themselves and help them, encourage them, etc. If it is difficult for the player to SCHAIPE themselves, then they must seek out a player who is easily SCHAIPE'd and follow them.

Each day players must make the choice, "Am I leading or am I following?" If you are not leading, then you MUST choose to follow. Leaders may change from day to day, but everyone MUST choose to lead or follow. Players will NOT be allowed to "do their own thing." This point is absolutely critical.

We want everyone to lead. We want everyone led in the right direction. Everyone can lead. Everyone can follow. If you're not leading, and you're not following, then you're going your own way. And if you're going your own way, then you're not going where the TEAM is going. And if you're not going where the TEAM is going then you're not part of the TEAM. And if you're not part of the TEAM there's no reason to have you on the TEAM.

SCHAIPE'ing can happen incrementally, and can be measured in the following way:

SCHAIPE self daily
SCHAIPE a partner
SCHAIPE a group

SCHAIPE a basket
SCHAIPE a TEAM
SCHAIPE a Program

When athletes do the SCHAIPE'ing, coaches can do the coaching.

John Wooden on Success: "Success is the satisfaction that comes in knowing we gave our maximum effort at all times to become the best that we are capable of becoming." We have little say over how big or fast or skilled our opponents will be. However, we do control our effort and our preparation. We will never fail if we know in our hearts that we did our very best. That is all we can do. That is all we expect.

***"Only one person on earth knows if you have made your best effort.
The only person who knows is you."***

LUGNUTs

Former college basketball coach John Wooden, winner of 10 national championships at UCLA during the 1960's and 70's, used the analogy of the LUGNUT to describe the role of his bench players. The part of the car that gets the most attention is usually the engine and the exterior. The engine makes the car go fast. The exterior makes the car look good.

However, very little attention is given to the smaller parts of the car that are essential for the car to run - like the LUGNUT. It doesn't matter how beautiful a car is, or how large the engine, if there are no LUGNUTs, the car will not go far.

In basketball, most media and fan attention is focused on the 5-8 athletes who play the most minutes, score the most points, etc. If they play well, the whole team looks good.

However, we have found that **our most successful teams understood the value of the LUGNUT**. LUGNUTs are essential for team success. They are the players who do not get their names in the paper. They are rarely recognized in the starting lineup. LUGNUTs are the players who are willing to serve the team by practicing as hard as they can everyday.

They understand their mission is to make their teammates better by pushing them in practice, and encouraging them always. Teams cannot survive without LUGNUTs. Wooden used the analogy to teach "all roles were vital to our success, that everyone is connected to the mission in some important way. The man sitting at the far end of the bench, and the person who tightens the lug nuts both can make contributions to their team's success. If the lug nuts come off, the race car crashes."

Remember the analogy of the iceberg. Most see only the part of the ice that is above the water. However, the strength of the iceberg lies unseen below the surface. The Titanic sank because the captain underestimated the strength of what he could not see. The same can be said of a basketball team - most people only see what happens above the water during the games. Most do not understand that a TEAM's strength results from what is done in practice, in the locker room, on the team bus, etc. It is in those unseen moments where LUGNUTs have their greatest impact, and where the team builds its strength.

As we approach the coming season we will have a number of "bench players" on our team.

Some of them will play substantial minutes. Others may not. However, for them to become effective leaders they must each have **the Attitude of a LUGNUT**. If they approach each day with the intention of giving their very best effort and making their teammates better, regardless of the playing time they receive, we will be successful. If they choose to put the team first, and are willing to do whatever is necessary for us to accomplish our team goals, we will be successful. In short, we are asking them to be servants that our racecar might achieve its peak performance.

"Championship players see themselves as part of a unified team working toward a common goal. They realize that everyone must be pulling in the same direction, otherwise the team will pull apart."

Jeff Janssen, Sports Psychologist, University of Arizona

This Year's Theme

I'm with you.

There is a story in Bob Goff's book called *Love Does* that has resonated with me for years. He describes a time when he dropped out of high school so he could move to the mountains and become a park ranger. On his way out of town in his VW bug he stopped by his friend Randy's house to say goodbye. Randy was a Young Life leader at his high school and had become good friends with Bob.

Upon hearing about his plan Randy makes a profound decision of his own. He decides to join Bob on his adventure. He slips back into the house, grabs some clothes and a sleeping bag, and jumps into the car with Bob.

Then Randy utters his signature line of their journey, one that he would repeat following the ensuing disappointments and debacles the two would face in their week on the road together...

"Whatever happens, Bob, I'm with you."

As I am challenged by Daniel Coyle's book *The Culture Code* and the importance of belonging cues in fueling a successful team dynamic, I cannot help but return to Randy's line...

I'm with you.

That is our hope for this year's team – that no matter what happens, we will be together. We will face adversity – there will be challenges on and off the court – but we will choose to face them together.

The players have written about what this theme means to them, and repeatedly they return to the same notion that was so meaningful to Bob Goff on his wayward adventure...

No matter what, I've got your back and you've got mine.

If there is a secret formula for creating a memorable and meaningful sports experience, this may be it - an unwavering commitment to support one another no matter what.

I can assure you this will not always be easy, but it will always be worth it.

No matter what happens,

I'm with you.

"Determine that the thing can and shall be done and then we shall find the way."

