

De La Salle High School Football Coaches Handbook

- The following pertains to all coaches on all levels.

I. Philosophy

It is the responsibility of De La Salle Football coaches:

1. To know and adhere to the school *Mission Statement*, philosophy and school rules.
2. To be an educator first.
3. To promote and education first philosophy and guide players to become responsible students.
4. To be examples and role models to players and the community as a whole.
5. To teach students how to be responsible members of an athletic team.
6. To teach students how to play the game of football.
7. To love the game of football and to believe that the game and the coach can give students tools to become productive young adults.
8. To strive to make the game of football fun.

II. Professional Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of De La Salle Football Coaches:

1. To dress like a professional:
 - a. Practice attire – shorts, sweats, tee or collared shirt.
All attire should be clean with no holes or rips. School colors are preferred; grey, green, white or silver.
 - b. Game day – Slacks (No blue jeans), collared shirts, school hats.
 - c. Clean shaven; hair and beards trimmed.
 - d. No smoking or chewing around students on or off the field.

- e. No drinking or gambling around students on or off the field.

III. Coach/Player Relationships

It is the responsibility of De La Salle Football Coaches:

1. To respect all players (What a coach says and does has a profound effect on players.):
 - a. Never cuss or rage at a player.
 - b. Know the team rules and goals. Enforce rules consistently and uniformly.
 - c. Adhere to your own team rules. (i.e. Being on time)
 - d. Know players off the field. Be informed about academic life and, as much as possible, be informed about home life.
 - e. Never play an injured player. Be able to recognize injuries and administer first aid. Clear all injured or dazed players through the trainer before returning to the game.
 - f. Do not punish players with physical conditioning.
 - g. Never physically handle a player by a strike, push, shove, grab etc.
 - h. Discipline and sanctions are as follows:
 - A player will not practice
 - A player will not start in a game
 - A player will not play in a game
 - A player will not suit for a game
 - A player will turn in his gear

IV. Practice Guidelines

It is the responsibility of De La Salle Football Coaches:

1. To be on time to all football functions.
2. To have a weekly and daily practice schedule.
3. To know *your* coaching responsibilities (Know the terminology and techniques for your respective players).
4. To run drills that are position specific (Have training aid ready and available, know what you are looking for in a drill, correct and praise good work.)
5. To coach *your* own players. Do not cross over and coach or comment on players that are not your responsibility. The only

exception is when permission is granted from the area coach or when a player is in danger.

6. To work toward understanding the entire scheme of offense and defense.
7. To drill technique and fundamentals the entire season.
8. To not argue with other coaches on the field.
9. To work with the varsity coach who is coaching your responsibility area.
10. To scout opponents. (Know an opponents strengths and weaknesses and devise game plans accordingly.)

V. **Game Day Guidelines**

It is the responsibility of De La Salle Football Coaches:

1. To be calm. (If the coach is excited or out of control players will not trust or listen to him.)
2. To help players during the game (Display confidence in the players – they don't need the coach as one of the opponents)
3. To be aware if a player is *out of it*. (If a player seems distracted – do not yell, speak with him or pull him out of the game.)
4. To not yell at an official. (This displays poor sportsmanship and is a bad role model.)
5. To have starters and substitutions in line. (Be sure there is a clear plan for substitutions and play them in their practice position.)
6. To watch the area players you coach during a game. Don't watch the game like a spectator.
7. To be aware of players conduct. (No cheap shots or trash talk.)
8. To not give advice to coordinators in the middle of a series. (Have advice procedures worked out before a game.)
9. To never speak to a rival coach or opponent during a game.
10. To not allow visitors in the team box.
11. To not run the score in a mismatch situation.

- **In addition to the above, the following pertains to coaches on the Junior Varsity level:**
 1. **Players must be aware that weight training is an integral part of De La Salle football. Maintain the weight program throughout the entire season.**
 2. **Team rules must be fair and consistent. Players must be aware of rules and sanctions. Rules should include promptness, grades, substance use, classroom and off-campus behavior.**
 3. **Players and coaches should address each other with mutual respect. Players address coaches as coach or mister. Coaches address players by first or last names.**
 4. **All players should have an offensive and defensive position and practice at both positions throughout the season.**
 5. **All coaches should work with varsity coaches assuring terminology, technique and drill work is consistent.**
 6. **Player positioning should be discussed with varsity coaches and an understanding agreed upon by both coaches.**
 7. **Stress upon players that they are in a “farm club” system. Their ultimate goal is to start on the varsity someday. Coach and develop them with that in mind.**
 8. **Set time for summer workouts that are conducive for the entire team.**
 9. **“Attitude problem” players should not be starting. Players should understand what attitude is desirable and undesirable. Do not confuse and “attitude problem” with personality conflict with you.**
 10. **Players that can’t make routinely required conditioning, should not be starting. Players must understand conditioning is an important part of our program.**

11. Make sure players know why they are not starting and what they need to do in order to start.

12. Inform parents of team rules, expectations, and injury procedures.

• **In addition to the above, the following pertains to coaches on the Freshmen level:**

1. Inform players that playing football for De La Salle is a privilege and not a right. Teach them about pride and tradition. Pride involves respect for coaches, school facilities, equipment, teachers, J.V. and Varsity football players.
2. Give players a fair evaluation before cuts are made. Take into consideration growth and speed potential. Players must feel they've been given a fair chance to make the team.
3. Do not be overly concerned about wins. Work to start 22 players and play as many players as possible.
4. Make sure all players have an offensive and defensive position and practiced throughout the season at both positions; including teamwork.
5. Introduce players to conditioning routine - weights included.
6. Teach fundamentals and technique. Players must learn how to play the game safely and fairly.
7. Grade checks should be done on a weekly basis. This should be coordinated through the head to the area coaches.

