Dear Players and Parents,

I am honored to be the head coach of the Seward High School baseball program, and I’m excited about the 2014 season. We will field a Varsity, Junior Varsity, and Reserve team this year and I look forward to working with our student-athletes at every level of our program.

I feel we have assembled a first-rate coaching staff this season, and while each team will have its own designated coaching staff, all of our coaches will have the opportunity to work with players at all levels.

Our goal as coaches is to develop our players both on and off the field. They are student's first and then athletes, so their first commitment must to be to school. Through our program, we want to develop fundamentally sound baseball players that understand and respect the game of baseball. We’ll place a strong emphasis on teaching the fundamentals of the game and playing “smart” baseball.

For the Seward High baseball program to be successful, we'll need your support as players and as parents. Please read the team policies, procedures and expectations included in this manual. Much of what you'll see has been carried on from previous years, but much has been rewritten to correspond with the new coaching staff’s approach. Some of the rules included on the following pages are in accordance with the Seward Public School District and others are unique to our baseball program. Most of what is here was established with a focus on simple common sense, courtesy and respect for all involved in the program.

Please remember that it is a privilege to play baseball at Seward High School, and not a right. I hope your experiences in the Seward High baseball program provide you enjoyable memories and when you look back on the season you are proud of what you accomplished as an individual and team.

Brock Anderson
Head Coach, Seward High School Baseball
COACHING PHILOSOPHY

WORK ETHIC: Desire and hard work are what it takes to be the best. Being the best means out working your opponents.

DEDICATION: Give 100% of yourself in all you do. Focus on your goals and your goals will become reality.

EUTHUSIASM: It is important and necessary to have fun and enjoy what you are doing. This ensures total dedication in all your endeavors.

TEAM WORK: No one is bigger than the team. We will win and lose as a team.

GOALS: You must have goals to succeed. Without goals there is nothing to work towards. Set your goals high and have the discipline and dedication to achieve them.

REPRESENTATION: Each athlete and coach is expected to represent themselves, their families, teammates, coaches, school and community with pride and class.

The Seward Baseball coaching staff’s focus is to prepare, instruct and develop our student-athletes. The coaching staff is committed to the team and each player. Coaches will be held to these expectations:

♦ Assisting our players to be the best in the classroom and on the field. We are not just baseball coaches.

♦ Developing character in our players by teaching them to be responsible and accountable for their words and their actions.

♦ Leading by example, demonstrating a passion for the game and respecting all players.

♦ Modeling and expecting honesty, punctuality and a committed desire to be the best.

♦ Encouraging communication, integrity and confidence in the classroom, on the field, and in the community.

♦ Demanding respect for teammates, opponents, coaches, umpires, parents, fans, Seward High School and the community.

♦ Providing a facility and equipment that the players can be proud of, and that offers every opportunity for learning the game of baseball.

♦ Providing an experience for our athletes that are rewarding, memorable and fun.

♦ Holding our players and coaches accountable to playing baseball the Blue jay way.

The coaching staff is proud to be a part of the baseball program here at Seward High School. We are fully committed to helping all players succeed in the classroom, on the field, and in the community.
BASEBALL PHILOSOPHIES

The key to accomplishing each one of these in a game setting is the team and coaches ability to be on the same page, which begins at practice.

Practice Philosophy

Do thing right every single time, no matter what it is. We win or lose during practice. When our players show up and step through the gates, they are expected to get after it. Game like tempo and focus are stressed in every drill, situation or scrimmage. We routinely break down practices into three manageable parts: individual work, group work and finish with scrimmages or situations. We will put our players into countless baseball situations at practice so when it happens in a game they can feel comfortable and be successful. Our coaching staff will also track many stats during practice. Tracking stats in practice will hold players accountable and also help the coaches make tough decisions.

Team Philosophy

We must play team baseball; we will win and lose as a team. Players must be willing to work together and play together to be successful. A confident, skilled team working together is our goal.

Mental Philosophy

Mentally tough people will be successful. We are making this a focus every day for our players. Baseball is a game of failure and can be very frustrating if we cannot deal with it. The teams and players that can deal with failure and learn from it will be the toughest and most successful. We will do daily mental training sessions before practice to help our players not only develop routines for when they fail but also during big moments to help them refocus and give them the best chance to be successful.

