



## Students of All Ages Involved in Cedar Springs Sports

As students in the Cedar Springs school district move from elementary school, to middle school, to high school, they are gone, but far from forgotten.

Especially if those students become Red Hawk athletes.

Two unique groups involving student-athletes at Cedar Springs High School help to keep the Red Hawk athletics program in the minds of former teachers, current teachers, and future students.

The Athletic Leadership Council (ALC) was founded in 2010 under the guidance of Autumn Mattson, the school's athletic director.

The goal is to “unite the students, staff, and community and spread the Red Hawk Pride,” as stated on the school website. So far, the initiative has been a huge success, with 30 athletes ranging from freshmen to seniors.

One of the numerous activities the leaders organize is the popular “Staff Pride Night” for each sport, during which members of varsity Cedar Springs teams invite one former or current staff member, district-wide, to a game or event, wearing that athlete’s jersey or team shirt. Additionally, all staff members receive free admission to Staff Pride Night contests.

“Each athlete chooses a staff member within the district who has made a difference in their lives, and invites them to attend an event,” Mattson said. “It makes a connection back to teachers earlier in their lives and let’s those people see that they are remembered and appreciated.”

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The ALC has six “captains” who run the meetings and plan events with Mattson. The group is also now heavily involved in another successful venture, the Red Hawk Kids Club, initiated by Mattson and football coach Brian Busen.

The Kids Club entails numerous student-athletes visiting Cedar Springs three elementary schools and participating in such activities as reading, working in the classroom, or monitoring recess and lunch for K-5th-grade students.

One of the readings involves the “Red Hawk Creed,” which states: “I am . . . Responsible, Enthusiastic, Dedicated, Hard Worker, Achiever, Winner, Kind . . . I am a Red Hawk!”

“We want to inspire kids to be really good people, to be Red Hawks,” Mattson said. “Our athletes are assigned to a teacher, and they spend an hour once a week for six weeks in that building.”

Participating sports then have a Red Hawk Kids Club one night per season.

– Rob Kaminski



### IT'S ELEMENTARY

How does a school generate enthusiasm within the community? Get all levels of students involved, which is the goal of Cedar Springs' Red Hawk Kids Club.