BOB LADOUCEUR

DEVELOPMENT, MOTIVATION, and PREPARATION

De La SALLE HIGH SCHOOL, CALIFORNIA

I do want to tell you a little about where I come from and where I am today and where I started my coaching career. I have just completed my 24th year as head coach at De La Salle High School. I started coaching there when I was 25 years old. I do not claim to know any more football than any of you. In fact, I know a lot less than a lot of you as far as X's and O's, schemes, designs, and formations. What I do know is that I work with kids. When you work with kids you must learn how to maximize their potential. This lecture is going to be on what I do in our program.

I am not computer literate. I know how to use the word processor. I do not have any of the latest software on scouting. I do not wear a headset during the game. I am the offensive coordinator and I coach the offensive line. I just came from Coach Andy Ludwig's lecture. He did a great job. I think I have three red zone plays and that is about it. The amount of time we have to work with our team limits us in the amount of material we can put into our offense. A big reason why we are successful is the fact that what we do put in our program, we do really well. Our kids understand what we are doing. It is very simple. I am not that good in putting in a complex scheme. I can't keep all of the material straight in my head when I am in a game. That is one of the reasons I do not wear a headset. I'm not that smart. When someone is talking in my ear and I'm concentrating on what is going on out on the field, it causes me to

lose my train of thought. I cannot go on to the next play with someone talking in my ear. So I just do not wear the headsets. Everything we do is very basic and simple. One thing that we do well is the fact that we are technicians. However, we still keep it very basic in what we are doing.

I like to go to campuses of the colleges and junior colleges. I like to meet 1-on-1 with the position coaches. I meet with them and ask them questions that are related to my situation. I take their answer and adapt it to my coaching techniques.

We run the *Split Backs Veer offense*. That is about 50 percent of our offense. The other 50 percent I have totally plagiarized from teams that we have played against. If those plays will fit into our formations, I will put them in our play book. We do run some four wide-out sets and some three wide-out sets. Our offense is like a menu. In some years we take a lot of our offense from column A and the next year we will take a lot of the offense from column B. It all depends on our personnel.

Two years ago we had an outstanding quarterback who went to the University of Michigan. That year we used a lot of four wide-outs. We did not run that many *Split Backs Veer* plays. This year we will run the *Split Backs Veer* a lot more. We are very careful about taking the materials from our playbook. We do

not want to overload the kids with a lot of plays.

There are four things that I think are critical to our success. At least they are really important to our success. I have these points written down so I do not forget them. *The most important person in your program is your strength-and-conditioning coach.* I have a great strength-and-conditioning coach. He works on flexibility, speed enhancement, change of direction and strength development. All of our lifts are just like a practice. There are no chairs in our weight room. There is no music in the weight room. That does not mean it is not fun to have music in the weight room. But our kids are working and they know it is to be treated like a practice. This goes for the entire year and not just during the season. You must have your best players working on the weights during the off-season.

I used to coach the strength-and-conditioning phase of our program. I did it for 15 years. Now I have a special strength and conditioning coach. I go in the weight room to see what he is doing and to see what is going on the field. It is different from what I did.

If I were to go back to coaching in the weight room, I would have to go back to school to learn what they are working on today. He is very skilled in what he does. Unfortunately, the University of California hired him away from us. He is the head strength coach for basketball. I was lucky enough to get a kid that worked under the former strength coach who graduated from UCLA and we are working with him to pick the program up and to continue the program.

I think your priority unit should be your offensive line. I coach the offensive line and I want everyone to know this is where our priority

is for our personnel. All of our kids come to me telling me they want to play defense. I tell them they cannot play defense until they establish themselves as an offensive player. Nothing is more demoralizing to a team than to have an offense move the ball down the field on them by running the ball and controlling the football. It happens to us when a team starts making first downs on us. They start to get an edge as far as their confidence to win the game.

I want to get our best linemen on our offense. I think you must work it from the tight end to the inside. The best offensive lineman must be the *tight end*. He has to block and he has to catch the football. He must be a multi-player. I think the weakest player can be the center. That is how I usually set our linemen up.

The team that can capture the neutral zone will win the game. All of our steps are positive progressive steps. We work on our steps all year long. When we do drill work on the field, we have a quarterback calling the cadence and we come off the ball on the snap. We have our linemen positioned on the field where they are next to each other so they can work drills together. We do not want them scattered all over the field. We work on their stance and their first three steps out of the stance. When we are not in pads we work on these steps and the blocking angles. We work on them all year long.

College coaches will come to look at our films. They will ask me how we get our linemen to come off the ball so quick. I really do not have a secret for them. We work on it year round. There is no secret to them coming off the ball.

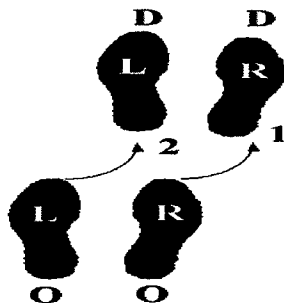
When we are warming up and when we are doing our agilities, I am behind them. If their feet are not positioned right, if they do not

step out properly, I keep working with them on it. We are always working to get them off the ball all year.

Linemen, who can get their second step down before their opponent, will win the 1-on-1 battle. I used to get really intimidated by this statement and tried to make this technique simple. I do not think offensive line play is as complicated or as intimidating as it appears to be. There are situations that come up that you are not going to be able to solve. I will admit the fact that I cannot answer that question and go on.

We work all blocks on the *tandem block*. We very seldom see defenders lined up on us head-up. Most times they are on our outside shoulder in a shade technique. Our first step is a six-inch step with the near foot. The second step must be a long step to split the stance of the defender.

