

EDDIE ELLIS

I was working the Summer Enrichment program for Golson, driving buses, and still coaching all 3 sports/teaching P.E. at Marianna Middle School when “Coach” Ellis called my cellphone and asked me what I thought about moving from the classroom into administration as a T.S.A. I was shocked but ultimately applied for the job and early that Summer, I went to work under his leadership. I learned many valuable lessons from him in my two years as asst. principal/TSA and we had some great times. I recall one of my first discipline situations that I was tasked with handling where two students got into an altercation. I was incredibly nervous in handing down the punishment and I asked him many questions during the ordeal. Finally, after the tenth question, he looked at me and said “Take control of the situation, treat each student/parent with respect, and no matter what decision you make, I will have your back”. That is something I never forgot, and it was an absolute joy working with him knowing he had your back in any situation. Coach Ellis had a way of defusing any set of circumstances from a broken-hearted middle school aged female to an irate parent. I remember one time this parent came into the office and he was HOT...Hot in a sense that he had to walk to the school and was very upset because his child was in trouble and was getting sent to ACE. I sat in Mr. Ellis’s office while this parent cussed him up and down. When the man got finished, Mr. Ellis got him a bottle of water, explained to him what was going to happen in a polite way, and asked the man if he had any questions. By the end of the meeting, the man and Mr. Ellis were carrying on a conversation and Mr. Ellis even took the man home in his own truck! I learned that day that there was nothing he would not do for his students and parents. I have always known this because he coached me in basketball when I was in 9th grade and even wrote me a letter encouraging me to work hard and never give up. I still have that letter to this day and when I need some “Words of Encouragement”, I pull it out. He is a great motivator, has a huge heart, and cares deeply for Marianna Middle School. I am proud to call him my coach, my mentor, but most of all my friend.