

Dear 2nd-7th Grade Falcon Families!

What a great year it has been across all of the Falcon youth baseball teams. As you know, up until recently the Falcons have not had a consistent spring/summer program for baseball after T-Ball and Machine Pitch ends. We are often left with three extremes: Play a minimal amount through Parks and Rec where competition is not too good, play club/travel ball where there are lots of games and high costs, or just decide to do nothing. It often seems like there is no "middle of the road" option for baseball.

This year, we had three Falcon youth baseball teams: 3rd-4th grade, 5th grade and 6th-7th grade. One team played USSSA and two played in the WIBBL league. Recently, representatives from the elementary and middle school coaches got together and reviewed their seasons. We discussed our successes and areas we felt we could improve. We discussed what we felt the parents wanted in terms of baseball for their boys. We discussed what we felt was good for the boys' development and enjoyment. We discussed cost. Interestingly, we also discussed outreach, as we have had many inquiries from the outside into an "SA Youth Baseball Program," even from students who do not currently attend SA.

Wanting to help formalize an SA Youth Baseball Program, as well as understanding that tryouts are underway, or even over, for local select baseball teams, having put our heads together, we would like to suggest a plan moving forward for 2nd-7th grade Falcon baseball in the 2023 season.

1. **Opportunity for All:** It is our goal to work with the SA administration and coaches to attempt to offer a place for any SA boy to play baseball at either the competitive or developmental level. Therefore it is imperative that we hear from SA families now as to their interest in baseball for their boys next year. Part of this communication relates to communications with Heartland Christian's 2nd-7th graders as to their interest in playing as well. Since HC now plays with SA in high school baseball, our boys should start playing together now.
2. **Development and Competition:** For next year, we would like all of our Falcon teams to join the WIBBLE Baseball League. WIBBLE is the Western Iowa Baseball League that is made up of many or most of the teams we will play as we move into high school. This league has a year-end tournament. Coaches schedule games, typically playing each team twice during the season. With this league, there is also the opportunity to add more games midweek with anyone else the coach would like, or outside in the USSSA organization if the coach wishes. This allows for flexibility, depending upon the team. The competition in WIBBLE is good at the competitive level, and more competition can be provided through adding games with other teams if interested.
3. **SA Identity:** A formal SA Youth Baseball Program is an asset to our school. Firstly, formalizing our program enables your sons to be working with the SA coaches at the varsity level throughout the elementary and middle school years, using our facilities and identifying as SA athletes from the beginning. Secondly, the boys gain comradery, comfort and confidence as they work together with their classmates in the younger years, the same individuals who they will be playing with in high school. Finally, our approach would be much less expensive than other organizations and more considerate as it relates to family schedules.

We need your help!

It is very important to us to have as many kids come back to these teams as possible. It is also important to us to hear of anyone else who would like to be on an SA team but hasn't had the opportunity. The following is a list of things we need to hear from you:

1. Let us know if you want your son to play on an SA team.
2. Let us know if you are willing to coach, volunteer or help this baseball program in any way. This new approach would likely create more teams. With that being said, we obviously need more coaches.
3. There is a lot that goes into baseball, from scheduling games to finding practice fields and umpires to identifying coaches or assistants to helping provide more practices if the coaches are unable. Any help you can provide is greatly appreciated!

We are committing ourselves as volunteers to make every attempt to find a way to allow your son to participate. Our main goals include the following: 1. Provide opportunities for the boys to play on a team with their friends. 2. Challenge everyone at every level. 3. Keep costs low. 4. Play an appropriate amount of games and schedule an appropriate amount of practices for the purposes of training, growth and development. 5. Work with the SA administration to develop talent for SA and promote a positive culture for SA families. 6. Most importantly, provide a fun and enjoyable opportunity for your boys!

If you are interested in having your son play on an SA baseball team next year, please contact Nate Sherrill at nathansherrill1978@gmail.com He has volunteered to create a list now of all of those boys interested in playing next year. As time goes on, you will be contacted by a Falcon baseball representative with more details.

Thank you!
SA Youth Baseball Coaches