TANDEM BLOCK



We use our hands and arms to rip through the defender to stand him up. We are working with the offensive linemen next to him and he is doing the same thing. All of our linemen are working in stacks or combination blocks. We work on the first two steps all year. When we watch the game film and our practice film that is the one thing I look at.

If the defender gets his second step down before the offensive man does,

he is going to move the blocker and stand him up. If the blocker gets his second step down before the defender does, he will stand the defensive man up on his second step.

Our kids understand our approach to the offensive line techniques. If they can understand what we are trying to accomplish, the rest is common sense. Once they understand what we want, and then see it in a film and see the success once they take the proper steps, then they believe in it.

This has been proven to me by past experience in working with our kids. When our linemen get off the ball and get those steps down quick, and then punch the defensive lineman, they start moving people. What is so hard to teach is that second step. They usually get hit before they can get the second step down and they get rocked back into their stance. This is what I am talking about when I say we want to get the kids off the ball in the summertime. In the summer workouts they have a tendency to come off the line like sprinters. They come out high and they have their feet close together. They do not come off the first steps as if they are blocking someone. I get the rubbers between their feet and I work on them staying low to high. I do this even when they are working against air. They like to rise up high and run. That is not how they are going to come off the ball in a game. They must come out low and the target is going to be right in front of them.

Our running game is an offensive priority. I do not think high school kids are skilled enough to be in an exclusive passing game offense. Even if we do employ the four wide-out sets, we still work the running game. We run the stretch, trap, speed option, and other plays. We are a run offense. We try to run the ball on everyone. We never abandon

our running game. We feel we can hit on something in our running game that is going to work for us.

Everyone must create the ability to attack on defense. When the offense starts moving the ball on you, your defense must disrupt what they are doing to your defense.

Next I want to cover some things that I have learned in my 24 years of coaching. A lot of these things many of you already do in your program. What I am going to talk about now are keys to working well with your players. I am going to talk about motivation. I am not a natural motivator in terms of people like Lou Holtz or other coaches who can get in front of a group and fire them up with words. I am not that way. That type of motivation is simple. I think real motivation must come from a set sense of feedback from your kids. That is what we are good at doing.

Getting your team to play with emotion is not a game-day ritual. The motive to getting your team to play is a yearlong process. First of all, you must earn the respect of your players. There are a lot of ways to do that. A lot of people will tell you that kids today are not motivated and they are playing the game for themselves. I disagree on this point. Kids want to please you. They want to please me as well. They want my approval that what they are doing is good and that they are doing the right thing. When I was playing high school football I always wanted to please my head coach and get his approval. I think this is still true today with kids. They want to get your approval. The question is how do we accomplish this with kids?

First, I think you must *know the game well*. You must know your phase of the game especially. I think one of the reasons my kids respect me is

because I know the entire scheme of everything we are doing with the program. I could step outside and coach the wide-outs. I could go across the line and coach the linebackers. I know what the secondary is doing.

A lot of young coaches come through our program. They want to become a head coach. I tell them they must feel comfortable enough to coach every position on the field. If they do not know how to coach the wide receivers, the kids will know it and they will not listen to him. If he knows what he is talking about they will listen to him. If you do not know how to coach all of the positions on the field, your efficiency drops dramatically.

You must *know the techniques* for the position you are coaching. I am sure most of you know this, but do you really adhere to it? I think you must coach techniques all year long. You must know when techniques are not being used. You must know what you are looking for in the techniques. I think you must provide feedback to the players to get them to improve their techniques. The feedback must be positive.

You must coach every snap, in every drill, in every lift, in each get-off, and in the stance all year long. I have seen coaches who did not know what they were looking for. You must know what you are looking for and you must look for it all of the time. It is tedious work to watch what the kids are doing.

One of the best things you can do for your kids is to *teach them to be problem solvers*. If you do not know the answers don't fake them. Tell them you do not know the answer. The kids will come up with some situations where there are no solutions. If we have a situation where we cannot block a defender, I will tell them we can't block that

guy. "Hopefully the quarterback will see him coming and get rid of the ball." Teach kids to solve problems on their own. After the season starts, the offensive line will come out of the game and they will huddle together and talk about the situation with each other. They do not come to me. I encourage this with them. I want them to figure things out for themselves.

Don't assume anything with the kids. Kids will forget things from year to year. I never try to fake anything about football knowledge. The kids will know if you know football. If you tell them you do not know the answer they will respect that. If you will work on it with them they will respect you even more. I have seen coaches come out on the field and change personalities. They may be the nicest guys off the field, but when they go on the field they are tigers. I encourage our coaches not to do this. Kids know when you change personalities on the field. *Be yourself on the field.* If you are a nice guy off the field you can be a nice guy on the field. You are out there for the kids and not out there to try to intimidate the players.

If you are good at what you teach the kids will be very respectful. I like to be organized from drill to drill. I never go on the practice field with a planned practice schedule. I have my play cards with me. Every time I have gone out to practice with a planned practice schedule I never stick to that schedule. Our staff will meet before practice and decide how much time we need for each drill in the practice that day. On some days a coach will tell me they need more time on a drill. We go along with him and give him another 10 minutes. We want to get a feel for what we are working on each drill. If we need to drop a drill from our schedule it is not a problem. I do not think I have had a timed practice schedule for over 20

years. Some coaches' work well with a written out practice schedule. I do not want to use the structured practice schedule.

