



# KEVIN KOHLER

## BEYOND THE COURT

By Lisa Kaitlyn | Photos by Kiley Hartzler

For Kevin Kohler, it's bigger than just the game. As Kevin was preparing to start his first season as the head boys' basketball coach and Athletic Director of Lighthouse Preparatory Academy, he sat down and shared with SLM his philosophy in his approach to high school sports and a strategy that reaches beyond the court.

Although Kohler has a background of nearly thirty years in public education and coaching, Kohler expressed that he's learning a lot in his new position. Kohler said of adjusting to the

new position, "It's a lot more technology. The last time I was an athletic director, it was probably 20 years ago. I took Microcomputer for School Administrators in 1983. That class isn't very relevant anymore. I'm not Mr. Technology, but I'm learning it a little bit." It may take him a minute to adjust, but Kohler is up for the challenge. The most challenging part may actually be scheduling practice times for the gym. "We've got this one little gym here," Kohler explained. "We're really happy to have this little gym

because before that they had to just find gyms around town and there are several teams." It's going to be a tight schedule to manage, but Kohler is optimistic.

Some changes may come as an easier adjustment than the technological challenge Kohler has experienced. LPA is a very different environment. Kohler said it's "almost polar opposite" in comparison to other schools where they may function on a six-days-a-week practice and four-days-a-week lifting schedule year-round.

Kohler said, "That's not the case here. We're competing and this is a college preparatory school, so there's far more emphasis on academics. I sat through teachers' meetings today; the one thing that they pulled out was the comparison of ACT scores compared to the rest of the state. [It's] pretty impressive here. There is a different emphasis." Faith is also a great influence at Lighthouse. Kohler has a background in ministry, spending nearly twenty years pastoring part-time. At LPA Kohler has the opportunity to coordinate his background in both ministry and education.

Kohler places great emphasis not just on his athletes' performance, but also on their attitude, particularly their humility. He said, "From a biblical view, scripture tells us that we're to humble ourselves and appreciate what we've been blessed with and that we are to demonstrate to other people. It's not all about us. It's about Jesus."

Kohler believes that the impact of high school sports reaches far beyond the court. He explained that high school sports programs have the opportunity to set the stage for life's journey. Kohler does not want this

influence to stop when his student athletes graduate. He does not want the glory time of their lives to be when they were sixteen years old and made those winning shots. Rather, he sees that high school sports play an important role in preparing students for the rest of their lives, teaching them about competition and preparedness. "And," Kohler added, "to be able to understand that you're not a loser just because you lost a ballgame. To understand that because you won, you haven't placed yourself ahead of someone else. You're just people playing a game."

What can the community, fans, and parents expect from the student athletes at Lighthouse Preparatory Academy? Kohler answered, "I hope that at the conclusion of the game, they'll know that they have participated against student athletes that are living their faith. That's a big deal to me." Kohler focuses on teaching his athletes to demonstrate good sportsmanship with their opponents and the officials. He shared that he is excited about getting to coach again. "I'm just happy to be here and hope that my gifts and talents will benefit the students in some way."

## A SPORTS PHILOSOPHY

"My philosophy in basketball is to win the games and prepare ourselves. Sports teaches you to be prepared. You prepare in practice, you prepare outside of practice, and you prepare your body. You're constantly trying to get yourself better. But maybe an even more important lesson is to teach our students to be good winners and good losers. You want them to win, but you want them to be humble in their winning. You want them to also be able to not win every time and be able to handle that okay. One thing that I think is interesting is that my wife and I have a background in martial arts. I'm not teaching Tae Kwon Do here, but when you've done that for a large part of your life, you bring in humility, physical fitness, and preparedness."

