

Stevenson High School

Baseball

Handbook



“Attack each day with enthusiasm unknown to mankind.”

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STEVENSON BASEBALL COACHING PHILOSOPHY

In all successful programs there is a coaching philosophy. The coaches need to demonstrate effective leadership. This is accomplished by maintaining the desired standards of behavior that instill confidence in all athletes knowing that their welfare and development is most critical. This environment encourages athletes to learn and develop on and off the playing field.

Each student-athlete needs to be given an opportunity to develop their core skills. The environment is structured to challenge the athlete while providing both encouragement and support. Athletes benefit most when exposed to drills that require effective decision-making and precise execution under pressure. The repetitiveness of these drills during practice helps develop competency and confidence.

Players are expected to be good student-athletes, with an emphasis placed on “student”. We expect all student-athletes to conduct themselves in a mature manner in the school setting, out in the community, and on the playing field at all times. Players, who do not, will not be part of the Stevenson High School Baseball Program.

The goal is to build, establish, and maintain a tradition of excellence. We also want to make every effort possible to provide our players with the most enjoyable experience that in turn teaches valuable life lessons.

Thank you for your cooperation and continued support,

Nick Skala
Head Baseball Coach

"The will to win is meaningless without the will to prepare!" -- Joe Gibbs



Mission Statement

Develop student-athletes who are committed to achieving excellence in the classroom, on the field, and in the community.

Program Goals

1. Field a successful team at all four levels
 - a. In the classroom - strive for a team GPA above a 3.0.
 - b. On the field - compete for a conference championship. Win the regional/sectional championships and compete for a state championship every year.
 - c. Active in the community and school events.
2. Provide each player with the opportunity to learn, develop, and improve baseball skills.
3. Teach players the rewards of hard work, both on and off the field.
4. Open doors for college advancement.

Player Expectations

An athlete in the Stevenson High School Baseball Program is expected to:

1. Show up on time.
2. Work hard every day.
3. Maintain a positive attitude.
4. Dedicate yourself to improvement every day.
5. Put the **TEAM** ahead of personal goals.
6. Respect your school administrators, coaches, teammates, opposing teams, and officials.
7. Encourage your teammates to be the best.
8. Discuss questions or concerns with your coach in a positive, mature manner.
9. Represent the program appropriately on the field, in the classroom and in the community.
10. Remember your priorities.
 - a. Family first.
 - b. Academics second.
 - c. Athletics third.

Team Selection Process

All students who are interested in trying out for the Stevenson High School Team will be evaluated during the try-out period by the coaches of Stevenson High School for a minimum of three days. The coaches of the Stevenson High School Baseball Program will select the team. If there are concerns they should be addressed with Coach Skala and not with any other coaches on staff.

Under Level Baseball Program (Freshman, Frosh/Soph, JV)

The purpose of the developmental baseball program at Stevenson High School is to:

- a. Develop and refine basic skills and conditioning of the athlete.
- b. Introduce, explain, and reinforce the rules of baseball and the team.
- c. Assess student-athletes athletic ability in baseball.
- d. Provide playing time to the athletes who have earned it (coaches' discretion).

There is no mandatory play rule for the under level teams. Our goal is to develop players for the varsity baseball team. Playing time is earned through practice and performance in games. The number of players kept on the team will vary year to year based on the talent level of the group. Participation in the under level program, does not guarantee the athlete a spot on the varsity team at a later date.

Varsity Baseball Program

The purpose of the Varsity Baseball program at Stevenson High School is to:

- a. Provide talented student-athletes a chance to excel.
- b. Provide student-athletes with a chance to set goals, work to achieve goals, and serve as role models for the younger athletes.
- c. Develop program goals that include winning, team building skills, hard work and enjoyment of the sport.

The Varsity team will consist primarily of juniors and seniors, but may include first years and sophomores that have demonstrated the ability to be starters or key contributors. No players will be guaranteed a position based on the previous year. The best nine or ten players will play, others will be asked to play other vital roles that lead to a successful team.

Stevenson Baseball Communication Process

When a player or parent has questions or concerns regarding the program or a player's individual role on the team, it is important to keep in mind the following communications process that has been adopted by the baseball program. This process provides an effective and efficient progression, focused on solving any problem that may develop throughout the season.

Four Step Action Plan

Step 1: The concerned player should approach his immediate coach to **schedule a time** to discuss his questions or concerns. If the player is not satisfied or comfortable with the outcome of this meeting, he should move forward to Step 2.

Step 2: The concerned player should **request a meeting** involving himself and Coach Skala. If the player does not feel comfortable with the out come of this meeting, he should move forward with step 3.

