Lakeview Laker Football –

“Building a Tradition
One Brick at a Time”

Our belief is that the game of football, at the high school level, is a teaching tool and an opportunity. It is a tool to teach young men the value of loyalty, honor, pride, hard work, competition, teamwork, performing under pressure, and character. This game allows young men to learn these qualities through experience. It is an opportunity for them not only to learn the value of these qualities, but also to build and instill them into their lives. It gives young men the chance to form bonds and relationships that only come by being a part of a team, a part of this game; bonds and relationships that last a lifetime.

“The Laker Way” is our foundation of one team and one heartbeat. We take pride in not making excuses, making great sacrifices, doing what is right, dreaming big and representing our community, school, families and ourselves to make Lakeview Schools the best it can be. Being a part of “Laker Nation” is something special and we feel that nobody has it better than us.

We will be fundamentally sound and disciplined unit. To be successful, we must be able to establish the run game, develop an effective passing attack, play aggressive defense and sound special teams. We play for each other, block for each other and win together.

Head Coach:

Purpose Statement “I will give my athletes my best with positive energy day in and day out. We will build trust to love and care about each other as human beings.”

In order for a head coach to do things properly he must have complete control of all team decisions, unless he delegates that authority to another individual. He should have final say on all decisions that affect the team, individual players, and the coaching staff. At the same time, it is my belief that a head coach should trust and value the opinions of his assistant coaches. The head coach needs to have the ability to actually listen to his assistant coaches’ opinions and avoid just giving them lip service.
If a head coach is to respect and value the opinions of his assistant coaches, then the head coach needs final say on who his assistants are and what they are coaching. This authority should extend all the way down to the junior high level. There are too many details, variables, techniques, and schemes for a head coach to give the attention that is needed to all of them. Therefore, he must be able to delegate responsibility/authority on these issues. When delegating responsibility/authority the head coach must trust those to whom he is delegating and this therefore leads back to the importance of the head coach having final say on his assistant coaches’ suggestions.

The head coach’s responsibilities include, but are not limited to: team policies/expectations, practice and meeting schedules, team time management, decisions on schemes, player personnel management, media relations, addressing parental concerns, safety of players/coaches, holding players accountable for practices, workouts, and conduct, and communication with college coaches for potential scholarship athletes/walk-ons.

**Assistant Coaches:**

The assistant coaches are the cornerstone to a successful program. There are too many aspects to the game of football for any one head coach to handle everything.

The assistant coaches’ main focus is on the game of football itself. They do not have to deal with media, administrative details, parental concerns, etc. on a regular basis. From time to time they may be asked to deal with such issues, if the circumstance calls for it, but their main focus is on player fundamentals, skill development, and implementation of schemes and game plans.

The assistant coaches are expected to uphold, promote, and integrate the philosophy of the head coach. If an assistant coach has a philosophical or game plan based disagreement with the head coach or another assistant coach it should be discussed in the appropriate setting, away from the players.

**Players:**

It is the coaches’ responsibility to teach loyalty, honor, respect, commitment, and work ethic. It is the player’s responsibility to carry these things out and conduct themselves in the appropriate manner. If a player cannot adhere to the team rules, make the commitment that is expected of him, or conduct himself properly he will be held accountable for his actions.

A football player is not a football player for 3.5 months a year. He is a football player 12 months a year, with the understanding that it is not expected that a player only participate in football. Players should be encouraged to participate in other activities. A team is built through a series of daily individual decisions made by its members to do the right thing, the right way, the “Laker Way”.

**Conduct:**

Without going into an entire team manual, appropriate conduct will be demanded of every player throughout the entire year. Rules and expectations should be clearly communicated to the players. Penalties for some offenses will be handled on a case by case basis, by the head coach, while penalties for other offenses (drugs, alcohol, tobacco, arrest, etc.) will be clearly defined Minnesota State High School
League and Lakeview Schools Student manuals. Rules and expectations serve a purpose. They are not there to please the public, or to serve as eye candy for parents, teachers, or administrators. Rules and expectations will be enforced. Any player that cannot follow the team rules or meet team expectations is subject to dismissal from the team.

