

# **Denton Independent School District**

**Athletic Department**

**Annual Board Report**

**August 28, 2012**

### **Mission Statement**

... in pursuit of excellence ...

The mission of the Denton Public Schools, in partnership with home and community, is to provide the best educational opportunities in a challenging yet supportive environment where individuals and cultural diversity are respected, so that our students become knowledgeable and responsible citizens, capable of life-long learning and of demonstrating the skills necessary to contribute productively in a complex and ever-changing world.

#### **I. Vision ... In pursuit of excellence, the district will:**

##### **a. develop a culture where learning is our first priority**

The Denton Independent School District Athletic Department stresses the areas of Pride, Poise, Class, Discipline, Accountability, and Decision Making in the classroom and on the competitive athletic fields. These areas are the foundation of a culture of life-long learning that we aspire and promote throughout the department.

##### **b. remain committed to providing equitable and outstanding opportunities for every student on every campus**

Every program within the department has rules and standards that allow participatory opportunities for all those interested in athletics or ancillary functions associated with those programs. One aspect we are looking at implementing is a high school wrestling program, which is the only University Interscholastic League sport that is not currently offered in the Denton ISD. This is just one example of how the department is striving to open even more opportunity for a diverse student population.

##### **c. establish goals for individual campuses that incorporate both measurable and intangible factors**

Each campus in the Denton ISD has coordinators that work closely with the athletic department in setting, implementing, and evaluating goals of every program. Evaluations are done on a continuing basis and culminate with an end of the year evaluation. Strengths and weakness are discussed in detail and goals are set or adjusted according to that evaluative process. Another facet of Denton ISD athletic programs is that they are covered closely by the local media and that allows a distinctive look at our programs, in tangible and measurable ways.

**d. develop a budget focused on student and professional learning**

The main athletic budget is focused on the implementation of student learning in multi-faceted ways. Facilities, equipment, transportation, etc. are all focused on training and preparing student-athletes to meet their full potential as individuals and citizens of their schools, our city, state, and nation. A portion of the budget is focused on staff and how to attract, develop, and retain quality individuals to enhance the development of the whole student-athlete.

**II. Teaching & Learning... In pursuit of excellence, the district will:**

**a. cultivate a consistent, strong, district-wide balanced curriculum based on ongoing needs assessment that supports all students**

The athletic department goals in this area coincide with the purpose of the University Interscholastic League (U.I.L.). The “aim is to provide healthy, character building, educational activities carried out under rules providing for good sportsmanship and fair play for all participants.” With that in mind, the athletic department stresses that our programs, district wide, are consistent and strong and are meeting the needs of all students. Through the athletic department’s evaluative process, we can address the needs of a continually growing, diverse student population. As a department, we are continually examining areas of the student population that is not currently serviced under the umbrella of athletics. One example is the need for a high school wrestling program that will introduce a segment of our student population to the benefits of athletics.

**b. expect full curriculum implementation on each campus by instructional leaders**

Each campus coordinator is empowered to oversee and maintain a quality athletic program that implements the basic tenants of the department’s philosophy of Pride, Poise, Class, Discipline, Accountability, and Decision Making. Through on-going and annual evaluations from the director level, the athletic department is vertically and horizontally aligned for maximum implementation.

**c. establish quality staff development programs and promote professional learning communities**

The athletic department has a comprehensive training session on an annual basis that covers all aspects of athletics. Coaches are required to attend and are educated in areas such as; proper treatment of student-athletes, first aid and safety procedures, budgetary demands, communication with parents, etc. Also, they are required by the University Interscholastic League to complete the Rules Compliance Program (RCP) on-line which include the UIL Constitution and Contest Rules, Ethics, Sportsmanship, Extracurricular Activity Safety Training, Steroid Education, Concussion Education, and UIL sport specific rules and policies. Also, all Denton ISD coaches have attended the state mandated two hour Concussion Training presented by Texas Health. As it relates to professional learning communities, the athletic department is united in the overall success of our student-athletes in the classroom and on the field. Athletic programs are the epitome of professional learning communities because of their commitment to student learning. The high school coaches work closely with the middle school coaches in implementing successful programs. They engage in collaborative

efforts, vertically and horizontally, to insure that the student-athletes under their direction meet their full potential. Through the educational process of athletics, student athletes experience a 'microcosm of life' which gives them the tools to be productive, successful members of society. That is accomplished through the collaborative efforts of our coaches at every level of a student-athletes development.

