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Press Release

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Shades Valley High School hires championship coach to lead football program

Irondale, AL - The Jefferson County School District is proud to announce that Rueben Nelson has been hired as the head football coach at Shades Valley High School.

The board approved his hiring during Thursday's regular meeting.

Nelson brings a wealth of experience to the Mountie program. He has been a head coach at the high school level for 15 seasons. Most recently he served as the head coach at Ramsay High School where in 2016 he won a 6A state title. During the 2020 season, the Rams made it to semi-finals in class 5A.

"Shades Valley is a program on the rise and I look forward to building on what is already there. I hope to help these young men become not just successful athletes but also successful students and successful people," said Nelson.

Nelson rebuilt the Ramsay program from the ground up. Before his arrival in 2012 the school did not field a team for 36 years. It took the coach only three years to put together a 10 win season (2014) and took him only five to win a state championship (2016).

"Mountie Nation and the Shades Valley family are honored to have a championship coach of Coach Nelson's caliber. I have known Coach Nelson personally for over 20 years, so I'm even more thankful for the kind of man he is, and the influence he will have on our student athletes," said Taki Sarhaan, Shades Valley High School Principal.

Nelson is a 1999 graduate of Alabama A&M University. He graduated from Miles Law School in 2003 and earned his Masters in Educational Leadership from Alabama A&M in 2016.