2019 NCSO
Coaches Clinic

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Recruiting Kids

• Mostly talk to them and personally invite them to a practice. (Pick them!)
• Accept verbal recommendations from other staff.
• Persistent kids who are determined to be on the team a chance.
• Run a “mock” competition with three (3) simple Sci-Oly events. New students are partners with their parent.
• Students who decide that Sci-Oly isn’t for them (at any point) can simply talk to me and leave the team.
Other Extra-Curricular Activities

- Be very clear about the time commitment and the importance of meeting practice goals.
- For sports kids, I counsel them that one sport can work, two sports is usually too many and they should probably not join the team (unless their sports coaches are willing to share them).
- In my experience, fall sports work best, winter sports are more difficult, spring sports are very, very difficult because it is Sci-Oly competition season (regionals & state)
- Simply encourage kids to choose to do what they are passionate about whether it is dance, soccer, or Sci-Oly.
Team Goal Setting

- What do we want from this season?
- Google Forms to collect feedback.
- Follow-up with a student meeting to look at the data and candidly discuss potential goals.
- Vote on team goals.
- Open conversation about how often we need to practice and what the practices need to look like to achieve the goals.
Team Practice Expectations

• Follow all safety procedures.
• Do not waste materials.
• Be where you are supposed to be.
• Be productive. (No cell phones – at all – ever.) (Not even for “study” music)
• Clean up after yourself.
• Students vote on expectations like: mandatory minimum practice hours, cell phone usage
Share Potential Consequences

- Share (in advance) your consequences for not meeting team expectations
- Call home and be picked up early from a practice?
- Temporary suspension from practice?
- Removal from team?
Have Some Fun

- Building community and relationships can be a game changer.
- Game Night
- Induction Ceremony
- Movie Night
- Lock-In
- Invitational Competitions
Team Funding

- Collect activity fee from students to cover team registration ($20 each)
- Amazon wish lists to parents
- Ask for specific items for a particular event – not “general” funding
- Draft a line item team budget and share it with your admin. Make sure to show what families are expected to pay for: t-shirt?, travel?, activity fee?
Communicating With Everyone

- Remind App
- LMS System or Team Website
- Post season calendar that includes practices and competitions
- The students have traditionally created an Instagram account to share information and ask questions (I am aware of it – but do not manage it.)
Getting the Event Rules

• https://store.soinc.org/us/page/Welcome (National Official Manuals)
• https://www.sciencenc.com/resources/ (NC only Rules)
• Download and post on your team website / LMS so they are easy to get to.
• Make several hard copies (bound in a three prong folder) for your team library.
Reading the Rules

• Spend some time early on reading the rules yourself – and with kids.
• Carry a copy around with you at practice.
• Ask kids to work together to summarize the rules (Elevator speech?)
• Ask kids to write improved short event descriptions for their events. (Save them and share them.)
Tournament Schedules

- [https://www.sciencenc.com/tournaments/middle-high/](https://www.sciencenc.com/tournaments/middle-high/)
- Four “periods” on competition day for “academic” events – including walk-in building events.
Getting Kids Into Events

• Give kids a bit of time to explore the events and find what they are passionate about.
• Ask experienced kids to use the rules to write “better” event short descriptions
• Ask kids to fill out an event preference form
• Coach writes a schedule.
• Kids usually get some of what they want and some of what the team needs.
• The schedule is somewhat fluid. Kids may move around some based on their performance.
Basic Event Help

- https://www.sciencenc.com/resources/ (North Carolina)
- https://www.soinc.org/bc-events (National)
- https://scioly.org/wiki/index.php/Main_Page (Wiki)
- https://scioly.org/tests/ (Test Exchange)
Team Library

- Purchase some used books every year
- Textbooks from multiple levels can work (i.e. middle school, high school, & college)
- Helps allow students to be independent
- Free e-books can be used (Ex: CK12 & Annenburg)
- Google “pdf textbook chapter heredity” (or any other topic) (Lots of teachers post their e-textbook access on-line)
Getting Help From Adults

• Ask parents to help with small specific things – think about not asking for a big time commitment (initially)

• Devices are student-built. Suggest “over-helpful” parents build their own device simultaneously

• Ask your principal to offer staff comp time for working with students after school
In-House Competitions

• Kids on your team show up on a Saturday to compete against each other
• Helps you see who knows what – even with partners
• It is a good time to check kid’s binders for evidence of their learning
• Really helps kids with short-term goal setting
• I use whatever test I can find on-line that is appropriate (Not always a Sci-Oly” test
Competition Safety

- Set the stage and largely turn team operations over to parents.
- Students are never alone. (Buddy System)
- Adults are never alone with children who are not their own.
- Chaperones escort middle school students to and from events.
- Every student gets a schedule, chaperones also get a cell phone list of all other chaperones (Collect using Google Forms)
Invitational Competitions

• Practice competition ran by another school – not NCSO. (Field Trip!)
• Traveling and competing brings the kids together. (Imagine a basketball team that practiced for months and played one time.)
• Other Invitationals - https://scioly.org/forums/viewforum.php?f=294