To teach the kids respect, you must let them know you are on their side. I will do anything I can for them. If they have any problems or need my help, I will be there for them. But I am not going to be their buddy. I tell them they need me as their football coach. That is what I am going to do. I am going to try to bring them together as a team and I am going to try to get them to cooperate with each other and to love each other. We are going to do all of the tangible things. I am not going to be their buddy. I am not going to try to fit into their world and I do not want them to try to fit into my world. That is okay. They need you in that role. I think a coach needs to *know his team.* You must know the subculture of the team. Know who is a party guy, know their grades, and know who is having problems in class. Know who gets along with the players and who does not get along with them. These things will come out during the course of the season. Sometimes it comes out when it is too late. I am not a busy body but I like to know what is going on inside the team. If there is something wrong with the team, usually a little birdie will come by and let you know about it. When we hear this we move. A lot of coaches will tell you they do not want to hear about the outside problems. Kids do not respect that attitude. The other kids on the team want you to get involved. If a player on our team is involved in drinking alcoholic beverages, the other kids want me to go after that player and I will.

We have a rule year round against drinking alcohol. I have suspended kids for games in September for drinking in April. They have

included starters and subs. We have given them warnings and told them we would suspend them if we caught them a second time. We have caught them that second time and we have suspended them. Those players turned out to be very good leaders on the team. We get a lot more out of them by sitting them out for two games than we would have if we had chosen to let the problem go.

The kids will respect the rules if you enforce them. It is tough to live by the rules but they will respect them if you enforce them. That may be the reason we have such a small squad. We only have about 40 players on the team.

Five of my coaches today have played for me in the past. When they jump on board they are very enthusiastic. I do not want my coaches talking down to the kids. I remember what words my coach taught me. I can remember words that my Pop Warner coach told me that I did not want to hear. Coaches can say things that go right through the heart of the players. Do not underestimate the power you have over your kids. I have had players come back to coach for me and they will remind me of what I said back in the 1980s. I get embarrassed. I have to apologize to them. You must be careful what you say to kids because they remember what you say. The power a coach has over the players is dramatic. If you treat kids with respect they will always come back to you. When they get older they will take what you gave them and it will be a part of who they are in life. For the kids to believe in you, you must do all of those things as a coach.

Let me talk about our program from the standpoint of the off-season up to the fall practice. We start our lifting program in January. We work to get 100-percent participation. If our kids are involved in other sports, we have them lift at 6:30

a.m. Other coaches in our program are good about this. They do not mind if their players are involved in our weight program.

When September rolls around the players will have a lot invested if they work from January to September. We work on power lifts, plyometrics, tracking, and testing.

We take the time to evaluate our players previous season. I am late getting to it this year but that is what I am doing now. I am evaluating the kids who will be with us the next year. I give the players a flyer to evaluate their season. I stole this from the University of Nebraska. Basically I have the players' grade themselves. You could give them this evaluation any time of the year. It is an opportunity for the players to give an assessment of the type of year they think they have had and they can let you know what they think is important. Some of the questions I like and some I do not like. You can make up your own questions and let them fill it out. They turn it in to me and I review it. I either agree with them or I disagree with them.

Most of the players coming back for the next season will usually have a good assessment of how they expect to play. They may say they are going to be excellent next season. I will make the comment that I do not think they will be that good unless they do a lot of work in the off-season. A lot of the players will want to know why they are not starters. I will use this evaluation to go over the reasons I think the need to work harder. They will know what you think of them and they will know where they stand with you.

Goal setting is a big part of our program. Our kids are goal setting right now while they lift. Football is the farthest thing from their

minds at this time of the year. The only thing they are thinking about is if they are going to get stronger and faster for next year. That is what motivates them. They are working very hard in the weight room now. We are going to give them a program they can be successful with. We tell them when we are going to test them and what we expect of them. They have already set goals and that is what really motivates them in the weight room. We do not get in the weight room and yell at them to work harder. That does not do the trick. For them it is: "I want to get this amount on this next lift."

We goal set all year round. In my experience, kids do not know how to set goals. Neither do they know how to be leaders. You must teach them how to do both. When teammates elect a player to be a captain, it does not mean that kid knows anything about leadership. You must train your team leaders constantly. You must train them how you want them to lead. I do not like leaders that are just yellers. I like leaders who can lead behind the scenes. I really do not like the screamers and yellers. Most of the young players who are selected as captains think leading is bossing people around. That is the antithesis of leading. It is the same thing with goal setting.

Kids do not know how to set goals. They will come in to see me about setting their goals and they tell me they are going to go 100 percent. Another example is they will tell me they want to be a Division-I player. To me that is a dream. They must have some concrete goals. They must have an action plan of how they are going to accomplish their goals. They must understand how they must change their attitude and work behavior. *Goals must be observable and they must be clearly measurable.* They are doing them or they are not doing their goals. If the want to be

a Division-I player they cannot miss workouts.

For some of the players their goal may be to start the next year. In order to do that, they must set specific goals. They will have to lift a certain amount of weight, or they will have to gain a certain amount of weight. It may be that he wants to be faster than he is at the time the goal is set. Goals must be measurable. I have the players write out their goals in a contract form and I ask them to hang them in their room at home. I keep a copy of the contract as well. If they are not working to meet those goals I will pull their goal sheet out and remind them of the goals they have written down. I will call them in and ask them if they are still working to achieve their goals. This lets them know they must be a man of their word and they must stay on track.

I go over the goal sheet with the players. I want their goals to be very specific. It can help them reach the goals if they are written down and are specific. A lot of kids want to achieve the goals but they do not know how to get started.

Our summer workouts are *mandatory*. We cannot make them mandatory *but*, our kids know that they are mandatory. Summer is where the team is created. The players may tell me they are going to be away for a month during the summer. I will tell them this is fine, but I let them know they will have to play JV ball in the fall. I let them have two weeks off. If they want to take a two-week vacation, that is the time to do it. They have to make all of the other workouts after that two-week vacation period. If the players want to split the time up into two one-week periods, that is fine with me.

