

ENCOURAGING PARTICIPATION IN TWO & THREE SPORTS

COACHES:

- -At each season's end meet with team and urge them to participate in the next sport.
- -Be visible in supporting other sports. Attend meets and games in the off season.
- -Individual personal contact remains the most successful method of getting students to join athletic teams. Ask them one to one. Consider a personal letter inviting students to join teams.

WHEN THE ADULTS GET TOGETHER THE STUDENT-ATHLETE WINS!

Teachers, coaches and parents must collaborate for the best interest of the student.

- -Avoid conflicts by communicating with and through the Athletic Director. Make it possible for every student to have access to every sport and school activity. Students should be able to be in sports and the band or the school play. If the adults privately work out the details students benefit from all that we have to offer. On occasion this may involve MISSING A SPORT PRACTICE, for a school play rehearsal.
- -Solicit the help of faculty members, counselors, and administrators to encourage participation from students in sports. A word from the English teacher to an individual student or a plug at the end of Math class may go a long way. Take a few minutes to ask for this help at the next faculty meeting.
- -Some sports cut, some do not. Could the baseball and softball coaches, who may cut 20 kids each spring reach a private agreement with the track and soccer coaches to accept those cut from baseball or softball?
- -Coaches communicating: Consider the boys Cross Country coach who permitted the basketball players a 30 minute shoot around period after work outs for those basketball players who ran Cross Country. Consider the volleyball coach who agreed with the Softball Coach and permitted the 2 pitchers and a catcher to throw two days a week in the winter while playing Volleyball.

-AWARDS RECOGNITION PROGRAM:

- -"Triple Threat Award" to athletes who complete three sports in one year. (any grade)
- -Senior Year Honors: Four Year of one sport, or 12 consecutive seasons in high school. Make a big deal of these, name them after someone, publicize within school & town.
- -Consider a Dinner or Special Luncheon with the Principal and Athletic Director for three sport athletes and parents in the late Spring.
- -Consider special honor listing or designation for 2 or 3 sport athletes, special three sport pin at each years end. Consider awarding an automatic varsity letter at end of sophomore or junior year to any athlete completing three sports in a year.

OVER

ATHLETIC PROGRAM POLICIES:

- -Our coaches will not be involved in coaching any non school sport teams.
- -We will not post, distribute, announce, promote or advertise any non school sport activity which takes place during the school year.
- -No facility in our school system will be used for a non school sport program during the school year except for approved city recreation department programs.
- -Every athlete will be permitted a one week break (7 days) between the end of one season and the required try outs or practice for the next. (Grades 9 & 10 only ?)
- -A full staff meeting (all coaches, all sports) each late spring or early fall is a priority. The staff that cooperates and communicates as a unit enhances participation and the student - athlete wins.

TIMING IS EVERYTHING:

- -Off season programs (e.g. football weight lifting, pitchers & catchers, open gyms) must be approved by the Athletic Director prior to any plans being announced.
- -Wait until after in season sports are in full swing before starting off season activity.
- -Consider a break in the weight lifting season so students can join spring sports. Resume lifting after Easter when spring sports are underway.
- -Let kids get bored for a few days. If there time is full with out of season activities they may opt to stay away from in season sports. It's easier: a couple days a week for an hour in the weight room or gym, no pressure, slight commitment compared with the daily practice and effort of an in season sport.
- -Overdoing it in the off season may not have an effect on numbers in the current year. However you may see some decline NEXT season when an athlete discovers he can "work out" with Coach a few days a week as opposed to having to be there "all the time."
- -Consider the time of day that tryouts or first practices are set. Often the younger players get the later time slot making practice difficult to attend. Could the younger teams go right after school for the first part of the season?
- -The location and time of the first meeting for a sport, before tryouts or practices, should be in surroundings familiar to Freshmen (classroom, cafeteria, etc.). The meeting should be well publicized and announced. This first impression should generate enough interest and rapport that the "fence sitter" will actually come back.
- - Consider starting fall sports for freshmen after school has started. Eliminate the August activity for Freshmen where possible. A shortened season, less demanding might be a good "entry level" technique for them.

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FIRST IMPRESSIONS ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT....

How many athletes do not return for sports after freshmen year?

- -Be certain the first few encounters with athletics are as positive as they can be. From the newness of a locker room full of Varsity athletes to the whole experience of being cut from a team. Make a good first impression as an athletic program and perhaps we can generate continued interest in other sports.
- -What are practice sessions like for frosh & sophs? How much standing around, holding dummies, watching others work out is involved? Coaches must keep it fun and interesting or they will lose interest and participants next year.
- -What do younger athletes do when the Varsity plays? If at all possible involve them in some capacity so they may feel part of the program. Wear game jerseys, sit together in the stands, rotating crews to take stats, handle equipment, etc. Conversely, encourage Varsity athletes attend some reserve or freshmen games.
- -Consider a Senior big brother or sister for each freshmen in a sport.
- -GOALS in order of importance for Frosh Coaches:
 1. The students had a good experience.
 2. The students come back out for the sport next year.
 3. They learned something about the sport.

IN AN IDEAL SETTING.....

- -No solution has surfaced that eliminates cutting in some sports; usually the more popular ones. We encourage students to look at sports that don't cut such as football, cross country, swimming or track. Wouldn't it be ideal if every student who wanted to play interscholastic basketball could actually do this?
- -Low participation in all or some sports, or a resistance on the part of athletes to play 2 or 3 sports might indicate a problem within our program. Consider some tough evaluation time. Review a wide range of topics:

The scope or perspective of athletics in our school.

The demands placed on our athletes. The space it takes up in the life of a student.

The approach of coaches and parents to involvement in sports.

If the shoe fits...wear it.

OVER