Defensive Philosophy

We work hard and take great pride in our defense and our players must be able to play sound defense in order to be in our starting line-up. Our focus – MAKE THE ROUTINE PLAYS, anticipate before a play happens and get outs. To be great on defense, you must focus and work hard in practice because championships are won with great team defense.

Pitching Philosophy

Pitchers and catchers control the game. Our pitchers are aggressive, throw strikes and work fast. Get ahead early (first pitch strikes), change speeds/locations, and hit their spots. Our goal is to locate pitches, change speeds and force contact in 3 pitches or less.

Offensive Philosophy

Our Hitters will be aggressive and productive. Our focus will be to have quality at-bats by staying inside the baseball and putting a good swing on every pitch. We will put the ball in play and make our opponents make the plays. We are aggressive on the base paths and will take advantage of other teams lack of discipline. Baseball is a game of adjustments. We will make the necessary adjustments and do whatever it takes to get the job done.
Seward Baseball Tradition is:

1. 4 Year Players in the Program

2. Responsibility to self and others. Do it right every single time.

3. Think, Prepare, Perform like Champions

4. Compete! Compete! Compete! Keep playing the game, It doesn’t matter what inning it is, what the score is, or who you are playing. Keep playing hard.


6. One pitch at a time.

7. Transferable Trust. Team Baseball

8. GET BIG!!!, If you believe you can...you will.

9. Expect To Win!!
THE “BLUEJAY” WAY

♦ Complete Focus
♦ Play Team Baseball
♦ Play Hard For 7 Innings
♦ Tough D No E (Only Give 21 Outs in a Game)
♦ Defense Wins Championships
♦ Look Good, Feel Good, Play Good
♦ Have Fun
♦ Quality At-bats
♦ Communicate On Every Play
♦ Hustle At All Times
♦ Do Everything With A Purpose
♦ 1% Better Every Day
♦ Encourage Your Teammates
♦ Master The Fundamentals Of The Game
♦ Strive For Perfection
♦ 100% Execution
♦ Have Pride In Yourself And The Uniform You Wear
♦ Always Confident, Never Cocky
♦ Stay Positive
♦ If You Make An Error Wipe It Off
♦ Know The Situation
♦ Be Accountable
♦ Believe In Yourself
♦ Transferable Trust
♦ Work As Hard In The Classroom As You Do On The Field
♦ Have Respect For Coaches, Teammates, Opponents, Umpires And Fans
♦ Play The Game The Right Way
♦ No Excuses, No Regrets
♦ Set High Expectations
♦ Wining Is A Habit, Expect To Win
PLAYER EXPECTATIONS

Student-Athletes

Playing baseball here at Seward High School is a reward for achieving your highest potential in the classroom – you are a student first, and an athlete second. We will get it done in the classroom before we get it done on the field.

Positive Attitude

Players will be expected to be open to learning new techniques and skills. Players will also understand that every member of the team plays an important role to the success of our program, whether you are on the field or serving a role in the dugout.

Commitment/Dedication

Players will be expected to exhibit commitment and dedication both on the field and in the classroom. What you do on the field, you do in your life. Learning and exhibiting these important character qualities during your four years at Seward will better prepare you prepared for life outside the fences of our field and this school.

Sportsmanship

Good sportsmanship is an important part of the baseball program and you will be expected to model it at all times. We will encourage and support our teammates and we will respectfully and graciously acknowledge our opponents – win or lose. Unsportsmanlike behaviors, such as the throwing of equipment, taunting of opponents, or disrespect will not be tolerated.

Teamwork

Baseball is not an individual sport. Our success on the field will be measured by how well we play together as a team, not as group of individuals. You will be expected to support and encourage your teammates, and in return, you can expect to be picked-up by those around you on the days you are not at your personal best.

Work Hard

You are expected to come to practice and games willing to give 100% at all times. Giving your best effort at all times does not require you to be the best player on the team. In fact, it has nothing to do with your baseball skills. You will be expected to run hard on and off of the field, to hustle between drills at practice, to run out “routine” balls and to hustle back to the dugout after striking out.