- d. strive to deliver all academic programs through teachers possessing advanced degrees and demonstrable competence in their areas of professional responsibility**

Working very closely with the campus principal, the athletic department is committed to hiring quality individuals that are successful educators. Through the Teacher Insight program (Gallup), the campus principal and the department are able to find the most experienced, qualified individuals to meet the complete needs of our student-athletes.

- e. stay abreast of and incorporate best practices into teaching, learning and leadership**

The department works closely with the campus principal to emphasize the importance of our coaches as academic professionals. The principal and the department work to avoid conflicts regarding staff development schedules and athletic meetings, so that both can be done effectively without diminishing either. The department allows coaches to attend coaching clinics and instructional opportunities to expose them to the most current and successful programs and individuals in the country. This keeps our coaches on the cutting edge of success and it allows them to put their student-athletes in the best position to meet their full potential.

- f. advocate and practice true accountability based on measurement of individual student progress over time, regardless of external mandates**

Every program within the athletic department is constantly monitoring student-athlete progress. Through constantly testing and re-testing the student athletes, the coaches have an accurate picture of their student-athletes strengths and weakness. This enables coaches to focus their attention to the improvement of individual student-athletes to mold them into a cohesive member of a team or unit. This process also can be a motivating factor to the student-athlete, because of accountability and improvement over time.

### **III. Climate ... In pursuit of excellence, the district will:**

- a. Celebrate and respect the diversity in our Denton ISD Community.**

Denton ISD athletic programs bring individuals together from all areas of our community and strive to develop them into a cohesive group with a common purpose. The developmental process that the athletic department expects lends itself to an interaction of individuals from diverse backgrounds and belief systems into an interconnected constituency. When our student-athletes take the playing fields, it exemplifies how diverse individuals can work together toward a common goal.

- b. promote and nourish a safe learning and working environment which is supportive, cooperative, and ensures open communication.**

Coaches within the Denton ISD Athletic Department are required to follow local policies regarding safety and working environments throughout the district. In some cases, they are required to follow state and national regulations to ensure that student-athletes are competing in the safest environment possible. We have athletic trainers that are charged with the monitoring and implementation of safety procedures and they work closely with the coaches at their campuses to make sure a safe environment is being achieved. From a parental perspective, our coaches have parent meetings that allow the parents to know exactly what is expected of their child and what steps are being taken to ensure their safety. These measures could not be possible without open communication with all parties involved.

- c. establish a high expectation level for success for all students, staff, parents, and community**

The Denton ISD Athletic Department has set a high standard of success and is continually working to build on the championship tradition of our programs. The department surely measures success on championships, but at the same time we also promote that success comes in the pursuit of excellence and being your very best in everything that is attempted. Academic success is promoted through campus base recognition and our Denton ISD UIL Varsity Scholar Athlete Award that has recognized over 1,700 Denton ISD high school varsity athletes for their outstanding academic successes.

- d. instill in students a love of life-long learning**

Athletic programs in the district are laying the foundation of life-long learning by promoting the qualities of successful individuals. Denton ISD student-athletes are being exposed to those qualities through athletic participation. From a physical standpoint, our student-athletes have the opportunity to engage in sport such as tennis, golf, running, lifting weights, swimming, etc. which are all life-long endeavors.

- e. motivate and prepare students to embrace their full responsibilities as active citizens of their community, nation, and world**

Many programs within the department are actively engaged in public service projects that benefit the community.

#### **IV. Parent and Community Involvement...In pursuit of excellence, the district will:**

- a. foster a positive and welcoming environment that encourages parent and community partnerships to achieve success for all our students**

Each program, as stated previously, has parent orientation meetings to set out the goals and expectations of each individual sport. Things such as: the coach's philosophy, expectations of their child, location and times of practices and games, team requirements, and procedures if their child is injured. Also, parents are encouraged to meet with their child's coach(es) at an appropriate time and place to discuss any concerns. Also, the department utilizes a web-based scheduler for all district teams that can be accessed by anyone that has internet access. Their child's schedule is available on-line with an automatic Google search for away

games. Community partnerships are utilized throughout our department from working closely with the City of Denton and the Chamber of Commerce (Denton Sports Commission). Sponsorships are also a vital connection to the community and also produces revenue for the district (i.e. C.H. Collins scoreboard produces \$30,000 annually). All these things work together to help ensure the best possible experience for our student athletes.

