

THE CHARGER WAY



WHERE CHARACTER MATTERS

THE CHARGER WAY...

Where Character Matters

In the fall of 2013, a group of Hamilton High School coaches collaborated with the goal of creating a unified character education program. Born out of those discussions we created **The Charger Way...Where Character Matters** program.

Student representatives of our athletic programs met with staff in the months of October and November of 2013. Conversations began with perceptions others may have of athletes compared to perceptions athletes may have of themselves. Based on that dialogue, the group developed a list of positive character traits that all Hamilton athletes could follow. Agreement was reached on five words as focal points for the Charger Way. Specific behaviors that are manifested in those five words were then created with the goal to communicate these as expectations for all athletes.

The group decided that the focal point and foundation of the Charger Way would be **Character**. We believe that character defines who we are. Our actions as teammates, students and community members will form the perception of who we are and that perception becomes one reality.

With CHARACTER as the foundation, we chose to focus on four characteristics that help define who we are, with the hope that each Hamilton athlete will exemplify these characteristics in sport, school, community, and in life. The most important thing is the development of the student-athlete. By instilling these in sport, the hope is our athletes will incorporate this into their lifestyle, school, and community. In conclusion, we strongly feel that by attending Hamilton High School and participating in athletics at Hamilton High School, our students will become productive members of society.

The following represents some of those expectations.

The Charger Way... ***Where Character Matters***

Character

Character comes from a Greek word that means “to scratch and engrave.” Character is “the qualities and features that make up and distinguish an individual.”

Every single issue we deal with today is a character issue. We live in a day when “image” is more important than character and “style” counts more than substance. We look at outward appearances and ignore the essential qualities that lead to excellence. It’s time to change our priorities.

Character is the difference-maker not only in improving performance, attitude and teamwork, but also in producing quality people on and off the field or court. To engrave means to “impress deeply.” Let’s make every effort to engrave the character qualities needed to be complete.

When Martin Luther King said he looked forward to the day when all Americans would be judged solely "by the content of their *character*," he was talking about a person's essential qualities.

In Quentin Tarantino’s *Pulp Fiction*, a character named Winston Wolf tells a young woman named Raquel, "Just because you *are* a character doesn't mean you *have* character." The line illustrates three different senses of the word, which can mean "moral strength or reputation" (what Raquel lacks), "a person in a work of fiction" (what Mr. Wolf and Raquel literally are), or, by extension, "a colorful personality" (what Raquel has). A fourth usage is "the distinctive nature of a person or thing," a meaning reflected in the word's origins. In Greek, a *kharaktēr* was a stamping tool, used to give something a distinctive mark.

Why is character important?

- Defines who we are
- Everything we do is based on our character

To exemplify character, Charger athletes will:

- Show **RESPECT**
- Strive for **EXCELLENCE**
- Be people of high **INTEGRITY**
- Be **RESPONSIBLE** to family, teachers, school, team, and community

The Charger Way... ***Where Character Matters***

Respect

Respect: To hold in esteem or honor. To show care, consideration or regard for persons, places or things. Respect comes in many forms; self, others (coaches, teachers, parents, officials, teammates, friends, elders), property (fields, equipment).

Respect is a way of treating or thinking about something or someone. If you *respect* your teacher, you admire her and treat her well.

People respect others for many reasons. People often respect authority, like teachers or police officers. People show respect for age and wisdom, like grandparents. You show respect by being polite and kind. For a lot of people, taking your hat off is a sign of respect. When people are insulted or treated badly, they feel they haven't been treated with respect. You can respect things as well as people. Saying the Pledge of Allegiance shows respect to your country.

Why is respect important?

- It is your image (one's perception becomes one's reality)
- Give respect, get respect
- It is an expectation

To exemplify respect, Charger athletes will:

- Respect coaches, athletes, teachers, administrators, custodians, school staff, school, community, teams, and THEMSELVES.
- Respect the school name—Represent in a positive manner.
- Address all coaches and teachers formally, i.e., Mr., Mrs., or better yet....Sir, Ma'am.
- Stand with both feet firmly planted on the ground, hands at sides or right hand over heart, head bowed or looking up to flag during the National Anthem/Pledge of Allegiance. This is not a time for individualism. Stand still and be quiet.
- Practice the Golden Rule; Treat others as you would want to be treated.
- Never address officials with complaints. This includes negative body language. Allow coaches to communicate with officials.
- Appreciate and follow rules.
- Respect the traditions of their sport.
- Take care of all equipment.
- Respect property. Example: clean up after each other—school/games.
- Be on time to all classes, practices, etc.
- Respect the opportunity to play and compete—most important represent Hamilton HS. Gain an understanding of the awesome opportunity to participate in a long and storied program of athletic excellence and perpetuate feelings that tradition.

The Charger Way...

