



STAR SC 2015 Vision Document

Mission

STAR Soccer Club strives to provide area youth with quality training in the many aspects of the game of soccer. We hope to develop self-discipline, dedication and confidence in each athlete. We believe the competitive athletic experience can enhance social development, contribute to mental and physical health and teach the values of teamwork and responsibility. Overall, STAR Soccer Club wants to foster a lifetime appreciation of the game of soccer, individual player progress, and SPORTSMANSHIP.

Vision

STAR Soccer Club will be lauded as one of the best clubs in the Midwest for developing great people who also happen to be excellent soccer players. We will accomplish this by building a culture of excellent coaching/training/playing coupled with behaviors, attitudes, and values that create men and women who succeed beyond the game.

Club Goals

Engage Families – We want to remain a community club. We care about the entire family and not the single player. To do this we have to provide programming, resources, and activities that allow families to engage with us. We will communicate clearly with families, empower them to be collaborative partners in their child’s development, and give them responsibility to be involved with the club.

Create High Value and Low Barrier – A community club has players who start as Juniors and stay for the remainder of their career. To do this we not only have to empower, encourage, and engage players, but we must provide high quality coaching and facilities to our players. We have to provide value at every turn for them, giving them reasons to want to remain a member of our family. We will be the club that provides the best training, coaching, and products at a fraction of the cost. The barriers for players to enter and remain in our club must be low.

Create People Beyond the Game – We must recognize that our players will go on to be successful at something other than sport if we provide an environment that develops the

person first and player second. We will strive to create a person development model in our club that focuses on transferring attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs that guide them beyond the game itself. It is not about creating the best soccer players, it is about creating quality people who also happen to be excellent at the game of soccer.

Values

STAR Soccer Club's values are not words spoken at training or written in a binder. They are a living, breathing representation of the players, coaches, and parents in our club. Our club will cultivate a culture of excellence. We will create champions who excel beyond the game and to do this we have to live these values every time we wear the badge. These values radiate from the STAR badge as beacons...spotlights on the people behind the badge. Learn them, know them, live them.



- **Fun** – Fun is defined as a feeling of enjoyment or an enjoyable time. People are hardwired to seek fun. This is one of the emotional needs inherent in all of us. For STAR Soccer Club, Fun is the most important value. Recent research shows that 70% of all soccer players quit by age 13. The primary reason for quitting is that they no longer have fun. Soccer is an opportunity to learn valuable life skills, grow as people, and be empowered to excel beyond the game, but only if children stay in the game long enough to learn. Make it fun and they will stay.
- **Integrity** – Integrity is defined as a firm adherence to a code of especially moral values, an unimpaired condition, incorruptibility, and a quality of being honest and fair.

Integrity is the willingness to keep our high values incorruptible, even in the face of pressure. In today's high pressure youth sports world, integrity represents our willingness to remain intact, morally, even in the face of this pressure to win, develop, excel. Our decisions to do the right thing at STAR Soccer Club will not be impaired. If character is moral excellence, integrity is the wall we build to protect that excellence.

- **Respect** – Respect is defined as high or special regard. This refers to feeling that someone or something is important, serious, and deserves our high regard. For STAR respect extends to the game, the coaches, our teammates, our fans and parents, our opponents, and the referees. For our players, the guidepost is to treat ourselves with respect. If we have personal respect, we will respect those around us as well. For our coaches, research shows that players who remain in the game report they feel respected by their coaches and have a mutual respect for those coaches. You want you players to excel, show them respect.
- **Evolving** – Evolving is defined as to change or develop slowly often into a better, more complex, or more advanced state. For STAR Soccer Club, evolving represents our constant process of learning, growing, getting better. As players and coaches we should strive each day to slowly become better players, coaches, people. We should be seeking opportunities to learn on all fronts: the game, the skills, values, life skills, human interaction, and beyond. If each of us is committed to evolving our game and our club, we will all become better, more complex, more advanced people who will excel in life.
- **Tenacity** – Tenacity is defined as the quality or state of being persistent. It is courage in the face of extreme difficulty, moral strength to resist hardship and opposition, the ability to keep an unbroken spirit, and a resolution or unwillingness to give up easily. This value represents work ethic, resolve, persistence, mettle, courage, and strength of spirit. For our players tenacity is a style of play, a belief we can accomplish all things, a resolve to take the moral high ground, and a refusal to quit even in the hardest of moments.
- **Commitment** – Commitment is defined as a promise to be loyal to something, a promise to do something, an attitude to work very hard to support something. For STAR Soccer Club, commitment represents our players' willingness to work hard for their teammates and their own success. It is an agreement to work for the good of the team, to adhere to the values of the club, and to be loyal for the sake of their own success.
- **Character** – Character is defined as moral excellence and firmness. Our players will make all decisions based on what is right and not on what wins. Another definition of character is a set of qualities shared by many people in a group. The character of our club should be a shared moral high ground. We represent something greater than ourselves when we wear the STAR bade and will always seek to make our club proud of who we are as individuals and as a whole.
- **Teamwork** – Teamwork is defined as work done by several associates with each doing a part but all subordinating person prominence to the efficiency of the whole. Teamwork

is dependent on collaboration, communication, compromise. Our players will learn to work together with others by working for what is best for the team and club. We all play a part in each other's success and will work toward mutual excellence.