Abraham Lincoln

Practice Policies

It is the belief of the coaching staff that the most critical component of our success on the court is practice. We will never play better than we practice. Therefore it is critical that we practice with the same intensity and effort that we would expect to give in a game. Everyone is expected to give their best effort in every practice for the benefit of the TEAM. Each player must accept her role during practice and perform that role to the best of her ability. Because we believe that each player fulfills a vital role to the TEAM, all practices and film sessions are mandatory. Playing time is earned at practice. Therefore, it is absolutely essential that all players attend every practice. In order to reinforce this belief, we are instituting the following attendance policy:

Excused Absences will include:

- a. School Absence. If a player is absent for any portion of the school day that is not pre-approved by the office, the player will not be allowed to practice.
- b. School Functions. School functions that cannot be scheduled at another time will be excused. Students have many responsibilities in the classroom, and to other activities. However, it is expected that players will schedule meetings, practices, test make-up, etc. around basketball practice whenever possible. *Please notify the head coach in advance when potential schedule conflicts arise.*
- c. Injury. If a doctor, because of injury or illness, withholds a player from practice, she is still expected to come to practice to continue to learn and to encourage the TEAM. Players will consult with the training staff for treatment as necessary.
- d. Family Emergencies. Obviously there are situations in life that we cannot always anticipate. However, if a player is going to miss practice for a family-related reason, *please contact the head coach before the beginning of practice if at all possible.*

All other absences, *unless specifically cleared by the head coach in advance*, will be considered unexcused.

Consequences of Unexcused Absences: Unexcused absences and other disciplinary issues will be handled on an individual basis at the discretion of the coaching staff. Possible consequences may include, but are not limited to, suspension, conditioning, temporary reduction of role, or dismissal from the team.

- 2) *Players who miss practice jeopardize their starting status and / or playing time. Team repetitions are critical for our success on the court and cannot be duplicated through making up practice.*

"The path of least resistance is rarely the path of greatest reward."

- 3) Players who miss practice may be asked to make-up the practice session by attending an optional practice or workout, doing a book report, or helping with a lower level practice (middle school, youth league, etc.). Those who miss practice due to illness or school functions will not be required to make-up time.
- 4) Players may not start the following game after missing a **pre-game practice** for any reason. Note – If there is a weather dismissal and the administration still allows us to practice, any player who chooses to go home rather than stay for practice will not be penalized in any way.

Important: These policies apply to all practices and film sessions. This includes weekend, holiday, and morning practices.

Practice Rules

- 1) **Be on Time:** Players are to be in the center court circle, dressed and ready (shoes on and tied) for practice before the buzzer sounds to begin practice.
- 2) Absolutely **NO PROFANITY** will be tolerated!
- 3) All players must wear a reversible practice jersey with a t-shirt or cutoff shirt underneath (that is not black or white) to all practices.
- 4) **Productive Complaining- Finding Solutions.** If a player has a complaint they should bring it to the coaching staff or captains at the appropriate time. We are available to meet with or listen to players anytime during the day (before or after school, before or after practice, on the bus, etc.). We hope that players will communicate their frustrations with the coaching staff so that solutions can be found. However, complaining during practice is counterproductive and we ask that it be kept to a minimum during that time (see the next page for tips on complaining). Our goal with all frustrations is to change complaints into solutions, and that can only happen if players and coaches work together for the betterment of the team.
- 5) There will be absolutely NO TEXTING or cell phone use without prior permission during practice hours.

“Achieving excellence requires a great deal of hard work.”
Jim Tressel - The Winners Manual

Practice Expectations

In order for us to become the best team we are capable of being, we must make the most of our limited practice time. We expect our players to give maximum effort during every practice, and all film and weightlifting sessions. We expect all players to set aside any distractions from the day and to focus solely on basketball during this time. As we have repeatedly said, players will be expected to work hard, care for their teammates, and pursue excellence within our system of play.

Below are the basic expectations we have for all athletes during our practice sessions:

Live & Protect our Culture: The most important aspect of our basketball program is who we become, and who we are as a team. As previously mentioned, our most important values are **Love & Effort**. We expect these to permeate everything we do together as a team.

CONCENTRATE: The primary focus during practice should be on BASKETBALL. Research indicates that “concentrated repetitions” are the single most efficient way to learn motor skills. This means players must be AWARE of what they are supposed to be doing and how they are to do it.

Communicate: Players who are not actively participating in a drill or game should be actively communicating with those who are. Players that are not engaged while out of a drill will not find themselves in the drill!

Concentration includes Active Listening: When a coach speaks, players are expected to listen with their full attention. Side conversations, interruptions, bouncing basketballs, or any other distractions will not be tolerated. Eye contact should be given to coaches and teammates who are speaking at all times.

EFFORT: Players are expected to give their best effort mentally and physically at all times.

ENCOURAGE: Practices will be hard. They will be demanding. Practices are designed to teach, to challenge, and to prepare. *“Nothing is ever accomplished without enthusiasm,”* so players are expected to be positive and to encourage one another for the good of the TEAM.

SERVICE: Because we have players with a wide range of knowledge and experience it is important that we take responsibility for each other when it comes to organizing our practices, drills, etc. We must be in the habit of helping one another!

When players value practice time, practice time becomes more valuable!

***“There is no path to ACHIEVEMENT
Other than DOING YOUR BEST RIGHT NOW.”***

Mental Health Wednesdays

As we progress through the season we will invest a great deal of time in the growth and development of our players beyond what they can do with a basketball. For the past three years we have dedicated 45 minutes every Wednesday to building our unique culture and learning mental, relational, and leadership skills to help our players grow as people within the context of the game.

