

Students in Sports Approach Life's Challenges Without Fear

He added, "The value a child gets from playing in athletics goes far beyond that. I think we watered down a lot of things. We've taken competition out of a lot of different things. Physical education used to be a place where you taught competition, but now, the emphasis is on health and fitness, and that is where it should be."



David B. Corbin

Mr. Tranchina added, "Although, everything in life you do is competitive, when these young people go out into the world and compete in their personal life, for jobs and careers, and they have to perform, they need to know how to compete, to know how to deal with the successes and the failures and the best place to learn that is on the athletic field, where you actually get knocked down and you have to get back up, and you don't have a lot of time to think about it. I think the kids that play high school sports have a definite and a distinct advantage over the people that don't when they leave high school."

Incoming freshman many times question themselves as to their qualification in participation in a sports program due to the fact that they may feel they may be not as physically strong or tall as other kids, therefore eliminating themselves from those activities.

"First of all, there is a sport for everybody," added Mr. Tranchina. "If the kid is a skinny little person, per example, he may qualify for the cross country program and become great at it. That may be a place for him to compete. There is some place for everybody to compete. That is why wrestling is so good."

He continued, "You have a 103 pounder who may not be able to play any other sport, but certainly can compete in wrestling. So my answer is, go out, give it your best effort and be the best that you can be with whatever talent God gave you. If you need to be the third string tackle on the football team, then do it and be the best third string tackle that you can be, rather than pass up the opportunity being part of a team, a

program, work with great coaches, great kids and understand what winning and losing is all about, because any person that makes it through the program is a winner and will have an advantage."

"Although in high school athletics, certainly the emphasis is on winning and losing as you move up from the freshman level to the junior varsity to the varsity level, there is much more of an emphasis on winning, that's part of what we are all about," stated Mr. Tranchina.

"We want to put the best teams that we can put out there to represent our school," he said. "We're not going to water it down and take everybody because the kid showed up, but there are activities where they don't cut kids; track and field is a perfect example. Other sports are very difficult to make, it's tough to be on the basketball or baseball team that carries only 15 kids, but you give it a shot, work on your skills."

"In football, we don't cut anyone and we try to find a place for all the seniors, we try to get them on special teams if they are not on the first string, so in certain sports it is easier to take care of matters than in other sports," he added. "But certainly the answer is you don't quit and surrender. You have to keep on trying. Michael Jordan per example got cut from his high school basketball team when he was in ninth grade, and I think he proved that he was a pretty good basketball player."

On the athletic home support front, one cannot help but notice that parent participation and attendance have dropped dramatically and embarrassingly to perhaps its lowest level ever with most of the emphasis and responsibility and caring shifted to just a handful of caring and devoted coaches in many communities.

"My number one message to parents is, be a fan, be supportive and limit your involvement to that," noted Mr. Tranchina. "You're not a coach, you're not an official. The coaches are paid to coach and the officials are



PRACTICING THEIR ROUTINES...The Color Guard from the Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School Raider Marching Band practices its routines before a recent performance.

paid to officiate. "You're there to support your child," he said. "Winning, losing, no matter what, keep a balance. No win is that great and no loss is that bad, just being balanced and being there. They want your support. They want to know that you are going to be behind them no matter what sport they choose. And this is the most difficult, but the reality is to be objective about your child's ability."

"Not every kid is a first string, All-state, captain of the team, it's just not going to happen. But every kid can

contribute and every kid can benefit from being there," he said.

"Realize most importantly, what this is really all about. This is an extension of the classroom. The teaching in our schools does not end at 3 p.m., we teach on our athletic field until 6 p.m. It's not what the sport can do for your child, it's not about recognition, it's not about scholarships, it's being a part of something that's going to make them a better person, so I urge parents to support them through that, no matter how much success they have or don't have."

SCHOOL HOURS

WESTFIELD

All Elementary Schools
8:45 a.m. to 3:05 p.m.

Intermediate Schools
8:15 a.m. to 2:47 p.m.

Westfield High School
8:17 a.m.
7:30 a.m. for Early Session
Last class ends at 2:47 p.m.

SCOTCH PLAINS-FANWOOD

Pre-Kindergarten
A.M. Session: 8:35 to 11:20 a.m.
P.M. Session: 12:25 to 3:10 p.m.

Kindergarten



A.M. Session: 8:35 to 11:20 a.m.
P.M. Session: 12:25 to 3:10 p.m.

Elementary Schools (Grades 1 to 4)
8:35 a.m. to 3:10 p.m.

Middle Schools (now includes Grade 5)
8:20 a.m. to 2:40 p.m.

Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School
8:08 a.m. to 2:24 p.m.

MOUNTAINSIDE
School Hours for both the Beechwood School (Preschool handicapped to Grade 2) and Deerfield School (Grade 3 to 8) were still being finalized as of August 12.

BERKELEY HEIGHTS
Governor Livingston High School
7:55 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.

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