

## **AISD Athletics Character Education Program**

This summer AISD Athletics, AISD Department of Social and Emotional Learning and Safe Place entered a collaborative project to enhance character education within AISD athletics. The project began with the desire of AISD Director of Athletics, Tommy Cox to enhance his legacy of positive impact on student-athletes. Each month four related 30min lessons are written and sent to each of the high school athletic directors, to be distributed to all sport head coaches. The topics were chosen by the same athletic director group after a meeting on coaching character in the spring. The goal is to use the rich platform of sport to more purposely teach character education. Coaches use the lessons, enhanced by their words and personal stories to best teach the topics to the student athletes. Each school is also sent bulletin board materials designed to match the topic which are created by Safe Place. The lessons are written by Tommy Cox and Department of Social and Emotion Learning (SEL) coach R. Keeth Matheny with the help of AISD SEL and Safe Place.

### **Moments of Greatness**

One of the goals of the program is to recognize those student-athletes who demonstrate strong character each month. All coaches can nominate students from any sport for being a great example of one of the character topics. Each month one student athlete is chosen for the district “Moments of Greatness Award”, while all nominees are recognized. Athletes are often recognized for big plays and great performances. Rarely are the best examples of education and growth through sportsmanship, respect and teamwork highlighted. That is what we want to do with this overall program; help coaches deliver powerful messages from there already influential platforms and recognize student athletes and coaches for demonstrating character.

### **Great Fans**

“Great Fans” is another part of the program designed to motivate great sportsmanship in our fan behavior at games. The goal is to raise awareness about what is considered good and appropriate fan behavior. Texas high school football is a proud tradition and we want to represent the game, our schools, and AISD with class and great sportsmanship.

At one home game for each school (primarily in October) student athletes will give out cardboard fans to all attendees as they enter the stadium. Just before kickoff the announcer will read a pre-recorded message from AISD Athletic Director Tommy Cox explaining the program and encouraging participants to take the pledge to be great fans.

Attendees will be encouraged to keep the fans and bring them back to future school sporting events.

AISD Athletics in collaboration with the Department of Social and Emotional Learning and Safe Place, presented two examples of these recently implemented programs demonstrating a positive impact on student athletes and their families. At the October 4th Lanier vs LBJ football game these awards were given out at half time to Odis Jones, Lanier Athletic Coordinator and Aiden Kahn, an LBJ/LASA student athlete. Each was given a plaque presented by Edmund Oropez. In addition every nominated athlete and coach was sent a certificate.

For more information contact:

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