We will continue that this season. Our Mental Health days will include all players, 9th-12th grade. Players will be divided into “Mental Health Groups” that they will meet with weekly for discussion, activities, etc. These groups will be comprised of 5-6 players from different grade levels to encourage sharing, relationship building, and mentoring.

Below is a sample of topics we covered in previous years:

- Building Your Confidence
- Navigating Outside Expectations
- Handling Pressure
- Playing Present
- Embracing Your Role
- Controlling Your Inner Monologue
- The Power of High Fives
- How to Build a Basketball Crowd
- Mistake Response
- Learning to Compete
- The Power of Appreciation
- The Beautiful Game

Our weekly lessons will involve videos, activities, discussions, and even the occasional interview with someone outside of our program. We have found that dedicating time to teach our culture and to learn about the mental-emotional side of performance has been extremely beneficial for our athletes.

Team Assignments

Our game schedule will be comprised of three levels this season:

- Varsity
- Junior Varsity
- Freshman-Sophomore

JV/V Reserve games will be scheduled as necessary for players who are not in the regular rotation at the varsity or JV levels. Those games will be coached by Coach Robinson and will likely be scheduled on Monday or Thursday nights once we determine which other schools will have enough players to participate.

IMPORTANT NOTE

In 2017, The Mississippi Valley Conference changed the designations for the levels in girls basketball to allow coaches more flexibility in assigning players to their teams. There are more and more schools who do not have enough players to field an exclusively sophomore or freshman team, so the conference loosened the restrictions on who may participate at each level.

We will be abiding by these guidelines moving forward. According to the conference, levels may be assigned as follows:

- **Varsity** – The top team comprised of the best players regardless of class. In our context, upperclassmen will no longer dress varsity by virtue of being a junior or senior. Varsity positions will be based on skill and ability level irrespective of age.

There will be some varsity players who are not in the rotation that will play with the JV team to continue their development.

- **Junior Varsity** – Formerly called the sophomore team, this is the 2nd best team regardless of age.

The purpose of our JV team is to prepare players to contribute to the varsity level in the future. While this will technically be considered our “2nd best team,” there will be a developmental aspect to how playing time is distributed. It is likely that the rotation will be more inclusive to allow more players to gain valuable game experience. That may include more juniors playing at that level than in years past.

Upperclassmen that do not make the varsity roster will be on the JV team. Those that are not in the regular rotation will play in JV/V Reserve games.

Note – We are reluctant to promote freshmen to the junior varsity team unless we are certain they will play meaningful minutes.

- **Freshman-Sophomore** – Formerly called the freshman team, this group will be comprised of freshmen and sophomores beginning this season. This means that sophomores will not automatically dress at the JV level. Similar to how the varsity

team will be selected, underclassmen will advance to the JV level based on skill and ability.

- **JV/ Varsity Reserve** – Players who dress JV or varsity but are not receiving regular minutes in the rotation will play in reserve games. These players may come from both the varsity and JV levels.

Building the Ladder

This is one of the most complicated parts of coaching is building “The Ladder” that determines where everyone will play and practice. I will attempt to outline the process by which we determine the ladder below.

The purpose of assigning teams is twofold:

- To maximize the development of those players most likely to contribute at the varsity level.
- To provide opportunities for all players to receive playing time somewhere.

Consider the example ladder below:

Varsity (12-15 Players)	Junior Varsity	Freshman-Sophomore
Varsity Starter	Varsity Rotation*	FS Starter
Varsity Starter	Varsity Reserve (Jr)	FS Starter
Varsity Starter	Varsity Reserve (Soph)	FS Starter
Varsity Starter	Varsity Reserve (Fr)	FS Starter
Varsity Starter	Varsity Scout Team	FS Starter
Varsity Rotation	Varsity Scout Team	FS Rotation
Varsity Rotation	Varsity Scout Team	FS Rotation
Varsity Rotation*	JV Rotation	FS Rotation
Varsity Reserve (Sr)	JV Rotation*	FS Rotation
Varsity Reserve (Jr)	JV Reserve (Sr)	FS Rotation
Varsity Reserve (Soph)	JV Reserve (Jr)	FS Reserve
Varsity Reserve (Fr)	JV Reserve (Soph)	FS Reserve
Varsity Scout Team	JV Reserve (Fr)	FS Reserve
Varsity Scout Team		
Varsity Scout Team		

Step 1 – Determine the Varsity Rotation – The first step in building the ladder is determining who is likely to play in the varsity rotation. Those players typically fill the first 7-8 spots in the ladder.

Step 2 – Determine the Varsity Roster – Beyond the rotation, the next step is to determine who the next best 5-7 players are in the program regardless of age. Those players will dress varsity though they may play at another level.

Step 3 – Determine How Many Varsity Players Will Play JV – Those varsity players who are outside of the regular rotation will play on either the JV team or in reserve games. That is largely determined by the age of the player. Underclassmen will play JV to continue to develop with consistent playing time. Juniors may be given the option to choose to be a full-time varsity player (and play in reserve games if they are not in the rotation), or play with the JV team.

Because the purpose of the JV team is to prepare players to contribute at the varsity level seniors who are varsity reserves will most likely play in reserve games. However, there could be circumstances where the JV team needs additional players from time-to-time in which case a senior may be given the opportunity to play at the JV level. However, because there is no “next season” to prepare for, senior reserves will generally play in the reserve games.