One problem we ran into with letting them pick the time they wanted off

from the weight program was the seniors were taking Saturday morning off. That is one of our best workouts. We work from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. A lot of the seniors were missing that practice. I had to step in and tell the seniors they could not take anymore Saturdays off. They wanted the vacation time to be Saturday morning. I convinced them they were totally defeating the purpose of what we were working for.

Question: *Do we give the players time off at the end of school?* The answer to that question is no. We go straight into our weight program. We give the kids about four or five days off around Easter time. The kids are off from the end of our regular season, which is the first or second week of December until we come back to school in mid-January. They are off about one month. We do not start back until the second week in January. That is the time off for the players. The coaching staff schedules our vacation for our families around each other. One or two of the coaches are always at the workouts.

Our summer workouts are hard. They are long and they are tedious. We go three days per week. All of the players come in on their off days. We will open the weight room and the linemen will come in and work on the things they need extra work on. If they need more upper-body work, they will work that fourth day. Again, they all do it on their own. I say they have to make three days a week but they can show up on the optional days as well on their own. We include all of our running drills and all of our stretching drills in the workouts. I will work the workout schedules around our passing league calendar. The total amount of time the kids work will vary from time to time. We could spend five to five-and-a-half hours in the workout. It can be a tough workout but I think this is where your team

is created. This is where the kids put their investment into the program.

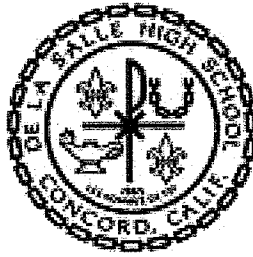
I have a lot of players tell me they work through the summer. I tell them, "Give me your boss's telephone number and I will see if we can work out something for you." They never give me that number. I get all of the workouts set up and print them out on a calendar along with our passing league schedule. On the back of the schedule is the list of all of the kids with their phone numbers and addresses. They will know how to car pool and how to get to practice. This also encourages recreational activities within the team as well. Before the summer is over I know who our defensive backs are going to be. I find this out in our passing league and in our drill work. We use the passing league to find our skilled personnel including the defensive backs. You must use *team-building activities* during this time. You cannot go out and tell the players, "We must play as a team." That is not going to make it happen just by saying it. You must create opportunities to make that happen. I have a few activities that work very well for us.

In closing, let me give you an off-season activity that I think is good. I am not a camper so I do not go camping. I am in the classroom a lot and I like the classroom work. I take the linemen and I give them a questionnaire. I take them in a room and I talk with them. I will tell them what they need help with. I ask them to list two long-term and two short-term goals. I ask them what the greatest advantage is in achieving their goals. I ask them what holds them back from achieving their goals. I ask them if they see themselves as a leader or a follower.

I try to get players together to talk in groups. Keep in mind this is

a session to help the kids to see what they are capable of doing. It is not a session to tear down the kids. The kids will hold themselves accountable for each other. That has worked for me and it has helped our program.

My time is up but I will be glad to answer any questions. Thank you for your attention.



De La Salle Football Leadership Paper

The following guidelines and characteristics are for athletes that are serious about carrying on the Spartan tradition of effective leadership. This paper is not for everybody; it is for a select few that have the desire, dedication, and discipline to grow as an individual and learn how to lead others in a dynamic way.

In order to be an effective leader, a De La Salle football player must individually possess the majority of the following characteristics:

- 1. You must be one of the best conditioned players on the team.**
- 2. You must be near the front of the pack in your running group.**
- 3. You must be a relentless worker in the weight room.**
- 4. You can't be injured a lot or spend a lot of time in the training room.**
- 5. You have to be on time, all the time, and not miss practices.**
- 6. You must never make excuses or blame others for your failures.**
- 7. You must inspire others with your play and effort. You must be seen as a difference maker in a game.**
- 8. You must be a good student.**
- 9. You must be respectful to authority.**
- 10. You must understand that team comes first and that coaches are not your adversary.**
- 11. You must be a representative of the school Mission Statement and team philosophy.**
- 12. You must be proud of this school and be a representative of this school at all times.**
- 13. You must carry on team philosophy when coaches are not present or unable to; which includes on the field during a game, in the weight room, away from school in social situations, and in the classroom.**
- 14. You must love the game of football.**
- 15. Listen to your football coaches and understand that outsiders are not coaching you, and are not your football coaches; this includes your parents.**
- 16. It helps if you have logged significant playing time the previous year.**

The following are guidelines for you to follow in order to be an effective leader:

- 1. Don't be loud or yell. Nobody likes to be yelled at. People will just get mad at you and therefore, will not listen to you.**
- 2. Get to know everyone on the team. This means you must talk to everybody on the team and get to know them individually.**
- 3. If you have an issue with someone that you are not happy about, take it up with him one on one and in private.**
- 4. Your job is to encourage players and bring them along, not criticize them.**
- 5. Never keep anything from the coaches that would be detrimental to the team or an individual.**
- 6. Don't be afraid to be unpopular or take an unpopular stand.**
- 7. Always use common sense and listen to your heart and what your gut tells you.**
- 8. Think often about what you admire in a leader and how you would like to be led.**
- 9. Organize the team when it's time to get started.**
- 10. Get the team to understand that the field and weight room is where we work not play around.**
- 11. Have a sense of humor and learn how to allow yourself to be the butt of a joke.**
- 12. If you want to challenge others, challenge the best players and your athletic equivalent. This means that leaders need to challenge each other.**

GOAL # 1 – WIN THE 2009 NCS CHAMPIONSHIP

TO DO THAT.....

WE MUST HAVE A DOMINANT RUNNING GAME;

TO DO THAT.....