Step 3: A meeting involving the player, necessary Stevenson High School baseball coaches and parent(s)/guardian(s) should be requested via e-mail. This e-mail should include a brief explanation of the player/parent concerns. If this meeting does not resolve the situation, the player and his parents should then move forward with step 4.

Step 4: A meeting should be requested involving the player, appropriate Stevenson High School Baseball coaches, parents and the Athletic Director. If all the parties involved are still not comfortable with the outcome of this meeting, additional alternatives should be discussed to resolve this matter.

Additional Information

1. All discussion should focus on individual questions or concerns.
2. **The performance and ability of other players will not be a subject of discussion.**
3. Before leaving any meeting, be sure to clarify and summarize your thoughts and feelings to ensure this will not be a lingering issue.

Coaches' Code

We understand as coaches that we are leaders and are dedicated to more than just the X's and O's of competition. As a coach, leader and role model for these student athletes we will do the following:

- Exemplify the highest character as a role model for young people.
- Teach and abide by the rules of the game.
- Promote personal fitness and good nutrition.
- Strive for excellence in coaching skills and techniques through professional improvement.
- Encourage and assist team members to set personal goals to achieve their highest academic potential.
- Gain an awareness of the importance of prevention, care and treatment of athletic injuries.
- Establish a realistic team goal or vision for each season and communicate that to the athletes and coaches.

Parent's Code

We understand that parents play a vital role in the development of student athletes and the success of our program. Therefore we expect parents to do the following:

- Be a "team" fan, not a "my kid" fan.
- Weigh what their student-athlete says; some may slant the truth to their advantage.
- Don't instruct their student-athlete before or during a game, because it may conflict with the coaches' plan and strategies. Also, parents are not allowed in the dugout.
- Any communication with the coach(es) needs to be requested by email. Meetings by appointment. No texting. No communications after 8:00pm. Limited discussion about players at the field and not before or after games.
- Praise student-athletes in their attempt to improve themselves as students, as athletes and as people.
- Recognize and show appreciation for an outstanding play by either team.
- Gain an understanding and appreciation for the rules of the contest.

Stevenson High School Baseball Team Rules

The following team rules have been developed as a guideline for all Stevenson High School Baseball players to follow and adhere to. These guidelines will set the foundation for a successful and respected baseball program. While it may be difficult to follow these rules, it is important to remember: “As a Stevenson High School baseball player, you not only represent yourself, but also your school, your parents, the Stevenson Athletic Program, the Stevenson High School Baseball Program and your community.” Your performance and success will not only be measured in wins and losses, but also by your conduct in the classroom, in the community, and in the locker room. After careful consideration, the following rules and guidelines have been selected to best exemplify respectable appearance, attitude, and the actions of a baseball player in this program.

Baseball Rules and Regulations

1. Coaches' Expectations:
 - a. Be on time
 - b. Be positive
 - c. Be a man
 - Be responsible for yourself and your actions.
 - d. Accept constructive criticism
 - e. No Cell Phones
 - Cell Phones are expected to be turned off as you arrive to practice and may not be turned back on until the coach dismisses the team.
This includes texting, unless there is an emergency.
2. Come to practice prepared with proper attire and equipment:
 - a. Practice uniform: shirt tucked in, hat worn correctly, white or black socks, and one necklace allowed.
 - b. Glove, bat, cleats, etc.
 - c. No flip-flops are allowed at practice, cages, and games. Make sure you have regular or turf shoes on.
3. Practice will begin and end at the scheduled times listed below:
 - a. Practice is approximately from 3:30 pm and ends at 6:30 pm during the spring. Times will vary during the fall and summer.
 - b. There will occasionally be Saturday practices.
 - c. Players arriving to practice late will be responsible for their own actions and will be required to fulfill the consequences associated with their tardiness. Players in tutoring, making up exams, or retaking tests

will be exempt from this as long as it is communicated.

d. Student-athlete tardiness more than one instance will result in team discipline.

e. Each player will be assigned duties and responsibilities to be completed prior to leaving. Permission necessary to leave without completing those duties.

f. If a player misses practice it is the head coach's discretion if player plays in game(s).

4. Parents/Guardians are to pick up their student-athlete at a reasonable time:

a. Please pick up your student-athlete from practice no later than 30 min after scheduled event.

b. Games are harder to estimate, but they are generally around 2 1/2 hours.

