

# *How to Advocate for More Resources in Your Athletic Department*

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# Introductions - Who We Are



## Dr. Jeffrey Sullivan, CMAA

- Director, Systemwide Athletics, Montgomery County (MD) Public Schools
  - 14th largest school district in the country
  - 25 high schools
  - 40 middle schools
  - 161,000 students, 28,000 student-athletes – strong diversity
- President-Elect, Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association
- 21 years as athletic administrator

## Mr. Ben Tensay, CMAA

- 160 HS in entire state of NM
  - Bloomfield Schools has 7 schools, 2 HS, 1 JH and 4 Elementary
  - Serve just over 3000 students k-12; 1/3 Native Americans, 1/3 Anglo and 1/3 Hispanic...HS has approx. 800 students and junior high has approx. 450 students. Athletic participation at the HS level is at 65% and junior high participation is at 54%.
- President of the NMADA
- NMAA Commission Board Member–serving
- NMAA Bylaws Committee Member
- NMAA Scholarship Foundation Board Member
- 1-4A League Chair
- 16 years as coach; 8 years as district athletic director







# Session Outcomes

1. Provide considerations for advocating
2. Conduct a resource analysis
3. Identify the key audiences and stakeholders
4. Share methods for success
5. Identify pitfalls to avoid
6. Celebrate wins
7. Learn the *Advocacy Action Plan*
8. Participate in a small group scenario
9. Identify Next Steps & Resources

Jeff – large, urban district level perspective

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• • • Ben – small, rural district level perspective







# Overarching Advocacy Principles

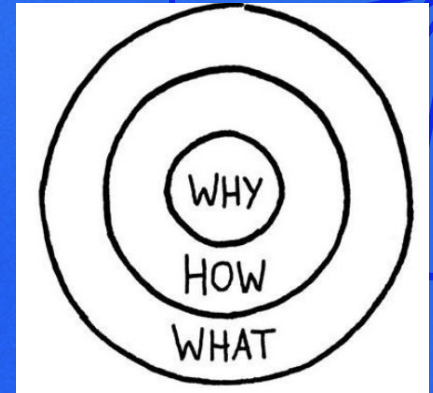
1. Do Your Homework
2. Who Needs to Know?
3. Who Can Help?
4. Plan & Prepare
5. Execute & Adjust
6. Promote & Celebrate



# Resource Analysis

## Key Questions & Considerations:

1. What do we have and Why do we need?  
Prioritize safety & equity, **needs** vs **wants**
1. What is the current financial state of the athletic program and district or school?  
Political dynamics, historical funding
1. How can needs be prioritized and promoted?  
Identify realistic goals, but be aggressive. Think big picture and promotion.
1. What are the clear benefits to student-athletes and coaches?  
Physical, mental, social-emotional well-being
1. How will this make the program stronger in the future? Long-term implications?  
Include long-term funding impact





# Key Audiences & Stakeholders

## Student - Athletes

- Loudest voice
- Feedback
- Promotions

## Coaches & ADs/ACs

- Enhanced operations
- Organize & mobilize
- Showcase
- ATCs as appropriate

## Administrators

- District Athletic Directors
- Principals – key voice
- Unify and assist
- Provide tools and platforms

## Parents/Boosters

- Ongoing communication
- Advocacy
- Celebration

## Board of Education

- Include superintendent
- Respect process
- Public and private advocacy

## Local Politicians

- Respect processes
- Promote and celebrate wins
- Showcase appreciation



# Methods

## 1. Resource Analysis

- Why?
- How?
- What?
- Who?

## 2. Stakeholder Input

- Student-Athletes
- Coaches, ATCs
- ADs/Principals
- Leaders
- Parents/Community

## 3. Game Plan

- Research
- White Paper/Memo
- Board Presentations
- Communications
- Social Media

## 4. Execute

- Clear Timeline
- Contingencies
- Mobilize people
- Involve students

## 5. Advocate

- Clear, consistent communication
- Strategic advocacy
- Finish strong

## 6. Celebrate

- Pass praise
- Celebrate wins
- Communicate resources & promote
- Set stage for next win



