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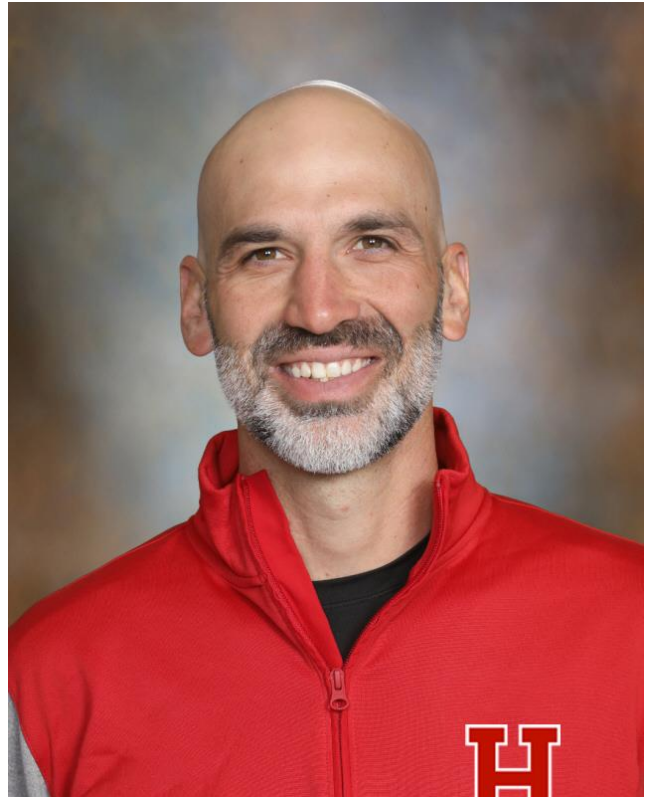
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Contact: Taryn Retzlaff

NSAA Phone: 402-489-0386

LINCOLN, NE — The Nebraska School Activities Association (NSAA) is proud to recognize Coach Josh Dean of Hemingford High School as this week's "Above and Beyond" Award recipient.

A coach, mentor, and culture-changer, Coach Dean has transformed not only his football program but the entire school climate through his leadership, accountability, and unwavering commitment to student-athletes.



When Coach Dean took the helm of the Hemingford football program, it was a team on the decline. Today, it is a program with back-to-back state playoff appearances and, more importantly, a group of young men who excel both on the field and in the classroom. Coach Dean's greatest win isn't just found in the scoreboard—it's in the hearts and minds of the students he's helped grow into leaders.

"Coach Dean is one of those special coaches who builds character just as much as he builds athletes," said Todd Westover, Hemingford's activities director. "His impact goes far beyond wins and losses—he's changed the culture of our school."

One of Coach Dean's most impactful changes came from establishing a system of academic accountability, directly involving teachers in the process and holding student-athletes responsible for their performance in the classroom. The results speak volumes: not a single football player was on the ineligible list during the entire fall season—a remarkable achievement that earned recognition from the NSAA Academic Excellence Program.

But his efforts don't stop there. Coach Dean has implemented leadership initiatives and commitment-building programs that challenge his players to be role models for future generations. These efforts have led to a complete cultural turnaround at Hemingford—recognized not only by the local community, but by athletic conferences across the region.

Coach Dean also sets the tone for respect and professionalism on the sidelines. After a concern was raised by game officials early in the season regarding an assistant's conduct, Coach Dean immediately addressed the issue, holding his staff to a higher standard. Since then, officials have consistently praised Hemingford's positive and respectful environment—something directly attributed to Coach Dean's leadership.

"Head coaches like Josh Dean are the reason our school has such a strong, positive reputation," said Westover. "We are incredibly blessed to have him."

Through his high standards, passion for education, and deep commitment to his players' growth as people, Coach Josh Dean is redefining what it means to be a coach. The NSAA is honored to celebrate his outstanding contributions with this week's "Above and Beyond" Award.