Step 4 – Determine How Many Upperclassmen Remain to Play on JV – Juniors and seniors who do not make the varsity team will be on the JV squad. This does not guarantee that they will play in the rotation, but they will compete for playing time at this level. If they are not in the JV rotation they will play in reserve games.

Step 5 – Determine Which Underclassmen Would Play in the JV Rotation – When considering whether or not to pull up a freshman or sophomore our primary concern is whether or not they would receive enough playing time to warrant a promotion. We believe players will develop the quickest by playing consistently. While JV practices may be more competitive than practices at the F-S level we will weigh the affect of the promotion on the player’s overall development carefully.

Step 6 – Determine the Appropriate Number of Players for JV & F-S – Depending on the season, there may be more room at the JV level for underclassmen to move up (particularly sophomores). However, that depends on the number of upperclassmen already at the JV level. In some cases, we may weigh the benefit of having sophomore leaders at the F-S level as a greater benefit to the program than promoting sophomores to be reserves at the JV level. This decision could vary from case-to-case and year-to-year.

Step 7 – Adjust as Necessary – Regardless of where players start the season, there is always the possibility for promotion during the year. There have been numerous cases where players have advanced from one team to another during the season, or moved up the ladder from a reserve to the rotation, or from the rotation to a starting position. We encourage players to constantly compete with one another as lineups may fluctuate throughout the year.

Note – One of the important reasons that we are running the same system throughout each level of the program is so that players can contribute at different levels, or on different teams at any time. Players who are promoted mid-season should be able to function with a new team because our offenses, defenses, language, etc are the same from one level to the next.

Important Note – Making a contribution to the varsity team is not exclusive to what happens on the basketball court. In 2015-2016 we promoted a freshman to the varsity level prior to the post season because she was an outstanding teammate, and made us better in practices and games with her spirit and enthusiasm. Enhancing our culture is another way to earn a varsity uniform particularly as we approach the post season.

Promotion – There are a number of factors that we consider when deciding to make changes to the ladder. I will try to outline those briefly below:

- 1) **Excel in your current job.** The most important thing to do is be excellent at your current job, whether it's the job you want or not. If you are a reserve and your job is to support the varsity rotation from the bench – do it with your whole heart. It is impossible to earn a promotion by neglecting your current responsibilities. Embrace your role and always do what's best for the team. Failing to do so will immediately torpedo any opportunity to climb the ladder.
- 2) **Demonstrate a willingness to do more.** There will be options for players to go beyond what is required. F-S players can come to Saturday practices to get better. Scout team members can stay to help varsity prepare for their up-coming opponents. Doing more gives you an opportunity to show your commitment to the team, to learning, and your desire to grow.
- 3) **Be excellent at Love & Effort – and be supportive of those in front of you.** To be promoted (or not lose your current position) you must be committed to embody the culture we have worked so hard to create. Be a great teammate. Celebrate others. We will never promote someone who could upset our culture of Love & Effort.
- 4) **Impress your current boss.** Your current coach can be a player's biggest advocate when it comes to a promotion. If the FS or JV coaches think someone is ready to compete at the next level that endorsement goes a long way – especially considering the varsity staff will not see everyone practice consistently throughout the year. If you earn your current coach's recommendation that is often how the conversation begins.
- 5) **Make the most of every opportunity.** Every drill, every game, every competition in practice matters. There will be times when players are brought up to give the varsity or JV team enough players to do a certain drill in practice – this is an opportunity for players to demonstrate they can compete at that level. If you are a reserve player that gets thrust into a game because of foul trouble or injury to someone in the rotation, BE READY.
- 6) **Make it obvious you are better than the person in front of you.** We have a number of data points that we track throughout the year including the Value Point System, Win Percentage in practice, and grading varsity games when the opportunity is available. None of these are determining factors for promotion, but they should confirm your performance when compared to others. The best way to keep your job, or take someone else's, is to prove you are the better player.

Substitutions & Playing Time

Playing time at the varsity level is always intended to field the best possible TEAM at all times. Though we typically rotate 7-8 players, the minutes assigned to each player may vary greatly. It is possible that some players may play the entire game while others share minutes as necessary. There are countless, unpredictable variables that affect substitutions on a game-by-game basis. We prefer to settle into a regular rotation when possible, though that rotation can certainly change throughout the season.

It is important to note that in order to be considered for varsity playing time, individual players must understand the responsibilities of their position, their role while on the court, and the game plan for that particular opponent before they will be inserted into a game situation. This knowledge is demonstrated in practice.

3 Tier System: Playing time will generally be organized into the following “tiers:”

Starters – We will start each game with the five players who form the best TEAM. Basketball is played and won as a TEAM. The best individual players are NOT guaranteed to start. Starters will have the first opportunity to play the most minutes during a game. As a team, and as a program, we value TEAM success over starting status. It is possible that we will use numerous starting lineups over the course of the season. What we accomplish together as a TEAM is far more important than the individual recognition one receives when starting.