**Expectations: “Be an 11”**

Besides the expectations of a player’s conduct there are several other areas in which players will be held accountable. They are, but are not limited to:

1. **Excellence** – excellence does not mean that you are the best at everything; it does not mean that you always win. Excellence is a spirit with which you conduct yourself, always putting forth your best effort. Whether on the field, in classroom, in the weight room, or in a public setting, players will be expected to be excellent.
2. **Respect** – towards all coaches, teammates, teachers, and opponents.
3. **Commitment** – to the team, both as a unit and as a concept.
4. **Maintaining the proper GPA** – they are “student athletes”, there is a reason “student” is the first word. Schoolwork will always be put before football.
5. **Strength and conditioning workouts**
6. **Being on time** – being late is absolutely unacceptable.
7. **Being at practice**
8. **Hustle** – always; never open to debate.
9. **Work ethic** – Laziness will not be tolerated.
10. **Compete** – it sounds basic enough since, every game is a competition, but players will be expected to compete in everything, always. A great coach once said, “Winning holds the utmost of importance, but sometimes it is not about winning or losing. It’s about the way you do it.” Never let up, never give up, never quit, and never surrender.
11. **Honor** - When we win, we will do so appropriately, by the unwritten laws of the game. When we lose, we will compete with honor and conduct ourselves with class.

**Captains:**

A Laker Football Team Captain must:

1. Be Respectful of your teammates and coaches
2. Be Unselfish and give praise to those who deserve it
3. Be Accountable to his team and not complain
4. Have Physical/Mental Toughness and play through anything.
5. Be a Competitor and get others to compete.
6. Be a Leader on and off the field- do more than is asked of you.

“Leadership is about positive influence on others, not power or authority” The Lakeview coaching staff will take the input from players and finalize the captains for the team.
Parents:
Parents are, without question, a coach’s greatest asset and at the same time can be a coach’s biggest hurdle. Obviously the former is preferred. Open and honest communication is key. There should be a parent’s meeting before every season to establish this communication, openly communicate what will be expected of their son, and to create fellowship: parents to coaches and parents to parents. It is my belief that there should also be a parent’s meeting in the spring. This meeting would provide information on what is expected of their son over the summer vacation. Providing this information early will allow families to plan out their summers while allowing their son’s to fulfill their commitment to the team.

Building a Program:
Building a program takes time. Therefore, the athletic director, the administration, and the parents need to understand that it is a process. This process is not standard, but done differently by everyone who attempts it. My belief is that this process is always evolving, changing, and constantly seeking improvement. I believe the foundational tenants of building a program are as follows:

- Establishing a culture that is full of expectation and is unwaveringly committed to hard work, loyalty, honor, excellence, and winning.
- Getting the players to buy into what you are doing.
- Getting the support of the parents.
- Getting the support of the athletic department and school.
- Welcoming football alumni and including them in the process.
- Getting the junior high players to buy into what you are doing.
- Teaching the junior high coaches these things and having them teach the same techniques and use the same terminology.
- Developing the youth football program

Final Thoughts:
The great thing about the game of football, at the high school level, is that work ethic and character development are far more important then winning, but if these things are being done then the chances of having a winning season are very good.

If you coach this game properly, doing things the right way, you become so much more then a coach to your players. You become and a positive influence in their lives, you become a mentor. This game is like a light that shines down on a man and exposes his character for what it truly is; whether that character is noble or that character is found wanting. This game makes you answer questions: can you compete, can you work hard, can you work under pressure, can you be a good teammate, can you overcome adversity, can others trust you, are you doing things the right way, and do you conduct yourself with a spirit of excellence? Inevitably these questions come at a man sometime in his life; when you’re in college, when you’re competing for a job, when you raise children, etc. The game of football simply prepares a young man to have these answers before the questions are asked.