WE MUST EXCEED 8 YARDS PER TEAM RUSH;

TO DO THAT.....

WE MUST DOMINATE THE PIT, AND THE ALLEY;

TO DO THAT

WE MUST.....

- 1) PLAY MISTAKE FREE.**
- 2) "B" - BLAST OFF; BEAT D ACROSS THE LOS**
- 3) "E" - EXPLODE; BLOW UP THE D-PLAYER'S INERTIA**
- 4) "E" - ELEVATE ; PUT HIM ON HIS HEELS**
- 5) "F" - FINISH; DRIVE HIM FOR OVER 4 SECONDS**

each INDIVIDUAL lineman must TERMINATE HIS D-player

TO PLAY "MISTAKE FREE",

WE MUST.....

- 1) KNOW OUR, AND OUR TEAMMATES ASSIGNMENTS**
- 2) COMMUNICATE WITH OUR TEAMMATES EFFECTIVELY BOTH ON AND OFF THE FIELD.**

TO "BLAST OFF"

WE MUST.....

- 1) BE IN A GOOD LINEMAN STANCE**
- 2) FOCUS ON THE "COUNT"**
- 3) BE AGGRESSIVE, MAINTAIN A BEAT THEM TO THE PUNCH. "ATTACK ON OFFENSE" ATTITUDE**

TO "EXPLODE"

WE MUST.....

- 1) ON CONTRACT, DELIVER A BLOW SO FORCEFUL IT STOPS THEIR FORWARD MOMENTUM**

TO "ELEVATE"

WE MUST....

- 1) STAY LOW ON CONTACT**
- 2) RISE THROUGH THE MAN AS WE DRIVE HIS WEIGHT BACK ON TO HIS HEELS**

TO "FINISH"

WE MUST....

- 1) HAVE OUR FEET FOLLOW THROUGH ON EXPLOSION AND BE RELENTLESS IN OUR PASSION FOR DOMINANCE.**

**IF YOU ARE GOING TO ACCOMPLISH YOUR GOAL THIS SEASON YOU MUST DO ALL OF THE ABOVE ALL OF THE TIME!!!
100% EFFORT — 100% OF THE TIME**

AND THEN YOU WILL KNOW WHY....

*******LINEMAN WIN GAMES*******

WHEN QUARTERBACK CALLS THE BLOCKING

THE RUNNING GAME

OUR PRIMARY BLOCKING ASSIGNMENTS ARE CALLED IN THE HUDDLE!

YOU WILL HEAR OPTION, VEER, DRIVE, TRAP, POWER, DRAW.

WHEN RUNNING OUR OUTSIDE OFFENSE (1,9,2,8,3, & 7 HOLES)
WE USE THE OUTSIDE-IN COUNTING METHOD

THE OUTSIDE-IN COUNTING METHOD
(OPTION AND VEER)

ASSIGNING STRONG SIDE NUMBERS TO D-PLAYERS

Always count from the "outside in" the Strong Safety (SS) is always #1.(Note: When the defense is in a three deep coverage, the SS will have come up and will look like an outside linebacker; he may or may not be #1 (count the PIT normally when no SS is outside of it).

From here on we will count lineman and linebackers only. (Note: Not by position but by depth from the line of scrimmage <LOS>). We don't care what number they are wearing, only WHERE THEY ARE LINED UP AT SNAP OF THE BALL! We will terminate all assigned D-players inside the PIT area. (Note: The PIT area is from the LOS approximately 4 yards into the defense area and 4 yards wider than our widest O-lineman.

When you count from the outside-in, act as if a line perpendicular to the LOS is being moved from the outside to the inside (toward our center) and the first D-player it touches is counted. If two D-players are stacked, we always count the LOS player first, and then the stacked player.

ASSINGNING WEAK SIDE NUMBERS TO D-PLAYERS

There is no difference in assigning numbers to D-players from the scheme on the strong side. (Our OT on the weak side begins with a "option" assignment of 1)

ASSIGNING STRONG SIDE BLOCKING NUMBERS TO O-PLAYERS

(strong or weak side starting numbers are different)

We count blocking assignments from our onside/playside, outside LOS lineman inward to our offguard position. E.G.; if we are strong right then:

- a. the tight end's assignment is #1
- b. the right tackle's assignment is #2
- c. the right guard's assignment is #3
- d. the center's assignment is #4
- e. the left guard's assignment is the #5 D-player

This outside-in counting method and assignment scheme is called option and veer and is the basis for all our outside running game.

ASSIGNING WEAK SIDE BLOCKING NUMBERS TO O-PLAYERS

The counting method is basically the same except, since there is no tight end, our tackle begins the outside/in counting process and blocks the #1 D-player, our guard the #2 D-player, etc....

OPTION

When option is called in the huddle, our onside tackle, guard, center, and offside guard, must add "1" to their OPTION blocking assignment numbered man; i.e. the tackle takes the (strong side OPTION assignment is #2 D-player, OPTION means +1) #3 D-player and the on guard takes the #4 (3+1) D-player, etc.....

VEER

When VEER is called in the huddle, our onside tackle, both guards and center must add "2" to their VEER blocking assignment numbered man; i.e. the tackle takes the #4 D-player and the onguard takes the #5 D-player, etc....

VARIATIONS TO THE ABOVE SCHEME:

TIGHT ENDS – You have the #1 man in Outside/In blocking schemes EXCEPT when we run 12.18 VEER or Lead at 1,9 VEER. When these plays are called to your side block down (back). This will often require calls with your Tackle.

OFFENSIVE TACKLES – These players require that you never let a down lineman free if he is on or taking your inside gap. It is an automatic SWITCH between him and the non-blocked option man. No call is needed this is just for you to know.