Rotation Players – Rotation players may be regularly substituted into the lineup to keep starters fresh, or to add a new dimension to the TEAM (rebounding, shooting, running the floor, etc.). Rotation players must be prepared to play starter minutes every night. Their minutes may be widely unpredictable night in and night out. They must be prepared to take the place of a starter in the event of injury or foul trouble. Rotation players will be expected to play with the same enthusiasm and effort as if they had started the game. They must understand that some nights they will be asked to play 20 minutes or more, while other nights they may play sparingly, or not at all. The interests of the TEAM must come before any player’s individual desire for playing time for us to be successful.

Reserves – The remaining players who do not find themselves in the regular rotation play a vital role to the varsity TEAM. Though they may receive as much playing time as the other varsity players, they have many critical responsibilities that benefit the TEAM. Undoubtedly, there will be situations during the season when our reserves will be asked to play in crucial situations and they must always be ready. I recall a game against West Burlington years ago at Louisa-Muscataine that we won because a reserve player came off the bench late in the game and scored the game-tying basket at the buzzer, then scored five more points in overtime to seal the win. Every single player must be ready to contribute when called upon!

Important: Starting positions are not guaranteed. They do not belong to individual players. Rotation players may move into starting roles. Reserve players may move into the regular rotation. For our program to improve, we must continue to compete for these positions everyday, in every practice.

Who Starts and Who Plays

The most important part of our program is the TEAM. Everyone has an equal commitment to, and responsibility for, the TEAM. Everyone is an equally important member of the TEAM, but each of us will have our own individual role. For some this role will be as a starter, for others it may be as a reserve who plays little in games, but who provides a quality effort in every practice to prepare us for our next opponent. We all must realize the importance of fulfilling our role to the best of our ability for the good of the TEAM. Listed below are the criteria we have set as a coaching staff in relation to playing time:

The best players at each position that form the best TEAM will start. We will play our best players, no matter what grade they are in school. This will be directly determined by a player's performance and production, and not by a player's potential, past experience, etc.

However, the best players may **FORFEIT** their starting position or playing time for many reasons including, but not limited to, those listed on the page entitled *"Playing Time Disqualifiers."*

Other variables influencing starting positions and playing time decisions include:

An individual's hustle, attitude, and work ethic in practice, the weight room, and watching film. We expect players to perform in practice as they would in a game.

An individual's ability to perform the responsibilities of their position. This includes understanding her job, and executing it to the best of her ability. Players must be aware of their role, and must perform that role at a high level. When on the bench, this also includes being aware of what offensive and defensive strategies are being employed should the player be substituted into the game.

An individual's health and injury status. We want to be successful, but we must always consider the health of our athletes, especially in relation to the amount of season that is left. When in doubt, we will error on the side of safety to protect the health and well being of the individual athlete.

The four fundamental requirements one must demonstrate to play varsity basketball are:

1. An ability to get back on defense.
2. An ability to stay in front of an offensive player (to contain a dribbler).
3. An ability to handle the basketball reliably (dribbling, passing, catching).
4. Knowledge of the player's individual responsibilities within our system of play

"Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results."

Playing Time Disqualifiers

Breaking TEAM rules for game-day dress code, conduct at school, attendance at practices, walkthroughs, film sessions, etc.

Demonstrates lack of effort – usually evident on DEFENSE by not sprinting the floor, standing up in the defensive stance, or not getting back to defend the goal.

Does not understand or execute the responsibilities of her position. Players must know WHAT they are supposed to do offensively and defensively at all times. Those who do not know their responsibilities will not play until they do.

Players must demonstrate enthusiasm for the TEAM while on the bench. Those players who do not applaud their teammates' effort, or do not demonstrate that they are "into the game" (paying attention to the game, during timeouts, etc.) will not be substituted into the game.

Displaying ANY attitude detrimental to the TEAM in practice, on the bench, in the locker room, on the bus, etc. Players MUST put the TEAM FIRST in all situations. Those that complain or speak negatively of their teammates or coaches may disqualify themselves from playing in the game.

Failure to manage frustration. When athletes allow frustration to fester their performance will inevitably decline. This is detrimental to the team's ability to compete and will result in a substitution until the player has regained control of her emotions.

Showing disrespect toward coaches, teammates, officials, or our opponents. Examples would include, but are not limited to, complaining to the officials, receiving a technical foul, playing "dirty," taunting, using profanity, not helping others up (from both teams), not retrieving the ball for the official, etc.

Violating the school's eligibility policy.

***These behaviors may result in immediate substitutions in game situations. Regardless of skill or status, a player who violates any of these rules may FORFEIT playing time and / or a starting position. It is vital that players understand these policies.

IMPORTANT

We expect players to demonstrate character, respect, and integrity at ALL times. We must always remember that our behavior, our attitude, and our language represent our teammates on and off the court. We want to live and play in a manner that reflects positively on our program, our school, and the community. Therefore, players who do not represent our program responsibly off the court may face consequences at the coaches' discretion.

Note: All violations are subject to penalties assigned by the Good Conduct Policy. Conduct violations may warrant additional penalties as described in school policy.

Parents & Playing Time

As a general rule, the coaching staff is reluctant to discuss playing time issues with parents. I can assure you that we have thought thoroughly through every decision we make in regard to our strategy, game planning, and playing time. Understand that our responsibility is to do what's best for the team. Often that will require individual sacrifice from individual players on the team.

If a player is frustrated by a lack of playing time we would prefer to frame that conversation around the following questions:

- 1) What can the player do to improve as a player?
- 2) What can the player do to help the team?
- 3) What can the player do to make her teammates better?

