

Youth Sports Networking Seminar

Monday, March 23rd, 2015 – Philadelphia School District Education Center

Introductions

- Nancy Peter: Introductions & welcome
- Who has attended previous PYSC Seminars, and who is here for the first time?
- How to become a PYSC Partner

Announcements

- **Get Healthy Philly, Philadelphia Department of Public Health** – Is sharing a new data brief on obesity among Philadelphia's school children. Please visit www.Foodfitphilly.org
- **DBHIDS – MHFA** is offering Mental Health First Aid training for free to all of Philadelphia. The training teaches you how to recognize signs and symptoms of mental illness or challenges and how to help individuals who suffer from these challenges. Support your student-athletes, learn the signs and symptoms. It's open to every community and all organizations. For more information please contact Dave Monico at Dmonico@pmhcc.org or 215-790-4996.
- **Achieving Independence Center** – Is seeking host job sites for July-August to employ foster care youth ages 15-18. This will provide them with valuable initial work experience. They are seeking only non-profit or small businesses. Please contact Shaun Mack at smack@aicenter.us
- **Philly Goes 2 College** – Is hosting Swag-A-Thon, join them for a marathon of college going events at various Connect2College and partner locations on April 2nd. Events include: Sat Strategy and Practice, FAFSA Completion Workshop, Graduation Coach Training, Last Minute Plans Workshop, Award Letter Deciphering Workshop, and College Student Panel. The intended audience is high school students and parents. To register visit Eventbrite or Facebook and search for, "Swag-A-Thon" or call the office at 215-686-0315 for more info.
- **Eagles Care Summit** – Please attend the 2nd annual Eagles Care Summit. The full day event will feature speakers, round table discussions, and panels designed to education and connect out valued non-profit partners with each other around the inspiration of collaboration. The event will be held Thursday, April 9th from 8:00am-4:00pm at Lincoln Financial Field. To RSVP click [HERE](#)

Panelists

James Patrick Lynch

- These notes include some of the key points that James hit during his presentation. Please check out his full presentation [HERE](#)
- Sportsmanship
 - High school and middle school youth pick up a lot of traits from their PE and afterschool coaches. Things like discipline and respect can be enforced by making youth simply show up to practice on time.
- Character Development vs. Player Development
 - It's important to teach youth how to win and lose.
 - Even in individual sports, there is still a team in your club mates and coaches.
- Understanding the STUDENT-athlete

- The whole idea is connecting sports and schools. It's important to teach the youth that they are all student athletes because academics always comes first.
- If you can get a kid to understand he is a student athlete from a young age, it'll stick with him.
- It's not easy enough to just see math grades. In order to efficiently tackle academics and athletes, it's important to have a collaborative effort between schools and academics, even if its external. This is necessary in order to properly quantify the data that represents improvement or fall in academics.
- Specialization of Athletes
 - It's important to not make youth stick to one sport at an early age because sometimes their passion dies.

Stephen Gregg

- Squash played a pivotal in my role. Because of my coaches in middle school, high school, and college I am where I am today.
- I moved to Philadelphia about 15 years ago in order to work for youth sport organizations.
- Through my work for youth sport organizations. I became aware of the increasing trend in urban squash. I became a regular volunteer, eventually, I became in love with it. I became the director of one of these programs 10 years ago.
- My first facility was in a Drexel basement that wasn't ideal due to its shape caused by underutilization. Since then we have expanded, we now serve about 120 people.
- We are a place based model. We specifically target three target schools around Philadelphia.
- Example of one school: In our North Philadelphia the 5th graders literacy rate and dropout rates were very high before joining our program. We made it our goal is to help them transition through all periods of education until college.
- Our focus on sports and academics are based on the 5 components: 1. Basic attendance. Our staff goes out to the school every day in order to meet the kids. 2. Squash Introduction 3. Fitness and Nutrition 4. PACT; a score based on 4 criteria that measures all aspects of an individual's commitment and attitude throughout the week. This reward system benefits good children by giving them some monetary value that translates into squash booty. 5. Leadership
- We're sending two kids to England and Spain this summer as a reward from their PACT score.
- While this program isn't for everyone, 100% of the children who have stuck through the program have gone to college.

