9th Grade Baseball

A tremendous amount of time during the offseason was dedicated to revamping 9th grade baseball. Significant changes are occurring and we wanted to take time to discuss with 9th grade parents.

Initial Challenge:

To this point you have played travel ball through AYBA. This scenario has allowed there to be multiple teams at each level with different levels of play (AA, AAA). Each team is composed of around 11-12 players meaning significant playing time is allowed for each player and team.

9th grade baseball brings all of these teams together on 1 team. Usually high numbers. This presents challenges for us, the staff, the players, and parents.

There is no way around this, and we move forward with what we have and our goal is to have your first experience with HS baseball be a positive one.

Roster Reductions:

- Roster reductions are not allowed at 9th grade.
- This is a ISD 206 policy and cannot be changed without approval through the school board.
- Many of the teams in our section allow roster reductions at 9th grade.

MSHSL Rules (New 2025)

- 9th grade is now part of the MSHSL
- This means they need to abide by the same rules for all JV and Varsity teams
    - Limited to 24 games over 20 dates
    - Regulation games
    - Penalty for not following rules results in ineligibility from Section Tournament

Schedule

- “9th” and “B” is the same thing for 9th grade
- It is coded on this based on the contracts between the schools

Uniform/Attire

- Players will be provided a hat and jersey during the first week of practice ($20)
- Pants - we encourage you to buy your own pants. White pants with red piping. Brand does not matter (we have extra used pants for those who need them)
- Helmets - we provide helmets, but they are used. If you purchase a helmet it must be Matte Black and can be used for the entirety or HS and summer baseball

Locker Room

- 9th grade uses the locker room more than any other group
- During the first week coaches will get locks for the players for the locker room
- Any disruptive inappropriate behavior in the locker room will have zero tolerance. Removal from the team could be a consequence for this.

Games

- Games will be single 7 inning games unless changes occur from other teams. We hope to be able to notify you of this prior to the game beginning. In the past teams have played two 5 inning games.
- In the event teams have numbers for 2 teams, there will be some dates where two games will be going on at the same time. Factors below determine whether or not this can happen
    - Need to see what our numbers are to see if we can do it
    - Need to see what other teams numbers are and if they can do it
    - Field availability is a key factor
    - Umpire Availbility
        - This is the number 1 factor in being able to add games to a schedule.
        - Any interest in umpiring?
    - Whether or not we are maxed out with the 24/20 rule imposed by MSHSL
- Parents will need to be patient and give grace on this. I have been working with Ben on this for the past couple months and we have to wait to see what other teams number are
- Our plan is to communicate at the beginning of each week what the plan is for 9th grade games that week. (Hopeful)

Playing Time

- Simply Put - playing time will not be equal
- The best players will have significant playing time
- Coaches have been directed by me to follow this philosophy
- It is likely that some players will not play at all during a game.

Travel

- At this point, all players will travel to away games.

Practice

- It is our goal to not to have parents have to drive back to school to drop their children off for practice
    - Practice for 9th grade will always be right after school
    - Indoor practice will be shared with softball (3:30 - 4:30)
    - When outside practice will go to around 5:00 p.m.
    - Wednesday there is no physical practice when indoors (unless space is found)
        - Players will lift after school these days as a team (3:20)
        - Coaches will meet with players for the following until 4:30
            - Mental Game
            - Situation Game
            - Signs
            - Other factors baseball related