5. Players are to adhere to the Stevenson and IHSA minimum guidelines for academics.

6. Players who miss a practice, will not play in the next game, unless:

a. You are not in school that day because of illness.

b. You have a doctor's appointment that can only be done at that time and is pre-approved by the Head Coach

c. You have an academic requirement that can only be done at that time and is pre-approved by the Head Coach

7. Players who miss a game, may not play up to the next two (2) games, unless:

a. Unless there are circumstances beyond your control and a conference has been scheduled with the Head Coach

8. Game Days: Travel to and from baseball games:

a. Players will be transported on school-sponsored buses ONLY, to and from games, not in any personal vehicles unless approved by Stevenson High School administrators.

b. All team gear will be properly worn at all times before and after the game.

c. Players will travel to and from games as a TEAM.

d. Only in the case of an emergency, will any player be allowed to ride with anyone other than the team.

9. Discipline:

a. If you receive a Discipline Report:

- Up to one game suspension (depends on severity)
- Major infraction may lead to dismissal from the team and is up to the discretion of Coach Skala and the Athletic Director.

b. Second Discipline Report:

- Up to three-game suspension.
- Major infraction may lead to dismissal from the team and is up to the discretion of Coach Skala and the Athletic Director.

c. Third Discipline Report:

- May lead to being dismissed immediately from the program.

d. If a player receives a discipline report for fighting or verbal abuse toward any administrator, teacher, or faculty member of Stevenson High School, they will be suspended and evaluated for dismissal from the program.

e. If a player is involved in matters of the police or school administrators investigations such as: drugs, alcohol, theft, vandalism, etc. the student-athlete(s) status will be reviewed by the school administrators.

The status of the student-athlete(s) will be determined at the time.

f. Umpires:

- All communication or conflicts will be handled by the coaching staff. Players are not to argue calls. Suspension may apply to a player if they argue a call.

g. No player is to ever:

- Talk back to an umpire.
- Gesture to an umpire.
- Show them up in anyway.
- Argue a call for any reason.

If player does any of these things they will be removed from that game and/or the baseball program by the head coach.

Sportsmanship

All players in the program are expected to conduct themselves in a mature, disciplined, and professional manner. It is important to remember the significance and responsibility of participating as a member of the Stevenson High School baseball team. Every time you step onto the field, you not only represent yourself, but also your school, your parents, the Stevenson Athletic Program, the Stevenson High School baseball team and your community. Act appropriately.

Team Equipment/Uniform Care Policies

1. Each player will be responsible for any team equipment provided to them. Any equipment lost or damaged, will be replaced at the player's expense.
2. All equipment will be properly maintained by each player.
3. Each player is responsible to ensure their uniform is clean before every game.
4. Players should never throw, kick, or abuse a batting helmet or any other piece of equipment. This is unacceptable. This goes for coaching staff as well. Throwing of equipment may result in suspension or discipline by the Head Coach.

At Stevenson High School we will provide the players with some of the nicest equipment and apparel money can buy. This equipment will be used for future teams at Stevenson High School.

Sponsorships/Donations/Volunteers

The Stevenson Baseball program would not be a success without sponsorships, donations and the numerous volunteers both on and off the field. This is not a prerequisite to any player's standing on the team.

Keys to Winning

If our team shows the ability to follow this philosophy, we will always be in a position to win. We may not win them all, but we will have given ourselves the chance.

I. Team

- A. Play Hard/**Hustle**
- B. Practice Hard
- C. Trust One Another
- D. Believe In One Another
- E. Play With Confidence
- F. Pick Each Other Up
- G. Make The Other Team Beat You
- H. Execute
- I. Stay Positive
- J. Know the system in place!!!

II. Pitchers

- A. Challenge Hitters
- B. Throw Strikes
- C. Work Ahead Of Hitters
- D. Keep Ball Down
- E. Focus
- F. Know the system in place!!!!

III. Defense

- A. Make Routine Plays
- B. Remember, Great Plays Happen, Routine Plays Win Games
- C. Deny Big Inning
- D. Take Away Individual Hitters
- E. Cover Every Base
- F. Focus
- G. Know the system in place!!!

IV. Offense

- A. Focus On One Pitch At A Time
- B. Swing At Strikes
- C. Hit Line Drives and Hard Ground Balls
- D. Run The Bases With Desire To Always Take An Extra Base
- E. Do Not Miss Signs
- F. Know the system in place!!!

Disclaimer:

I _____ hereby abide to all rules and regulations set forth by the Stevenson High School Baseball handbook and IHSA guidelines. I will conduct myself in a mature manner in the school setting, community, and on the playing field at all times.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent or Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Returned Date: _____

Signature of Head Coach: _____