Robert Coleman

- PIAA. A sports collaborative that created an umbrella program which builds better communities by bringing them together.
- PIAA has increased their scholarship % for athletes by almost 400%.
- PIAA brings a large amount of exposure to neighborhoods.
- Reduces the truancy rate, increases attendance, and brings siblings and families together through sports.
- Some children don't have the family support that they need at home; as a result, they are able to get that extra support.
- Only by partnering with everyone in Philadelphia can we bring pool all of our resources together.

Q&A

Q: How have funding and budget cuts affected programs in schools.

A: Robert: We've never experienced things in the past that we have experienced in the past 3 years. Our budget took a tremendous slash from 9 million to 7 million. 7.5 million is half of 1% of the entire budget of the school district. Athletically, we said to schools that if you have less than 6 teams; you can keep what you have. We offer a total of 23 sports. If your school offers between 6-11 teams, you had to drop at least one team. If you have 25 or more, you have to drop three teams. In order to make the new budget work, there had to be a collaborative effort between all schools to cut where they could cut. People appreciated the chance to honestly present and cut their fluff. What we have slowed down is the introduction of new sports because we have to focus on what we have. In this instance, we go to our partners like the PYSC in order to provide these opportunities in non-traditional sports where we cant.

A: James: What I've done that has proven to work well is making the youth pay one fee for all sports. You can choose to play one sport or multiple sports; regardless each youth has that opportunity to play more sports.

A: Stephen: From an after-school perspective, it means you have to be more persistent. The more you're involved and engrained in the culture of your school; those voices within those institutions can provide support for when needed. It's unfortunate that programs like SquashSmarts and the PYSC have to exist because it would be great if the school district provided funding for what we do, however, because we lack in that we do exist and because we exist we have to persevere for the benefits of youth.

Q: Are there other sources of funding to turn to?

A: Robert: We only thrive when our partners thrive. An example of an organization that has been supportive through funding is Beat the Streets. Through their alumni, they provide funding which provides salary for coaches.

Q: How equitable are women sports and what is the retention rate of the girls programs?

A: James: Father Judge is an all-boys high school. However, for other schools within the catholic league that are co-ed, the women programs are flourishing.

A: Robert: I have been very conscious of male/female equity. When the schools ask for programs, we make sure we introduce both male and female programs. When we have pre-existing male programs, we allow the females to join the male sport if there isn't a separate category for females.

Q: What are other challenges outside of budget?

A: James: One is the recruitment of student athletes. Just getting kids to enroll into programs is tough. This past year, we could only get 10 guys out for our cross-country team. Another is the coach's education and controlling the impact they leave on youth. It's very important that the coaches understand that they have an influential role in youths life, therefore, they should

A: Robert: It's hard for us to get back out to always keep tabs on the day-to-day run-down of things. We need to have 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th graders that are able to transition from their playground activities into structured sport in order to properly flourish and compete against others. It's hard to get the confidence they need when they aren't engaged from a young age.

Q: How do you change the culture of sports?

A: Robert: We're the only school district in Pennsylvania that gives written exams to coaches. Once you get a 70% or higher, you qualify for an oral exam. What were coming across is that people are PE teachers are going back to school in order to become principals. Taking a coaching job became a thing of the past. I'm hoping that with our new governor, the stability within public schools can return. Today, people are coaching who didn't necessarily play the game which is a huge problem.

Next Seminar

Location: Starfinder, Wednesday April 22nd

Topic: Funding and Fundraising – The panel will discuss some of the opportunities and challenges that arise in fundraising for youth sport organizations.

Registration link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/BFYHPJR>

Panelists:

- TBA