



PHOTO BY STEVE WILLIAMS

*As the West High Rebels practice Wednesday, one coach can be seen wearing a mask, and the scoreboard reminds all what year it is. The high school football season is scheduled to start this week despite the coronavirus pandemic. Please see high school previews for football, volleyball, girls' soccer and girls' cross country in Sports and Recreation, Section B, of this week's Focus.*

## Pressure? New Central head coach says he's excited

By Steve Williams

The season opener is days away and his feelings could change as kickoff time nears Friday night.

After all, Central's football team has won back-to-back Class 5A state championships and it will be Nick Craney's first time on the sidelines as a high school head coach.

He'll be close to 85 miles from Hensley Fountain City, too.

But when asked if he was feeling any pressure, Craney didn't gulp or blink.

"I feel excited first and foremost," he said from his coach's office after a preseason morning practice. He also was sitting



*FAMILY... "Forget About Me I Love You"... the foundation of the Central High football program.*

behind the same desk that Bryson Popper had occupied the past six seasons, during certainly one of the most successful eras in the school's proud history

"I'm excited for our players. I'm excited for where the program is at, and honestly for where the program is going," added Craney, who served as defensive coordinator in Central's

first trip to the state finals in the past four years.

Craney said he feels fortunate to be part of a program that has had succession and off the field. He's also proud to have helped build the current foundation of that program.

When Popper left Central for family reasons, Craney was named interim head coach and let it be known he wanted to continue the program's "family" foundation.

"I'm extremely excited and honestly the pressure is not something that I'm going to worry about," said Craney. "I

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teaching at the Eugene Johnson Building. Board member Jennifer Owen was the one dissenting vote after expressing concerns at the board's work session on Wednesday, Aug. 5.

The program could cost the district up to \$1.5 million for the full semester and should not exceed \$3 million if used again in the spring of 2021.

The Florida Virtual School model is the same one being used by Metro-Indianapolis, which is beginning its academic year exclusively with distance learning.

FVS is opening to schools on Monday, Aug. 24 but 18,500 students and their parents have opted to attend school virtually this fall.

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## New alcohol permit adopted for outdoor dining

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