

Lapel Girls Basketball Culture



Driving Force

- I am a firm believer that your culture is the driving force for your success.
- A winning culture will create winning teams. This definitely isn't something that happens overnight. I feel like this year we finally had all players on board buying into the culture we wanted.
- I did not do a great job of creating a winning culture my first couple of years and I still had players in the program attached to that old culture. Sometimes you have to let people go that don't buy into the culture you want.
- Good things trickle down but so do bad things.

Know that you care

- Most have heard the quote but we are firm believers in the quote
 - “They must know that you care before they care what you know”
- We spend time doing things, saying things, showing our players that we care about them as people not just players.
- We are a people first program.
- Our players don't think we care about them they know we care about them.

I think this foundation has helped to create the culture we want.

Examples of how we do this

- Food
 - This seems silly but we have a lot of donuts. We do donuts for Saturday practices, we will have donuts on a random mornings before school.
 - They love when food is provided.
- Conversation
 - We have a lot of conversations outside of basketball that are not about basketball.
 - We ask our players how they are doing, we ask about siblings, parents, grandparents, etc..
 - Not all players love basketball, we find out what they love and show an interest in that.
- Support
 - We support our players in their other hobbies. We show up to sporting events, choir concerts, etc...
- Philanthropy
 - We do things as a team for others. Especially during the holiday season we spend time together doing things for others. We show them how it feels to give back. We show them the huge impact they can make with just donating time, skills, and some resources.
- Team Building
 - We open our homes to our players. We have team dinners or team parties. We allow our players to see us in our own environment.
- Authenticity
 - Show players who you are. Be authentic. They will respect that, they will trust you for that.

Trickle Down Effect

- Our players care for each other
- By all of our coaches making our players feel cared for it allows them to care for each other.
- This cuts out any selfishness from players. We have had players in the past being selfish unknowingly. They felt they had to score in order for us to win or they had to guard the best player in order for us to win.
- When a player knows their teammates are playing for them and not themselves everyone can have everyone's back so you don't have to have your own. This cuts out selfishness.
- It's amazing how much a group of individuals can accomplish when they are working for others and not themselves.

Authenticity

- Kids are smarter than we sometimes give them credit for.
- My first year I made the mistake of trying to be someone I wasn't. I wanted to be the hard coach, the yelling coach, the coach that thought the only way players will do what you want is out of the fear of punishment.
- That isn't who I was at my core. I love to have fun, I like things to be relaxed, I found out very quickly that I got much better results when players were doing things because they wanted to please us than because they feared us.
- I don't believe you have to be easy going and relaxed in order for your kids to know you care about them, but you must be YOU.
- I do believe strongly that you can't worry about what you THINK you should be doing or how you THINK things should be done. Be yourself, your players will see right through you if you aren't.

Trust

- My players trust me
- They trust I know the game
 - I show them why we do things a certain way
 - I explain why we want things done a certain way
 - We practice doing those things, and when they are successful the trust is built
- They trust my staff knows the game
 - I allow my staff to coach
 - They run drills, they have responsibilities, they talk before games, after games, during timeouts
 - Your players must be comfortable and trust your staff

You will not win very many games if you don't have the complete trust of your players. You begin to see it when your players come to you with non basketball related things. You know then that they trust you completely. When you have that complete trust you never have to worry about getting them to buy in on anything basketball related, you don't have to worry about outside people saying "you all should be doing this" or "he should be playing you more". I've seen and heard it first hand, "I trust what we are doing."

Off Season

- Building culture for us is just as important in the off season as it is in season
- By having conversations, eating breakfast, getting together as a team outside of the season it allows our players to understand it isn't just about basketball all of the time.
- We also try to be aware of our student athletes time during the off season. We don't feel we need to be in the gym every possible second allotted in order to get better. We are more interested in the quality of work than the quantity and you get better quality from kids who are motivated to be there.
- We are upfront and honest with our players about where they are and what they need to work on in order to make a bigger impact and accomplish their personal goals the next season. The most important part of this is helping them create a plan to accomplish those goals and holding them accountable to following through with that plan.
- Something that our players love is using June for team building on a personal level as much as getting better as a basketball team.

Ways to help change your culture

- Read
 - I have done a lot of reading/listening to books that have to do with all sorts of different things.
 - Leading
 - Coaching
 - Positivity
 - Teaching
- Being open to change
- Jon Gordon
 - Reading Jon Gordon's books have made a huge impact on our program.
 - He has great ideas on leading with positivity, creating a positive environment, and creating positive players.
 - We saw a huge shift in culture after reading Stick Together by Jon Gordon as a team
 - Not just from the content of the book but our players accomplishing something together was a huge step for us.
- If you are in the school building interact with your students in a positive manner whenever you can.
- Provide ways for your players to help each other.

Conclusion

Success has a lot to do with talent. We have been lucky enough to have plenty of that in my five years here. This year we did have a lot of talent but I'm not sure it was my most talented team. The biggest difference this season was our culture. Our players loved being in the gym and they loved being with one another. They wanted to win and work for each other. We went through plenty of adversity during the postseason especially but what it came down to was our players did not want the season to end. That is something that cannot be looked past, can you navigate yourselves through a long season and when you get to the most important part of the year your players aren't ready for it to be over.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions: znewby@flcs.k12.in.us

Thank you for the recognition! I truly appreciate it and have the utmost respect for all of the coaches in our state. We truly have the best basketball coaches in the country. I also want to thank my staff and players who support me and trust me. Without that trust we would not enjoy the success we have had in recent years.