Where Character Matters

Integrity

Integrity is a concept of consistency of actions, values, methods, measures, principles, expectations, and outcomes. In ethics, integrity is regarded as the honesty and truthfulness or accuracy of one's actions. Integrity can be regarded as the opposite of hypocrisy.

Integrity is adherence to moral and ethical principles: soundness of moral character; honesty. *Your integrity is your gift to yourself and to the world.*

Integrity is a personal quality of fairness that we all aspire to — unless you're a dishonest, immoral scoundrel, of course.

Having integrity means doing the right thing in a reliable way. It's a personality trait that we admire, since it means a person has a moral compass that doesn't waiver. It literally means having "wholeness" of character, just as an *integer* is a "whole number" with no fractions. Physical objects can display integrity, too — if you're going over a rickety old bridge that sways in the wind, you might question its structural integrity.

Living in integrity means that everything we say and everything we do are true reflections of what we value, what's important to us. Think about what your behavior says about you. Does it clearly show others what you value? Do you show up as honest and committed, or dishonest and indifferent? Are you spending your time with the people and activities you value, or is your focus elsewhere?

When we live in integrity we are sincere and true to ourselves—we don't say or think one thing and do another. People trust and respect us, our relationships are solid, and we feel good about ourselves. Those positive feelings from others and within ourselves reinforce our values and build our reputation and self-esteem, leading us to greater success in all areas of our lives.

Why is integrity important?

- It is about trust.
- Respect yourself, school and traditions.
- Consistency on and off the field, in the classroom and community.
- Defines who you are and others.

To exemplify integrity, Charger athletes will:

- Respect themselves and the competition.
- Compete to better themselves and those around them.
- Be consistent with actions and words—Tell the truth—Relationships are built on trust.
- Walk the Walk-- Lead by example in everything.
- Refuse to cheat themselves or others.
- Do the right thing all the time and apologize if wrong.
- Stand up and speak up when faced with lack of integrity in teammates/classmates. "If it is to be, then it's up to me."
- Refuse to compromise on matters of principle.

The Charger Way...

Where Character Matters

Responsibility

Responsibility: Something for which one is responsible; a duty, obligation, or burden. A moral obligation to behave correctly toward or in respect of individuals. The ability to control personal behavior. Responsibility is taking care of your duties, answering for your actions and being accountable.

A *responsibility* is something you're required to do as an upstanding member of a community. If you're in a band, it's your *responsibility* to learn the songs and show up to practice on time.

Responsibility comes from the Latin *responsus*, which means “to respond”. There are actually a few different definitions of the noun. It can be another word for trustworthiness, as in, "He demonstrated his *responsibility* by showing up to practice on time." It can also be used to describe the social force that motivates us to take on individual responsibilities, as in, "A sense of *responsibility* drove him to memorize all of the songs."

Why is being responsible important?

- Keeps you accountable for your actions.
- It shows self-discipline.
- People know they can count on you.

To exemplify responsibility, Charger athletes will:

- Show up for school/class on time.
- Attend school.
- Make responsible choices.
- Not skip workouts or portions of workouts (SAS).
- Maintain balance between sports, academics, and work.
- Know their role and the expectations that go along with it.
- Hold each other (teammates and classmates) accountable.

The Charger Way...

Where Character Matters

Excellence

Excellence: means greatness — the very best. Achieving *excellence* is never easy to do.

Excellence is a quality that people really appreciate, because it's so hard to find. Excellence is the quality of excelling, of being truly the best at something. Getting an A+ shows excellence. Michael Jordan's basketball career was filled with excellence. We love Picasso and Shakespeare for their excellence. When you see excellence, you should appreciate the work that went into it. So much in the world falls short of excellence.

1. the state or quality of excelling or being exceptionally good; extreme merit; superiority
2. an action, characteristic, feature, etc., in which a person excels

Why is striving for excellence important?

- It will spread to other people/sports programs.
- Show refinement and dignity to yourselves and others.
- Help you reach your goals in everyday life.

To exemplify excellence, Charger athletes will:

- Show great effort and attitude.
- Step out of their comfort zone.
- Earn respect.
- Show sportsmanship.
- Be clean and honest.
- Give back and contribute.
- Be unified.
- Will not complain, whine or make excuses.
- Support all sports and athletes—PRIDE.
- Hold each other accountable.
- Excel inside and outside of the classroom.



CHARGER WAY...

WHERE CHARACTER MATTERS

MY PLEDGE

I WILL LEARN, SHARE, AND INTEGRATE THESE CHARACTERISTICS IN MY SCHOOL, COMMUNITY, AND SPORT.

CHARACTER-I will be a person of high character.

RESPECT-I will represent my school, community, and sport in a positive manner at all times.

INTEGRITY-I will be honest.

RESPONSIBILITY-I will be accountable for my own actions.

EXCELLENCE-I will do my best at all times.

NAME _____ DATE _____