We prefer to have these conversations with the individual players before involving the parents simply because the player must show improvement to earn more playing time. That allows us the best opportunity to communicate directly with the player, and allows the player to take responsibility for the situation. We want to communicate with the players first to help them be successful. That conversation may include assistant coaches or captains if the player is reluctant to approach the coaching staff, but ultimately we want players to learn how to have hard conversations independently.

We will do our best to be prepared and to be fair with each player, but please understand that we will make mistakes just as our players will during the season. We will strive to learn from those mistakes and to improve as coaches just as we would expect our players to do.

We hope that you will come alongside the coaches and players as they attempt to create a memorable and meaningful experience. As mentioned before – the players are very clear about what their parents can do to help give them that experience:

- 1) **Be Present**
- 2) **Be Supportive**
- 3) **Be Positive**

“Championship players see themselves as part of a unified team working toward a common goal. They realize that everyone must be pulling in the same direction, otherwise the team will pull apart.”

Jeff Janssen, Sports Psychologist, University of Arizona

Lettering Requirements

Players must meet one of the following requirements to receive a varsity letter.

Option – Varsity Minutes

1. Appear in at least 50% of regular season varsity games and have perfect practice attendance for the entire season.
2. Important note - excused absences do NOT count against practice attendance (family emergency, funeral, school events, etc.). However, other absences must be made up to qualify for a varsity letter. This includes practices over holiday breaks, Saturday practices, etc.

Option 2 – Scout Team Excellence

Though these players may not appear in many varsity games. Yet, their effort and contribution to practice cannot be underestimated. In order to recognize them for their selfless commitment to the team we may award Scout Team members a varsity letter at the end of the season.

These players must remain academically eligible and in complete compliance with the good conduct policy and have perfect practice attendance for the season.

Option 3 – Four Year Commitment

Complete four years of high school basketball while remaining academically eligible and in complete compliance with the good conduct policy for all four years, and have perfect practice attendance for the season.

*** Injured players will be expected to attend practices unless attending doctor's appointments or physical therapy. Percentages will be adjusted to reflect the games a player could have played in while healthy during the season. For example, if Sally missed 5 games due to injury, but attended all of the practices during this time, she would need to appear in 50% of the games she could have played in.

ALL PLAYERS have a responsibility to compete in practice with great enthusiasm for the success of the TEAM. Rotation and reserve players must understand that part of their responsibility is to prepare the starters for our next opponent, and to contribute in whatever ways necessary to achieve success as a TEAM.

*** **Note** - The coaching staff may choose to letter additional players based on their contribution in practice to the varsity team's success.

Team Captains

Team captains are chosen at the beginning of each season. Players are asked to vote for individuals who best demonstrate the culture we are trying to build within our program, and who they trust to represent the players when communicating with the coaches. Team captains are chosen regardless of age, playing status, or previous experience.

We will elect captains at the varsity, sophomore, and freshman levels this year.

I lean heavily on our captains throughout the season to aid in decision-making. I rely on them to help address team issues and live and represent our culture at all times. Varsity captains will meet with me on Saturday mornings throughout the season to communicate about how things are going, the up-coming schedule, and to address any other issues that may pertain to the team.

Captains will also be relied upon to bring any team issues to the coaching staff so that solutions can be found.

The role of team captain is a tremendous honor and an important responsibility for the well being of our team. Without question, our decision-making is greatly enhanced when our captains are part of the process.

“If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go TOGETHER.”
- Traditional African Proverb

Game Day Expectations

Game Day Dress

There are two important values that are communicated by how we dress for game days, and regardless of what we do on a specific day, these values will be communicated in what we wear.

Unity – All players will be dressed the same to demonstrate we are a team, and that game day is a special day.

Basketball is important. Therefore, we will not dress like everyone else on game days. We will set ourselves apart by what we wear.

Road Games – For road games we will typically wear our Linn-Mar travel suits to school and on the bus to games. This will be coordinated prior to game day to ensure everyone is dressed alike.

Home Games / Rivalry Games / Playoff Games – We will “dress up” for school at least five games this year (selected by the varsity captains). One of the assistant coaches will help determine what is, and what is not acceptable to wear on Dress Up Days. On some days we will wear team shirts to school. This will be announced in advance and it is expected that all players will dress the same.

Important Note: Players may be allowed to EARN casual dress, or a jeans day (jeans may not be tattered or have holes in the legs... or anywhere else, for that matter), on game days by accomplishing various statistical goals in previous games. Regardless of what we wear, we want to be dressed the same (example, all “dress up” or all wear team shirts), and be dressed in a manner that communicates that basketball is important.

Varsity players are expected to attend JV games prior to changing in the locker room. These games provide an excellent opportunity to see what offenses and defenses an opponent may employ in the varsity game, and is encouraging to the JV players. When attending, we would like all varsity players to sit behind the bench with their teammates. NO CELL PHONES will be allowed while watching the JV games.

On some occasions, players will be required to arrive early to varsity contests for film review. We will be preparing our minds to play basketball during this time.

Varsity players will also be asked to attend home reserve games when possible. They may also travel with the varsity reserves to their away games, but will not be required to do so.

"If you give anything less than your best, you're not only cheating yourself, your coaches, your teammates, everybody in Green Bay, and everything pro football stands for. You're also cheating the Maker who gave you the talent."

