



Sacred Heart-Griffin High School
Office for Institutional Advancement

For Immediate Release
February 24, 2022

Sacred Heart-Griffin High School Football Coach Announces Retirement

Sacred Heart-Griffin High School head football coach and Athletic Director, Ken Leonard, announces his retirement effective December 31, 2022.

Coach Leonard became the head football coach and Athletic Director at Griffin High School in 1984. In the fall of 1988, Sacred Heart Academy and Griffin High School combined their spiritual, academic, and financial resources to form Sacred Heart-Griffin where Leonard remained the head football coach and boys Athletic Director. Helen Dulle served as the girl's Athletic Director until 2009, at which time, Coach Leonard became SHG's Athletic Director for both boys and girls.

Coach Leonard dedicated years to young athletes and making Sacred Heart-Griffin High School football program one of the best and most competitive in the state. He became the most winning coach in Illinois history in 2018, and in 2021, he celebrated another milestone with his 400th career win. Leonard has brought a total of five state championships to SHG, winning the state title in 2005, 2006, 2008, 2013, and 2014. In addition, he's brought the school four runner-up trophies.

"It has been a pleasure serving SHG as the Athletic Director and head football coach since 1984," said Coach Leonard. "I have enjoyed my years of service and the people that I have had the honor of working with through the years."

"We are grateful for Coach Leonard's dedication and service to SHG for 38 years," said Sister Katherine O'Connor, President. "He has mentored many young men, not just to be athletes, but to be Christ-centered leaders in the Springfield community and beyond."

Coach Leonard has been synonymous with SHG football for decades. "Coach Leonard has created a legacy at SHG and in football that will live on for a very long time. I have always been grateful for the leadership and commitment he has shown to all of us," stated Kara Rapacz, Principal. "Faith, Family, Football isn't just a slogan with Coach Leonard. It is the way he lives his life and why he has positively impacted each and every player whom he has coached throughout the years. His presence will be missed on the field and in the school, but we are all better having worked with him for so many years."

Assistant Principal Bob Brenneisen shared those same sentiments. "I have had the pleasure of working with Ken for quite a number of years. I most appreciated his loyalty and dedication to SHG as well as his support for all athletes and teams. He lived and breathed SHG athletics. His presence will be greatly missed. He is Mr. SHG."

Students and fans alike will have the opportunity to enjoy one last season with Coach Leonard, as he will officially retire as Athletic Director this summer, and coach his last season of Cyclone football this fall.

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