- **Leadership** – Leadership is the power or ability to lead other people. Leaders set standards. They take risks. They are willing to do the right thing even when it is the hardest thing to do. As members of STAR Soccer Club, we should all seek to be leaders of each other, of our opponents, and of others in our lives. We should be willing to take risks, set standards, encourage others, and do what is right.
- **Family** – Family is defined as a group of people united under certain convictions or a common affiliation. For STAR Soccer Club, family is our united love of the game, our belief in being of high moral standards, and our willingness to work for each other. At STAR, we will treat anyone with a love for this game and a belief in personal excellence through sport as part of our family. This includes opponents, referees, fans.

Coaching Philosophy

Develop Mastery - Our coaching philosophy stems from the desire to create a mastering environment for our players. Mastery is accomplished through allowing our players to have the freedom to risk and thus learn. We expect our players to have the courage to fail, the honesty to admit it, and the fortitude to fix it. In other words, they are expected to try new skills and tactics. If a child fails, we expect him or her to be able to learn from it by deciding what it was that went wrong, and then we provide the opportunity to fix it next time.

Encourage Risk - We DO NOT punish players for risk. We do not want our players to have fear of failure and do not want mistakes to hinder the learning process.

Require Maximum Effort - If players are exerting maximum effort, continually learning from both successes and failures, and are empowered to risk they will be playing in a mastery environment.

Demand Excellence in a Positive Way -Coaches are expected demand excellence out of players, but are also expected to do so in a positive and encouraging manner. Words are vital in the development of athletes and people, and our coaches WILL use words that build players and people. When discussing mistakes, players will be honest, but will also be encouraged to try again with a solution. Coaches will treat players with respect, positivity, empathy, and dignity. There is no place for negativity in our club.

Provide Detailed Instruction - Praise or criticism extended to players is to be detailed, specific, and measurable. Players need to know exactly what they did right or wrong, why it was right or wrong, and how to correct or replicate it.

If coaches encourage, they move on, but if coaches yell, they dwell. We want players who move on and develop.

Encourage Problem-Solving - Coaches are to create a problem-solving environment for players. Training sessions and games are to be coached in a manner that asks players to solve the riddles of the games on their own. Provide cues and clues, give advice and feedback, but let them solve the game.

Keep Engaged and Active - Keep players moving and engaged. Put them in activities and small sided games that require constant movement, analysis, and problem-solving. Let games teach your key learning markers.

Develop Progressive Themes - Prepare sessions that follow a progressive theme and make that theme clear to players, including any key coaching points. Training sessions should build on each other throughout the season, helping to build overall players.

Communicate Clearly and Frequently – Coaches should communicate often with parents and players. Make allies of parents by keeping them in the loop on what you are thinking and why you are doing the things you do. Parents in the know will be patient and understanding. Players should be clearly told expectations, given prompt and positive feedback, and should be empowered to seek answers from coaches. You cannot over-communicate. Communication cures many club ailments.

Coach Beyond the Game - Finally, focus on foundational learning, connect everything you teach to the game and beyond in a bigger picture, and coach for the love of the game. Most youth athletes move on to succeed at something other than sport and it is our obligation to prepare them to succeed beyond the game.

Player Priority

STAR SC puts the player first. We place the highest priority on our players over anything else when making decisions. We know that decisions we make today will have an impact tomorrow and in the future and thus strive to make decisions that are ethically sound and player-focused. STAR officials endeavor to display the highest integrity and accountability when making decisions and will not sacrifice the long term health and welfare of players for short term rewards. We treat all players with respect, dignity, compassion, grace, and honesty.

The priority of decisions is as follows:

Player > Team > Club > Coach

No coach is to put his or her own success or welfare above the player, team or club. No official in our club is to put the welfare or success of the club over the player. The player is our number one priority.

Playing Environment

Problem-Solving – Players should be encouraged to problem-solve in training and in games. Coaches should provide advice and cues to help, but allow players to develop analytical thinking skills. Teach them technical and tactical concepts and allow those concepts to drive their problem-solving. Ask players questions to let them develop problem-solving skills (What could you have done differently? What is another option? What if we did this?)

Risk, Reflect, Retry– Encourage players to take risks. Mastery learning is predicated on a model of risk, reflect, retry. Players will master a skill or concept if they are able to take a risk, reflect on the outcome, and retry with different techniques or tactics. DO NOT punish players for mistakes. Use them as learning tools. If we punish a player for a mistake it teaches them to avoid risk and they will not try anything new.