Vince Lombardi, Former Head Coach of the Green Bay Packers

Walk Through – We may have players arrive early for a “walk through” prior to home games, Saturday games, or tournament games. We use this time to shoot and review offense / defensive strategies for the up-coming opponent. Players are expected to be on the court, with practice jerseys and shoes on, at the assigned time.

Bus Time – DO NOT BE LATE FOR THE BUS. Arrange to be boarding the bus five minutes before the scheduled departure time. Remind your teammates!!!

As coaches we would prefer that our athletes ride the bus home from away games. We understand this is not always possible, especially on school nights. If your daughter will not be riding the bus home, please make sure to sign her out before you leave. One of the assistants will have the sign-out sheet for every road game.

Substitutions

All players will stand and cheer, high-five, etc. for all players coming out of a game. All players coming out of a game will high five with each teammate and coach on the bench before sitting next to the head coach to receive feedback, instruction, etc.

School Attendance

It is important that all players and parents be familiar with our school attendance policies. For players to participate in games they must be in attendance for AN ENTIRE DAY OF SCHOOL, unless their absence has been pre-approved by the office.

“There is a difference between interest and commitment. When you’re interested in doing something, you do it only when it’s convenient. When you’re committed to something, you accept no excuses, only results.”

- Ken Blanchard

Miscellaneous Information

Good Conduct

Administrative Regulations Regarding Co- and Extra-Curricular Conduct Policy 502.5-R3

Students who participate in co- and extra-curricular activities involving public performance are prohibited from possessing, using, transporting, controlling, or transmitting tobacco/nicotine, alcohol, or other drugs at any time (year round) during his/her middle school or high school career. The administration will suspend a student if it is determined, as reported by school personnel, that the violation did occur. The ruling includes any activities outside of school as well as at school or at school events (either home or away). Suspension may also result from either legal documentation or by self-admittance. Investigation of possible infraction will involve parent notification. If a student is guilty of an infraction and is not currently involved in an activity, the suspension will become effective utilizing the activities they were involved in the previous year.

During Middle School or High School Career:

1st Offense: Tobacco/Nicotine Alcohol and Other Drugs

Suspended from at least 20% of public performances with carryover to the next activity. Counseling required to reinstatement (suspended from at least 33% of performances if no progression in counseling). Must continue to practice.

2nd Offense: Tobacco/Nicotine Alcohol and Other Drugs

Suspended from at least 50% of public performances with carryover to the next activity. Counseling required prior to reinstatement. Must continue to practice.

3rd Offense: One-year suspension from co- and extra-curricular activities. Counseling required prior to reinstatement for all third offenses.

4th Offense: Permanent suspension from co- and extra-curricular activities. Counseling available for all fourth offenses.

Established school/team/group rules may also apply to violations. In order for the suspension to be put into effect it must be clearly determined that the violation did occur. It is clear that an admission from the student is not required prior to disciplining a student (Schmahl vs. Glenwood Community School District, 2 D.P.I. App Dec. 26, 1979).

Court System Involvement: Students admitting to or found guilty of non-traffic misdemeanors or felonies not defined in these regulations may be subject to suspension from co- and extra-curricular activities as determined by the building principal and/or designee. The school district will cooperate with the courts or other recognized public agencies in carrying out consequences in co- and extra-curricular activities.

Appeal Process: As established in Board Policies 502.5 and 502.5-R1.

Definitions:

Carry-Over: In situations when there are not enough performances remaining in a season to complete a suspension, the suspension will be carried over to the next co- or extra-curricular activity in which the student takes part.

Counseling: Directed by the Linn-Mar Middle Schools or High School Counseling Offices or other non-school agencies that students are referred to or are approved by school counselors or Student Assistance Team. Any cost for use of non-school agencies is to be borne by the student. Linn-Mar counseling will include discussion of decision-making skills, tobacco/nicotine/alcohol/drug information, and peer and family relationships with parent(s)/legal guardian(s) invited to participate. A student may receive confidential assistance at any time during their middle school or high school career.

Possession/Use/Transportation/Control/Transmission: Tobacco/nicotine: personal possession, use, transportation, control, or transmission.

Alcohol and other drugs: As defined by legal statute and/or court interpretation. Possession, transportation, control, or transmission may be determined by prior knowledge or intent. Team rules may be more specific.

Public Performance Activity: Is a co- or extra-curricular activity where students are expected to perform in activities which the public may view. Examples are, but not limited to, athletic events, concerts, plays, debates, speech contests, music contests, and previews and exhibitions. Activities begin with the first required meeting for any participant and end when equipment is checked in, set is struck, or the last required meeting occurs, etc. Athletic seasons are defined by state or local designated starting and ending dates. Public performances are determined by the administration prior to the beginning of co- and extra-curricular activities.

Policy Title: High School Academic Eligibility for Co/Extra-Curricular Activities Code 502.6

Those students not academically eligible may be allowed to participate in practices at the discretion of the coach, director, or sponsor with the approval of the high school principal or designee. Academically ineligible students may travel with co/extra - curricular activity groups at the discretion of the athletic director or administrator, but may not participate .

Students must pass all courses during the preceding grading period in order to be eligible to participate in co/extra-curricular activities. Students who do not pass all courses during the preceding grading period shall be ineligible for a 30-day consecutive calendar period. For co/extra-curricular activities, this 30-day period shall begin in the next grading period the day after grades are available.

