

Best Practices in Instruction, Leadership, and School Culture

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In my roles as a mathematics teacher, head coach of three athletic programs, PBIS team member, and social media coordinator, I strive to create environments where students feel *supported, engaged, and accountable*. Across both academics and athletics, I focus on *consistency, communication, positive recognition, leadership, and relationship building*. The following best practices reflect strategies that have positively impacted students both inside and outside the classroom.



Establishing Consistent Classroom Structure and Expectations

One of the most important practices I use in my mathematics classroom is maintaining a **consistent and organized daily structure**. Each day, students are greeted with a slide that includes the agenda, learning objectives, vocabulary, classroom expectations regarding personal devices, and a brief engaging element such as a joke or warm-up question. This routine **helps students transition into class quickly and understand what is expected of them** from the moment they enter the room. Posting vocabulary daily also **supports literacy and comprehension in mathematics**, especially for students who struggle with academic language.

IM I:
5/1/26
Today's Objective:
Students will be able to classify and solve different angles on parallel lines cut by a transversal.

1st: Activator
2nd: Review Activator
3rd: Continue Project
4th: Exit/Review

VOCAB:
Parallel
Transversal
Adjacent
Vertical
Congruent
Supplementary
Complimentary
Interior
Exterior

GUESS WHAT?!?!?
PUT YOUR PHONES AWAY.
GUESS WHAT ELSE?!?!?
I MEAN IT

ON DECK:
Slope and Equations of lines/parallel, perpendicular

Ms. Smith has four daughters. Each daughter has a brother. How many kids are there in total?

OK
● Duration: 29/50
● Bedtime: 19/30
● Interruptions: 19/20
67

The consistency of classroom procedures **reduces downtime** and helps **maximize instructional time**. It also creates a more predictable and supportive learning environment where students feel prepared and focused. By clearly communicating expectations every day, **students are able to build independence, responsibility, and stronger classroom habits**.



Building Strong Communication Systems with Students and Families

As the head coach of cross country, indoor track, and outdoor track and field, *communication* and *accountability* are essential to maintaining a successful program. A major best practice I implement is establishing *clear expectations for athletes, families, and coaches* from the beginning of each season.

Athletes and families receive information regarding attendance expectations, conduct, communication procedures, and team responsibilities. Maintaining open communication helps *build trust between coaches, athletes, and families* while also promoting accountability and consistency throughout the season. Coaching three seasons has reinforced the importance of creating a *positive team culture* where students understand expectations and feel supported both athletically and personally. Strong communication systems reduce confusion, improve organization, and allow students to develop *responsibility, teamwork, and leadership skills* that extend beyond athletics. We currently utilize a platform for all athletics communication that streamlines important information as well as a calendar with schedules and events.



Encouraging Leadership, Growth, and Community Engagement

Participating in the **2026 Women's Leadership Conference** provided valuable insight into leadership, communication, and empowerment strategies that can be applied within both the classroom and athletics. Listening to keynote speakers and participating in breakout sessions reinforced the importance of *resilience, confidence, collaboration, and mentorship*. In my own work with students and athletes, I strive to encourage a growth mindset by helping students recognize that improvement comes through *effort, consistency, and perseverance*. Whether in mathematics or athletics, students are often more successful when they feel supported and encouraged to *take risks, learn from mistakes, and continue growing*.



Encouraging
Leadership, Growth,
and Community
Engagement
(continued)

Celebrate KATE



In addition to athletic and academic responsibilities, I also encourage my student athletes to participate in community service opportunities that strengthen their connection to the school and local community. Each year, members of the track and field team volunteer at a local 5K walk/run that raises awareness about dating violence in memory of a former student-athlete from our school. The event is organized by her family, who also provide scholarships to graduating students each year. Team members assist by cheering on participants, directing runners along the course, and helping organizers wherever needed throughout the event. Participating in this event allows students to recognize the importance of *service, empathy, and community involvement* while honoring the memory and legacy of a former athlete. Experiences such as these help students develop leadership skills and understand the positive impact they can have both *within and beyond the school community*.

Promoting Positive School Culture Through Social Media and Recognition

As a social media coordinator for the school, I help highlight the many positive accomplishments and experiences taking place within our school community. Through social media posts, we *celebrate student achievements, athletic accomplishments, awards, events, and other positive moments that contribute to school pride*. This practice helps *strengthen the connection* between students, families, staff, and the larger community by *recognizing the successes* of our students in a public and encouraging way. Positive recognition can have a significant impact on student *confidence, motivation, and school engagement*. Social media also serves as an important communication tool that allows families and community members to *stay informed and connected* to school events and accomplishments. By focusing on positivity and celebration, we help create a culture where *students feel valued and recognized* for their efforts.



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Conclusion



As both an educator and coach, I aim to model leadership through *consistency*, *communication*, and *positive relationships*. Creating supportive environments where students feel *respected* and *motivated* contributes to *stronger engagement* and a more *positive overall school culture*.