Communication

The coaching staff will model open and honest communication at all times. Players who have an issue with a coach or another player will be expected to communicate their concerns as soon as possible. The first attempt at handling concerns will be between player-player or player-coach. If the issue is not resolved to the satisfaction of both parties, parents will then be contacted.
Be Accountable

You are expected to be on time for all practices, games and team functions. If you are going to be late, or miss, contact a coach by telephone as soon as possible. You are expected to keep the commitments you make to your teammates and coaching staff throughout the season. You are also expected to be responsible for communicating all necessary information to your parents. We will hold our teammates and ourselves accountable.

Dressed to Play

It is expected that when you walk off the bus or in the dugout you are ready to practice or play. That means that your shirts or jerseys will always be tucked in, your hats will be on straight and you will not be wearing any jewelry.

• Have gear available for practice including long sleeves and shoes at all times.
• Pants are required at all practices. Do not wear your game pants to practice.
• Cutoff shirts are not allowed.
• If coats are necessary, they must match our team colors.
• Socks must be a solid blue, yellow or black in color. No brand markings showing.

Behavior

How you behave on and off of the field is a direct reflection of you and the baseball program at Seward High School. You are expected, especially when wearing a part of the Seward uniform, to behave as gentlemen. You are expected to think before you act and to understand that all of the choices you make have a consequence, whether intended or not. You are expected to obey all rules and laws of the school and the community. Any behavior issues will result in disciplinary action and possible suspension.

Game Day

We will be dressed and ready to go once we step off the bus on away games or when we arrive to the park for home games. You will be required to watch each other play, watch and learn from your teammates.

• If you are on the varsity roster you are in the dugout for that game and visa versa for junior varsity.
• If you are on the bench you are expected to help warm the starters up and stay loose at all times.

Field Work & Equipment

Players are expected to assist with general maintenance duties after each practice and game during the season. We take great pride in the facility we have created and expect that our players will do the same. Each player will be assigned a job at the field, once you get your job done find somebody else to help – don’t wait to be asked. Each player will also be assigned equipment and you are responsible for having that equipment ready for practice and games.

School Policies

All players must turn in their physical form, buy their activity pass, pay their pay to play fee and also have their NSAA signature page in before being allowed to participate, no exceptions. Players will also be required to sign a participation form before the season starts.

On days we leave early, it is your responsibility to let that teacher know you will miss and also get your homework done early. It is required to bring homework on the bus and work on it while we travel to our game.
If you are ineligible you will not be allowed to practice or play until that grade is brought up. You will work after school with that teacher to improve your grade. You will also have extra conditioning.

If you get suspended from school you will not be allowed to compete until you have completed the necessary days back in school. You will also receive a 2 game suspension once you are back on the team. You will also have extra conditioning the following week you are back. Don’t let your teammates down.

**Weight Training**

All players are encouraged to lift before, during, and after the season. Our baseball program will have a specific training regimen that players will learn and be encouraged to follow during both the off season and in season.

**Letter Winners**

You will need to play in at least ½ of the games to be qualified to win a letter. There are exceptions and those will be handled on a player-to-player basis determined by the coaching staff when they arise.

**Zero Tolerance**

There is zero tolerance policy within the baseball program dealing with Drugs and Alcohol. Anybody caught participating in these activities will receive a 5 game suspension on top of whatever school punishment they receive. If the punishment carries into baseball season, then that player will serve the 5 game suspension. This is not a topic that I will discuss or give lenience on. Choose your friends and activities wisely. Following team rules and expectations is a requirement for playing baseball at Seward. Players who violate team policies and/or expectations for behavior will be subject to immediate consequences, including dismissal from the team.