**b. work continuously with the community in planning and facility development**

The athletic department is continually working to bring and maintain quality athletic facilities to the Denton community. Through bond committees, architects, contractors, etc. the department is sensitive to meeting the needs of the community, present and future.

**c. utilize citizens' advisory committees to focus on short and long-term tasks**

Again, through bond committees, the department works to develop a plan for immediate needs as well as the needs that will arise with future growth. Those committees are introduced to current staff, current facilities and the vision of the athletic department to best meet the needs of the Denton community.

**d. provide support services and promote health, wellness and safety for students and families**

Inherently, athletics requires that individuals being physically fit and healthy. Hopefully, through participation in athletics individual student athletes affect their lives and the lives of their family members. Also, the community does have access to our facilities to improve their own physical fitness and overall health.

**e. establish and promote programs to develop and enhance parenting skills and participation in the schools**

The athletic department is committed to setting a positive example and being a role model in the development of whole student-athlete. We encourage parents to become actively involved in their child's success and let them know that we are here to assist them in allowing their child to reach their full potential. Parent meetings, before each sport begins, are a wonderful tool for our programs to reiterate that purpose.

**V. Human Resources...In pursuit of excellence, the district will:**

**a. develop and expect a consistently high level of, and respect for, professional performance by all staff**

The goal of the athletic department is that our coaches are able to handle adversity through parent, player, and game situations. Our coaches are told in our annual orientation that they are role models and that their actions are being observed and they will be held to a high standard of professionalism. Each coach is held accountable for their behavior and if situations arise that does not meet a high level of professionalism they are addressed on an individual basis.

- b. recruit, select, and employ teachers in every classroom because of substantive experience in the discipline they teach, rather than in auxiliary functions**

Working closely with the campus principal, the athletic department actively helps recruit quality applicants that meets the standards set forth in the Teacher Insight (Gallup) program utilized by the district. Teacher Insight allows both the campus principal and the department to find individuals that have the talent to teach, not only in the classroom but on the athletic fields.

- c. maintain a diverse workforce with respect to qualifications, expertise, and commitment to excellence**

The recruiting process allows the department to assist the campus principal in finding individuals from different areas and backgrounds. It enables the principal and the department to give our diverse student population educational leaders that can impact them in an extremely positive way.

- d. encourage all teachers and staff to pursue advanced professional development and degrees within their specialty area**

The stipend schedule set forth by the district can be a strong motivator in individuals pursuing educational improvement. However, more importantly the hiring process helps tremendously in this area. The department's goal is to assist the campus principal in hiring people that are highly motivated and wanting to succeed in every area of their lives. The Teacher Insight allows us to find those types of individuals.

- e. promote health and wellness in the workforce**

Coaching is a very physically demanding occupation and the profession itself promotes health and wellness.

## **VI. Growth & Change...In pursuit of excellence, the district will:**

- a. review and adjust policies and procedures effectively to address the challenges of rapid growth and changing demographic characteristics while maintaining and enhancing our strong sense of community**

The Denton ISD Athletic Department is governed by not only local policies, but state and federal policies. We are constantly working with the University Interscholastic League to implement an equitable and productive athletic program. We integrate those policies with local needs to ensure that our student-athletes are given the best opportunity to succeed. That success translates into a community that is has a connection to not only the athletic programs, but the school district.

**b. create and continuously modify strategies to mitigate increasing stresses on our children, our schools, and our community**

Athletics is intrinsically performance-based and there are always going to be stresses associated with competition. The department is committed to the belief that we “praise the performer, and criticize the performance.” This belief allows us to hold individuals to a high standard, but at the same time never personally diminish the individual.

**c. be environmentally responsible and aggressively pursue energy efficiency and conservation principles in building design, transportation alternatives, and operating procedures**

The department has worked closely with facilities and operations to strive to improve in these areas. We have looked at reducing watering schedules to meet our athletic needs and reduce our usage. In transportation, we have tried to combine trips to help reduce the number of buses needed for contests.

**d. work continuously with our community to adjust and enhance district goals as appropriate**

The athletic department is constantly working to meet the needs of our student-athletes, staff, parents, and community. We take information from these areas to make the decisions that ultimately impact our student-athletes in a positive way. When issues arise, we are proactive in addressing and meeting them in a quick and deliberate way.