LINEMAN RULES

I. Stance and Alignment

1. Start stance with feet in proper width, hands on knees, back flat, arms straight, and head up watching defensive alignment counting defenders in the box.
2. Splits vary according to play. When there is an inside run play we want widest possible splits, 2 ½ foot splits. The most common plays that call for wide splits are 13&17 veer, 14&16 counter drives, all traps, and draws. Wide splits are necessary for inside run plays to create running lanes for our backs. The smaller the splits the less room backs will have for inside runs.
3. Screens call for wide splits. We want defensive lineman to have room to escape up field and not get hung -up. Wide splits also allow offensive lineman room to escape up to the second level of defenders.
4. Narrow splits. Narrow (small) splits are necessary to help cut down on defensive line penetration. Narrow splits are necessary to execute successful back blocks. Common plays that call for narrow splits are 22&38 powers zone and wedge plays. Tight end alignment on 12&18 veer should have narrow splits. Cut splits some (2ft) on 11&19 option.
5. PASS—all pass plays except screens should have small splits (1 foot). The reason for this is to cut down rush lanes. That means to allow the smallest amount of space for defensive lineman to rush through or linebackers to blitz through.

II. Line calls

1. Line calls must be made on EVERY play. Either you will make the call or acknowledge the call. Whatever the case EVERY lineman must verbally say something on every play.
2. The center and guards and tight end are the lineman that make most of the calls. The tackles are the ones who usually acknowledge the calls.
3. Line calls are: Richard, Larry, Lazier, Ram, Dradle, Baugh, Nacho, Tandum, Partner, Mine/Yours, Back, Help, Switch, Zone, Fan, No Casa, In, Solid, Stay, Tee, L. It is essential that all players wanting to play the offensive line, and be effective doing so, KNOW and UNDERSTAND these calls.

A. Richard—Richard means right. This call is made by the center. It means he is going to help to the right side of the line with the right guard. He will usually make a Richard call when the number of defenders inside the box are numbered more on the right side of the formation than on the left. In passing situations the center and right guard will be responsible for the DL-LB stack on the right side. This means that the left guard and left tackle will be responsible for the stack dl-lb on the left side of the formation. All linemen must hear this call so you know who your working with and who is your responsibility.

B. **LARRY**- LARRY means left. This means the center will help left and work with the left guard. The right guard and right tackle will work together. All responsibilities in a Larry call will be the same as in a Richard call only opposite.

C. **PARTNER**-This is a double team block. It means that two offensive linemen will drive a defensive linemen together 5 yards off the line of scrimmage. (LOS). This call is usually made by offensive tackle and some times by the guards.

D. **TANDUM**-This block starts out like a double team partner block. Once movement and position is established one lineman will come off the defender and move up to block a second level defender, usually a linebacker. Guards usually make this call. Tackles cannot call off guard making a tandem call. There are inside and outside tandems. You must know where the ball is going in order to determine if its an inside or outside tandem. Both linemen in the tandem block must keep their eyes on the second level defender in order to determine who will leave the partner in order to pick him up. This is important especially against a blitzing front.

E. **MINE\ YOURS**-A mine call simply means that the down linemen aligned on an offensive will become that offensive lineman's sole responsibility when he calls the defender mine "mine." He will engage that defensive linemen in a one on one block. This will allow other offensive linemen the freedom to escape to the second level immediately. An example would be a guard-tackle combo facing a defensive linemen in a 3 technique with a stack linebacker. This scenario usually calls for a tandem block. However, if the guard feels confident that he can execute the block one on one he calls "mine" and the tackle escapes to the second level linebacker immediately. A YOURS call means that the offensive lineman is going to have to pick up a stunting linebacker or other defender and abandon the down linemen on top of him. This means that down linemen becomes the sole responsibility of the linemen next to him. In the same scenario with the guard-tackle facing a 3-technique stack, the stack linebacker might be showing blitz through the A-gap. The guard will call "yours" to the tackle. The guard leaves the down linemen to pick up the stunting linebacker and the down linemen becomes the tackles responsibility. If the linebacker shows blitz in B-gap the tackle call "yours" to the guard meaning the down linemen becomes the guard's responsibility and the blitzing linebacker becomes the tackles. Mine and yours calls are frequent calls between the tackles and tight end.

F. **BACK**- Back block means that an offensive lineman is going to cover for a pulling lineman. This means he will block the defensive lineman covering the pulling lineman. Back blocks are essential in all traps and power plays. The center will always cover for a pulling guard—if the center is covered he will call “back” to the playside guard and then he will block the man covering the center. Technique is important—pull straight down the line keeping your head in front of the defenders between ball carrier and defender. Do not let defensive lineman penetrate the L.O.S.

G. **LAZER**- This is cross block. The advantage of a cross block is to get excellent angles on defensive lineman and the element of surprise. It means if you are working with a line mate he will block the man covering you and you will loop around and block the man over him or a second level defender. LAZER is a call between center and left guard with the center blocking the man on guard and left guard looping around to block the second level.

H. **RAM**- Ram is the same call as lazer except the cross block is between the center and right offensive guard.

I. **DRADLE**- This is a cross block that is executed between the guard and tackle with the guard covering the tackles man and the tackle looping around to the second level.

J. BAUGH- This a cross block between the tackle and guard with the tackle taking the guards man and the guard working around to the second level. There are not many situations where this call is used.

K. NACHO-This is a cross block that is executed with the tackle and tight end, with the tackle going first and the tight end working around through c gap to the second level.

L. HELP-A help call is usually a last minute call from a lineman that discovers he has to block 2 defenders – usually a blitzing linebacker. Help should be given by the next closest lineman. If the lineman giving help has a man over him he should pass the help call down the line so his man will be covered.