**PARENT EXPECTATIONS**

♦ Support the team, players and coaches.
♦ Respect the decisions of the coaching staff.
♦ Understand the coaching staff has the best interest of team and players.
♦ Making sure players are where they need to be on time (mainly freshmen, that can’t drive).
♦ Help the season go smoothly
  o Communicate with coaches
  o Working the gate, concession stand, press box
  o Away game meals (Team Parents)

**COACHING DECISIONS**

The coaching staff will make decisions that are based on what is best for the team and overall program. Decisions about playing time are not always based purely on baseball talent but also include how each player fills certain positions and how they fit into the team concept. Players who have negative attitudes or who are disrespectful to teammates or coaches will find themselves on the bench or off the team, no matter how talented they are.
OTHER SPORTS/ACTIVITIES

All baseball players are encouraged to participate in other SHS sports and school activities during the fall and winter seasons. Multi-sport athletes are well rounded and maintain their conditioning at a higher level. Those who participate in other sports or clubs gain valuable knowledge, experience and friendships. We as a coaching staff want you to enjoy your high school years by participating in as many activities as you choose. However, once baseball season begins, all players are expected to commit to the team beginning the first day of practice. On occasion there will be conflicts and we will address them on an individual basis.

TRY-OUT SCHEDULE & PROCESS

If necessary, the tryout process usually will last 2-3 days depending on the total number of players who try out. During try-outs, all players will participate together in organized drills and conditioning conducted by the entire coaching staff. This will ensure each players is visible and given the maximum amount of exposure to the coaches. Players that wish to pitch and or catch will also be fully evaluated. It is our goal and intent to give each player an opportunity to be seen in as many situations as possible.

Skill Evaluations will mainly consist of:

♦ Running- 60 yd dash, Home to 1st, Straight steal from 1st to 2nd, 1st to 3rd
♦ Throwing- Arm strength and accuracy
♦ Fielding- Ground balls and fly balls
♦ Hitting- Cage rounds and live on field rounds
♦ Scrimmages

It is expected that the JV and Varsity squads will end up with rosters around 12-15 players each. The Varsity roster will also include some swing players who will play for both JV and Varsity. The coaching staff will meet with each player and let them know how their evaluation went and also their role on the team for the start of the season. Each player’s role will continually change throughout the season and we expect each player to give their best effort no matter their role on the team.

Gear you should bring to Try-Outs:

- Baseball Hat
- Baseball Pants
- T-Shirt with Sleeves
- Running Shoes
- All Baseball Gear
- Long Sleeves
- Water (optional)
HOW TO MAKE THE TEAM

♦ It doesn’t take talent to hustle.
♦ Be a student of the game, learn the game.
♦ Help your team win whether you play or not.
♦ Never argue with an umpire.
♦ Be a coachable player.
♦ Maintain the grades to keep you eligible.
♦ Don’t tell people what you’re worth, prove it.
♦ Don’t let anyone make excuses for you.
♦ It is your coach’s opinion of you that matters. He makes the line-up.
♦ Life is not fair; either is baseball, how are you going to deal with it.
♦ Be passionate about your team and teammates.
♦ The only thing that coaches owes you in honesty.
♦ Body language screams, it never whispers.
♦ Balance makes champions; work hard on all parts of your game, mental and physical.
♦ Games are lost not won. Don’t beat yourselves.

SHOW OFF YOUR TALENTS

♦ When you jog to warm up, finish first.
♦ When you stretch, do it best.
♦ When you play catch, play with a purpose.
♦ Go hard at all times. Never walk.
♦ Hustle out of the box, expect a double.
♦ Know the situation on defense and take what the baseball gives you.
♦ Baseball reveals character, it doesn’t build it.
♦ Character means doing the right thing when nobody is watching.
PLAYER & PARENT AGREEMENT

Please return to Coach Anderson as soon as possible

PLAYERS WILL BE UNABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN PRACTICES OR GAMES WITHOUT THIS FORM ON FILE WITH THE VARSITY COACH.

I have read all of the information in the Seward Baseball Student-Athlete Handbook. I understand what is expected and agree to follow and support all policies, procedures, and expectations throughout the entire season.

________________________________________  ____________________________
Player Name (Print)  Date

________________________________________  ____________________________
Player Signature  Date

________________________________________  ____________________________
Parent/Guardian Signature  Date

________________________________________  ____________________________
Parent/Guardian Signature  Date