For athletics, this ineligible period shall follow the guidelines of the Scholarship Rule, 281 IAC 36.15(2). The Scholarship Rule states that the student is ineligible for a 30-day consecutive calendar period in the next (or current) interscholastic athletic team in which the student is a contestant. This 30-day period begins on the first date competition in that

sport is allowed, as determined by the Scholarship Rule. There is no requirement that the student competed in the sport previously.

In order to fulfill the requirements of a loss of competition penalty, the student must complete the entire activity/sport season in good standing as well as be withheld from the prescribed number of competition dates. To be considered a member in good standing, the student must follow all behavioral, attendance, and team expectations; be an active team member at the end of the season; and their name must be listed on the end-of-season report for their sport. If a student quits an activity/sport team or is removed from an activity/team because of disciplinary reasons, they will not receive credit for time served.

These co/extra-curricular activities include but are not limited to: interscholastic athletic contests, music concerts or other performances, speech and other competitions, trips, or performances by Linn-Mar High School sponsored clubs, teams, and organizations.

Students who receive incomplete grades shall be ineligible until all course work is satisfactorily completed. These courses must be completed within 10 days after the conclusion of the previous grading period.

Students who qualify for credit recovery shall be ineligible for a minimum of 30 days pending the completion of all course work at a passing level. This work will be monitored by the academic assistance counselor with final approval by the principal.

The principal, or designee, is responsible for checking the records of students in activities at the beginning of the activity and at the end of each grade reporting period the activity is in progress to determine eligibility and will notify the coach, director, or sponsor of ineligible students. All first-time ninth graders (freshmen) will be considered academically eligible at the end of their eighth grade school year. The academic eligibility of incoming transfer high school students during the school year will be determined by the grades earned and reported by their previous school. Summer activities are considered an extension of the second semester.

The superintendent shall be responsible for the administrative regulations for academic eligibility.

Uniforms

All players should have purchased a reversible practice jersey. These should be worn to all practices with a shirt (or cutoff) underneath that is not black or white.

Uniforms will be distributed prior to the first competition date, and collected at a TEAM meeting following the conclusion of the varsity season. Please wash the uniforms before turning them in!

Please DO NOT DRY the uniforms in the dryer. In order to keep them in top condition, please allow them to air-dry after washing.

District Games

ALL PLAYERS in the program are invited to attend all regional games, home and away. Non-roster players may ride the bus with the varsity team. Players from lower levels may also ride the bus to road playoff games as space allows.

The Last Practice

One of our best traditions has been hosting one last practice after the final game of the season. This gives players and coaches the opportunity to connect one last time before transitioning to their next season. All varsity players will be expected to attend the last practice.

F-S and JV teams may also have a last practice after their last game. This will be determined by the head coach at each level.

Off-Season Hours Summary

During the off-season we offer numerous opportunities for players to develop their skills within our offensive and defensive systems. Since the spring, we have tracked each player's off-season commitment by tallying the number of hours they have invested in open gym, summer league, team camps, etc.

For each hour they attended one of our basketball events they received one point. Any summer games or scrimmages played counts for two points.

A player's off-season hours are not factored into any decisions when determining team assignments, starting roles, etc. However, it is sometimes useful for players, coaches, and parents to see how much time some players have invested in the off-season.

We certainly realize that many players are also committed to their club basketball teams or individual trainn where they are playing and practicing outside of our team, and we do not discourage that in any way. We also understand that players have commitments to other sports, jobs, etc. that may prevent them from attending many of our events. This list is simply meant to provide an objective look at how many hours each player attended our off-season offerings, and helps us to design our off-season schedule in future years.

Overall, this year's team has invested over 500 more hours than we did in the summer of 2017.

"A person does not become whole until he or she becomes part of something greater than herself."

- Jim Valvano, Former Head Basketball Coach, North Carolina State University

Player	Grade	Total	Career
		Hours	Hours
Macey Miller	12	105.5	181.25
Olivia Hoskins	12	65.25	132.5
Anna Huggins	11	61.25	168.25
Ashlyn Stuecker	11	77	156
Carly Printy	11	92.75	175.75
Chelsea Buck	11	0	0
Jamison Feldman	11	117	229.75
Jeany Toingar	11	0	4.5
Molly Chmelicek	11	102.5	172.5
Skyler Presler	11	85	188
Tara Crosby	11	0	3
Tess Hooten	11	38	38
Abby Thoms	10	136.25	217.5
Emma Casebolt	10	75	137
Hallie Peak	10	67.25	113.75
Jada Healey	10	86.25	122.5
Kaitlyn Brunson	10	74.25	162
Keegan Krejca	10	72	108.5
Maddy Kolek	10	35	81.5
Marissa Miller	10	94.5	175.75
Mia Frese	10	71.25	130.25
Sarah Murphy	10	38.75	91
Abby Hoefle	9	30	30
Alexis Beier	9	117.25	117.25
Alisa Friday	9	38.75	38.75
Caelynn Obleton	9	55	55
Ella Grove	9	59.75	59.75
Izzy Shelby	9	77.75	77.75
Kennedy Wegmann	9	40.75	40.75
Lauren Spaete	9	35.5	35.5
Liberty Nyberg	9	23	23
Rylee Jonker	9	2.5	2.5
Skylar Galloway	9	0	0
Sydney Ruske	9	52.5	52.5
Taylor Stuecker	9	46.25	46.25
Taylor Weber	9	49.25	49.25

Hours tabulated through Tuesday, October 30th.