

Paul Jacobson was an elite competitor with grit from the start. A 1987 graduate of Negaunee High School, he was a three-sport standout in football, basketball, and track. As a senior, he earned All-Conference, All-UP, and All-State honors while leading the Miners to the State Semi-Final game, marking the longest playoff run in school history at the time. After graduating from NHS, Paul attended Central Michigan University and was a key member of the Chippewa football program. In 1990, Paul earned All-Conference 1st Team Lineman honors, helping propel CMU to a historic season by earning the MAC Championship and a trip to the California Raisin Bowl. A four-year letter winner, Paul graduated in 1992 with a Bachelor of Science degree with the hopes of a career where football and teaching could go hand in hand.

First teaching at Mount Pleasant High School, Mr. Jacobson returned home in 1997 to start his 28-year career with NPS as a teacher, coach, and administrator. In the classroom, he taught Science and Physical Education at NMS and NHS. He eventually went into school administration, where he served as Assistant Principal and Athletic Director at NMS, then later at NHS, before retiring in 2025. Coach Jacobson was not only respected by the students and student-athletes of Negaunee, but also in regional sports governance where he served on the U.P. Athletic Committee for the WestPAC and MID PEN Conferences. He emphasized sportsmanship and representing one's team and community with pride, and was a role model for many young coaches, players, and peers. His profound impact on athletic administration is evident by the honors he received; U.P. Athletic Directors Association (UPADA) Athletic Director of the Year and Michigan Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (MIAAA) Regional Athletic Director of the Year for the 2024-25 school year.

"Coach Jake" strengthened the legacy of the Miners through his coaching principles of discipline, consistency and loyalty. Early in his coaching career at NPS, he was the head wrestling coach and varsity football assistant coach under Coach Dick Koski. In 2000, Coach Jacobson took the reins from Coach Koski and served as Varsity Head Football Coach for the next twenty five seasons. Under his leadership, the Miners amassed an incredible 191 wins and reached the MHSAA playoffs 23 times. One of those playoff runs includes an achievement that stands as the proudest in program history, a Division 6 State Championship victory in 2002, just three years into his time as head coach. Miner football returned to the state championship game in 2022, finishing the season as Division 6 State Championship Runner-Up and further cementing the strong culture of Miner football. Coaching peers recognized his aptitude for teaching football, naming him MHSFCA State Coach of the Year twice, an 8-time Regional Coach of the Year, UP Class ABC Coach of the Year, and a multi-time UP All-Star Game coach, ultimately earning him induction into the MHSFCA Hall of Fame in 2024. Coach Paul Jacobson's name is well-known across the U.P. and state for his coaching style and success.

The true legacy of Coach Jacobson is not measured in team trophies or his coaching awards, but in the profound impact he had on student-athletes. His lessons of tenacity and commitment on the playing field got through to hundreds of young athletes. Team work and perseverance were at the forefront of every practice and contest. Coach Jake didn't just prepare and build winning teams; he built character and a relentless work ethic that his players have carried beyond their days in a Miners uniform. Those who have been fortunate to call him Coach will attest that his high standards were rooted in mutual respect and love for the game. The legacy of Negaunee Public Schools is stronger, and will continue to grow, because of Coach Jacobson's commitment to excellence. NPS is proud to recognize Coach Paul Jacobson for his lasting impact on the District. Welcome to the NPS Hall of Fame, Coach Jacobson!