# Considerations for Large, Urban School Districts



## Key Considerations:

1. Political dynamics and financial state of district
2. Implications on large program – balance of high schools/middle schools
3. Title IX and equity – including race and socioeconomics
4. Stakeholder input – important along the way
5. Communication – consistent, including media and social media – control narrative
6. Infrastructure – do we have what it takes to maintain?
7. Compliance with state and local regulations
8. Impact on other departments, community entities







# Considerations for Small, Rural School Districts and Schools

*In New Mexico, we have many rural school districts; therefore the following considerations are for those small districts as compared to other large states.*

- When advocating for more funding:
  - Long term impact for the programs
  - Financial state of the school district
  - Title IX and Equity
  - Balancing the travel cost between high school and middle school
  - Fundraising
  - Boosters
  - Donations
  - Communication with Superintendent and Finance Director
- For Bloomfield Schools, athletics is centralized





# Pitfalls to Avoid

**1. Lack of Preparation**

**4. Absence of Input**

**2. Unclear WHY**

**5. Muted Communication**

**3. Taking on Too Much**

**6. Throwing in the Towel**





# Celebrate Wins - Examples of Success

## Montgomery County Public Schools

- Full-time, 12-month athletic directors
- Full-time, 12-month certified athletic trainers and sports medicine program
- Central transportation, enhanced security, field maintenance
- Officials contracts and funding
- Enhanced central athletics department staffing

## Bloomfield Schools

- HS and MS Campus Coordinators for athletics
- Certified Athletic Trainer
- Community support for all athletics (mid school and high school)
- Separate funding for official's pay
- Transportation; security cameras; turf for baseball, softball, soccer and football
- Competitive athletic programs





# Next Steps - Getting Started

## Advocacy Action Plan Top-10 Template – Roadmap for Success

1. Advocacy Initiative or Outcome
2. Goal(s)
3. Rationale and Background
4. Key Stakeholders
5. Advocacy Timeline
6. Communication Strategies
7. Implementation Plan
8. Potential Roadblocks or Challenges
9. Outcomes
10. Celebration & Promotion



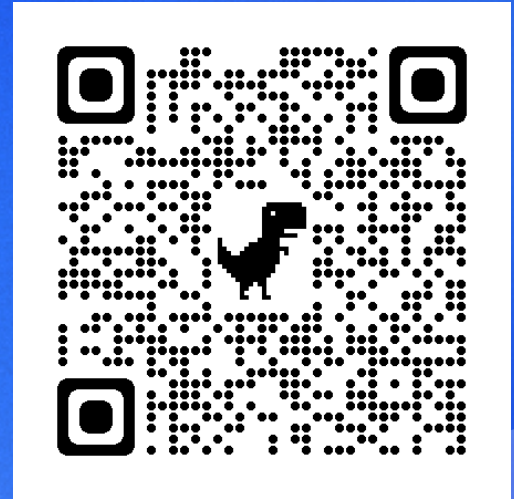


# Scenarios – partner or small group

## Quick Brainstorm – 10 minutes



1. Partner or form small group
2. Open Advocacy Action Plan
3. Identify one initiative or outcome
4. Try to brainstorm one bullet in each section

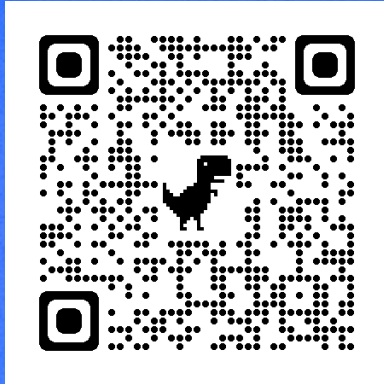






# Reflection & Resources

## Action Plan Template



## Questions & Answers





# Thank You & Good Luck!



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## Advocacy Action Plan Top-10 Template

**Advocacy Initiative or Outcome**

**Goal(s)**

**Rationale and Background (Why)**

**Key Stakeholders (Who)**

**Advocacy Timeline (When)**

**Communication Strategies (How, Where, Who, When, What)**

**Implementation Plan (How)**

**Potential Roadblocks or Challenges (How, What)**

**Outcomes (What & Where)**

**Celebration & Promotion (How, Where, Who, When, What)**