M. SWITCH-A switch call is made in blocking responsibilities between 2 linemen

N. ZONE-Zone call is much like wedge blocking the results are 3 linemen working together blocking to the point of attack. The desired results are 2 linemen working on a partner block with the third linemen working to the second level linebacker. This call is used on a 14 and 16 counter; and 13 and 17 zone for short yardage situations.

O. FAN- A FAN block is called by the weak offensive tackle on pass plays. This means he has 2 potential pass rushers to his outside with no back help. This call alerts his guard and center that they must block one man over to the side of the call. If center, guard, and tackle are all covered with the potential rusher outside the tackle the center must call the playside guard to cover the centers man.

P.**NO CASA**- This call is made by the Tight End to his tackle that he is leaving on a pass route and will not be available for pass protection help.

Q.**SOLID**- Call made in the huddle by the quarterback calling for the tight end to stay in and pass protect.

R.**STAY**- Call made in the huddle by the quarterback to the weakside back to stay in and pass protect to the weakside.

S.**IN**- Made by the playside guard on traps to let the trapping guard know if he is going to back the offside linebacker or influence the down lineman on him.

III. Trap Rules And Notes

1. Trapper will always trap the first man past the center.
2. Trapper will cut his splits to 1 ½ feet and work up into the line on his trap route.
3. Playside guard will have a wide split and call to the trapper guard "in"- for influence or "back"- for back block. Influence block if the defensive lineman is playing aggressive hit and read technique. Influence if the down lineman is obstructing your route to the offside linebacker.
4. Tackles will take wide splits so they can make a free release to the second level. Your aiming point is for the ass of the inside down lineman anticipating the inside linebackers will step up to take away the trap. Make backers play over the top.
5. Tackles are always blocking their side inside linebackers. One exception to this rule may be when a tackle has the tight end to their side and his route is obstructed by a defensive lineman, then he is to call "switch" with the tight end and trade blocking responsibilities.

IV. Counter Drive

1. Center will call Richard or Larry to determine which guard he will work with on the tandem. Whatever defensive lineman is playing in the one technique will determine his call; he will call to the side of the technique. If he calls a Larry the center and left guard will work the stack and the left tackle will block the down lineman closest to him (4,5, or 6 technique).

2. In a Pro 4-3 front the center will call "even". This means that the blocking responsibilities will be man on blocking. Versus a pro 4-3 front the center and guards will work Laser and Roger calls to move the 1 technique.
3. Offensive front will never block a 9 technique or defenders responsible for pitch and QB
4. This play hits 80% of the time through A-gaps.

V. 11 + 19 Option

1. This is an outside in counting system with + 1 added to your count
2. T.E. will always block the 1 man with an outside release, not adding to the count.
3. All interior lineman will have to count to determine their man to block and who they will be working with
4. Never turn 2 outside defenders loose that are on the L.O.S.
5. Option away from the T.E.- the tackle to the play side will block the one or two man whichever is the easiest to block.

VI. Powers

1. Strength of power play is to get excellent blocking angles on defenders.
2. Defensive line penetration is a major reason for defeating the power.
3. Cut to smaller splits to stop defensive line penetration (1 ½).
4. Offside linebacker is dangerous defender if he reads the pullers. The playside LB is dangerous if he is blitzing.
5. Playside guard, tackle, T.E. are always back blocking with one moving or sliding from a tandem to the offside linebacker.
6. Pulling guard kicks out the 8 or 9 technique using pull steps not trap steps. If the 8 or 9 technique squeezes the T.E. down the line; the pulling guard must decide weather to kick him out or log him in. If the pulling guard logs the 9 the pull tackle goes around the guard and heads up field on the first man that shows.
7. Center always backs for the pulling guard.
8. On a one or nine power the T.E. will block the 7,8, or 9 technique. We want him blocked in so we can run outside the T.E.

VII. Passing Plays

1. There are 4 different types of pass blocking: play action, drop back pocket, sprint, and screen.
2. All pass plays require small splits except screens.
3. It is very important for all lineman to know when the back to their side is staying in to pass block.

A. Play Action Pass

1. On play action pass the offense must fool the defense into believing we are running the ball. This is accomplished by aggressive, fire-out blocking. The first

two steps must start out as run block steps. After elevation is accomplished then gather and get into a pass set.

2. On most play action passes the weakside tackle has no back help to his side.
3. Pass block responsibilities are the same as in a pocket pass set.
4. The weakside of the line has no back help on 13+17 y pop; 14+16 counter pass, 12+18 veer pass, lead at 1+9 veer pass.

Pass Blocking Technique

1. Our drop back pass blocking technique is called quick set.
2. Make a short initial step toward the down lineman, and sink your hips. "stab" down the lineman with a forceful extended arm, and maintain separation.
 - A. Keep shoulders square to L.O.S.
 - B. Keep back flat head up, bulled neck, front numbers showing, butt down.
 - C. Feet wide and active.
 - D. Do not chase defensive lineman on a loop.
 - E. Keep position and do not create open gaps for defensive lineman to run through.
 - F. Keep elbows in and thumbs up. Punch and separate, retract hands and repeat punch.
 - G. Do not grab defenders outside the frame. Grab breastplate of defenders shoulder pads.
 - H. Never grab jersey

I. DEFENSIVE TECHNIQUES

1. In order to simplify the understanding of defensive alignment we will use a numbering system to identify defensive positioning. For example; if we say a defensive lineman is in a 7 technique, this means a defender is playing on the inside eye or shoulder of the T.E. If we say he is playing a 3 technique, it means outside the eye or shoulder of the offensive guard. Head-up on the guard is a 2 technique. If a defender is not on an offensive lineman then he will be designated playing A, B, C gap.