The Game As a Teacher – In games, do not “joystick coach” by telling players every little thing they should do. Allow them to play, explore, risk, learn. You can provide cues and clues for them. Call out options, ask questions, point out opportunities. Use games as tools for teaching by allowing players to see the problems and answers in the run of play. Players on the bench should be engaged with you so you can ask them questions, show them cues, get them to problem solve through watching. Players on the field can be pulled aside to be taught cues or told when they sub out of the game.

Team Accountability – Create an environment where players are encouraged to teach and learn from each other. Get them to provide each other with feedback. Teach them to positively coach each other. Players learn well through teaching the game. They should be holding each other accountable in games and in training.

Playing Style

Playing style and formation should be fluid and dictated by the personnel, the weather and field conditions, and the opponent. STAR Soccer Club players should be empowered to understand multiple formations and styles, and should also have a basic knowledge of how each position on the field functions within various formations and styles.

The overarching club style will be a **penetrative attacking style of play that uses possession as a weapon to control the game and the opponent. Our players will be problem-solvers who evolve their game during the run of play. We will attack efficiently and defend with discipline and organization.**

Defense

- Press high and force teams to play square or back
- Everyone defends behind the ball
- 6 Seconds to recover the ball after losing possession
- Last offensive player to touch it is first defender
- Track players back diagonally toward middle of field and cover passing lanes
- Stay ball and goal side
- Defend as a team, communicate clearly, collaborate
- Pressure, Cover, Balance defense
- GK and Center Backs lead the defense

Offense

- Possess with a purpose. Possession is a weapon/tool/resource. We use it to move the other team, create imbalances, develop attacks, control the game. We don't sacrifice possession for panicked play, but we won't sacrifice our playing philosophy for purposeless possession. It is not the philosophy of our club, but a tool to accomplish our philosophy.
- Priority of passing is positive, neutral, negative – vertical play
- Play from back is dictated by pressure of the opponent
- Pass and get ready – all players should be moving to angles of support
- GK is a field player and should be used when needed
- Score! Be creative in the attack, force defense to defend, take risks
- Play quickly with fewer touches and more ball movement
- Restarts should be taken quickly if available
- Receive balls open to field and on deadly foot
- Attacking 3rd priority is shoot>dribble to shoot>pass to player who can shoot

Both

- All teams should learn multiple formations and playing styles
- All players should learn multiple positions and perspectives
- Playing style is dictated by: Personnel, Opponent, Field/Game conditions
- Problem-solve – risk, reflect, retry
- Communicate clearly and effectively
- GK should distribute quickly and priority is roll short>throw longer>hold & punt
- When opposing team kicks off count out 6 seconds to touch the ball
- Seek joy on the field
- Be passionate about the game and getting better at it

Habits of Excellence

We will teach our players Habits of Excellence that will not only make them great players, but great people. Our goal is to create great people who happen to excel at soccer too. To accomplish this we must begin to model and teach habits that create excellent behaviors. The following is a list of Habits of Excellence promoted by STAR SC.

- **Be Ready to Play** – Players show up on time, geared up, and ready to play
- **Everything at game speed** – Everything we do will be at game speed. We will play like we train. We will also run to get drinks, run when called in by coaches, and run on and off the field of play.
- **Line your bags** – all bags should be lined up orderly as a group
- **Greet your coaches and teammates** – All players must greet coaches and teammates on arrival
- **Thank your trainers and coaches** – Coaches and trainers should receive a handshake and a thank you after each session
- **Shake the referee's hand** – Referees deserve respect. Shake their hands and thank them
- **Shake every opposing player's hand and Thank the opposing coach** – Respect them as competitors, thank opposing coaches for also being teachers of the game
- **Shirts tucked in and socks pulled up** – Every game or training begins with shirts tucked in and socks pulled up
- **Thank the parents** – After every game, players should job over to thank their parents with a raised clap of the hands
- **Address referees properly** – Sir or Ma'am. When being spoken to by a ref, stand tall and look them in the eye. Do not argue with refs. When presented with a card, stand and take it with class.
- **No cussing or negative language** – This includes words like “suck”. We will always present a positive and professional tone of speech
- **Honor the Rules / Defend the Game** – All rules are to be followed. Character is what you are when no one is looking, so rules will be followed even when no one is watching. Defend the game against those who choose to break the rules.
- **Ask questions respectfully** – Seek guidance. If you do not understand something ask. If you do not agree, be respectful in your approach. Always seek to learn from every situation.
- **Take Pride in Your Badge** – Always wear your STAR gear with pride and professionalism. Show others WE ARE STAR through excellent values and behavior on and off the field. Remember that we are ONE CLUB and encourage, help, cheer your fellow teams. Attend each other's games, give back by mentoring younger players, get involved and create a family atmosphere.