

# Community Baseball Presentation

*Wednesday, September 13, 2023*

# Agenda

- I. Introduction**
- II. Announcements**
- III. Presentation**
- IV. Questions**
- V. Open Forum**
  - A. 2-3 minutes per community member**

# Why I'm Here and My Vision

## Why I'm Here

- To serve all Octorara Baseball student-athletes.
- The game has meant so much in my life and I want to show student-athletes what it can do in their lives.

## My Vision

- 100% of these kids will be adults, but only a small portion will play college and so on.
  - To help student-athletes grow and develop as people through the game of baseball.
  - Create a winning environment; winning as people, as students, as a program.

# Mission Statement

- Serving your children
  - This is a team where opportunities are earned.
- Safety and well-being.
- Control what can be controlled.
- Process-oriented.
- Rewarding vs. fun
- What we're looking for – LEADERS
  - Excellent Academics
  - Character/Behavior
  - Commitment
  - Ownership
    - Baseball is not one-size fits all.
  - Team-Oriented
    - Roles
  - Coachable
- Build Trust
- Your child is accountable for convincing us that they should play through the above and skills/abilities as it pertains to the game.

# Coaching Staff Approach

## What We Want to See

- Student-athletes playing competitive baseball with peers from the Octorara community, improving through that process, and competent for JV level baseball.
  - Prioritize HS Baseball in season and in the summer.
  - Encourage students to play other sports.
  - Encourage those who don't to take advantage of offseason opportunities.

## Challenges

- Giving everyone the time and attention in the various feeder programs.
- Cautious about actions with everyone.

# Announcements

## 1. Student-Athlete Interest Meeting (Offseason is VOLUNTARY)

- Information was given to both MS and HS, but we only have enough room and resources to prioritize HS at this time.
- Packet of Information given; sent lesson resources, clinic information previously
- Why off-season workouts?
  - Safety and injury minimization, creation of healthy habits for life.
- Compilation of experience and working with Athletic Trainers, coaches and players at collegiate level in various programs.
- September-November
  - Speed/Agility
  - Workouts on their own with program provided – Mr. Durante Tues and Thurs from 2:45-4:00pm HS Gym
    - Beginner and advanced levels, stretching/yoga off-day activities.
  - Long toss program beginning in November
- December-February
  - Team weightlifting
  - JH Gym baseball sessions starting Saturday, December 2nd.
  - I have information on nutrition and supplements, but that was not included in the packet of information.

# Announcements Continued...

- 1. MS Baseball is funded for 2024 and resources are purchased for the season.**
  - We will continue to do so each year because that's what a school should do for their community, and what is outlined for a school to do for a district program as per Board Policy 915.
- 2. Baseball in this community will run as it has since I've been here this season.**



# Our Current State

1. MS Baseball
2. Club Level Travel
3. Organizational Travel
4. Little League
5. Some combination of the above.



# What I've Learned

- Little League
  - Consistent numbers from lowest ages through 50/70.
  - 14 and up fluctuates; sometime there is a Junior team, sometimes a Senior, rarely both, and sometimes no teams at all.
  - 14 years old and up sometimes start late and have trouble filling out teams.
  - Can be played in conjunction with MS Baseball and some travel.
- MS Baseball
  - Access to everyone in JH school building and home school students within district limits.
  - Fluctuates based on student-athlete participation.
  - Must be in 7th and 8th grade (usually ages 13-14).
  - Can be played in conjunction with LL (50/70 or 14 level depending on age) and some travel teams depending on the organization.

# What I've Learned

- Travel
  - Club level
    - Comprised only or mostly Octorara student-athletes.
    - Some of these teams are able to play in conjunction with LL and MS and some are not.
    - These teams are run by a collection of individuals/parents of student athletes.
  - Organizations
    - Some players have elected to play with travel organizations scattered across Lancaster and Chester counties → Elite, Keystone Bombers, WC Dragons, All-Star, and several others in PA and even MD.
    - These teams are comprised of some Octorara student-athletes as well as other student-athletes from communities outside of Octorara.

# Little League

## Pros

- League is growing and robust from lowest age through 50/70 (age 13).
- Inclusive; no cuts.
- Kids playing with their local community members.
- Can be played in conjunction with other outlets.
- All-Stars/Postseason.

## Info to Consider

- Junior division and up (14 years old and up) has inconsistencies.
  - Not enough participation or games played depending on start time.
  - Kids not always leveled appropriately because of possibly playing up.
- Competition inconsistent.

# MS Baseball

## Pros

- Meets the needs for some in the community.
  - Proximity.
  - School transportation.
- Can be played in conjunction with other outlets.
- Kids playing on 60-90 field.
- School running things makes it easier financially.

## Info to Consider

- Turnover in coaches.
- Not having two teams consistently; numbers fluctuating.
- 7th graders having to play up if teams have to combine (not leveled properly)
- Possible cuts depending on numbers.
- Not enough games played.
- Some games not being rescheduled.\*
- No postseason.
- ChesMont League can decide to not renew Octorara for MS Baseball since the HS program is no longer in that league.\*

# Club Level Travel (Lancaster Youth)

## **Pros**

- Octorara kids playing together.
- Competitive baseball.
- Leveling of players into sections.
- Opponents are other communities we will play in HS.
- 18+ games; games are rescheduled.
- Postseason opportunities.

## **Info to Consider**

- Not inclusive in its current form.
- Not run by an association.
- Not able to play in conjunction with other outlets or LCYBL games are forfeit.
- Field dimensions.
- Proximity and transportation issues for away games due to times of games.

# Organizational Travel

## **Pros**

- Players improve due to resources of these organizations.
- Competitive\*
- Can be done in conjunction with other outlets, including HS Baseball and HS Summer Baseball.
- Recruitment.

## **Info to Consider**

- Players not playing with community members.
- Not always competitive (varies by tournament, etc.)\*
- Less utilization of HS coaches for recruitment.
- Price.

# What's the Pathway Forward?



# Option 1: Keep Thing the Same

- Baseball continues to remain a household decision in the most literal sense.
  - MS
  - Little League
  - Club Travel (such as Lancaster Youth)
  - Organizational Travel
  - Combination of the above.



## Option 2: Little League Pathway

- MS Baseball is handled by Little League at their 14 year old level.
- We recommend that kids move into LL at 14 and continue there after their 50/70 year.
- LL runs it as they normally would.
  - Board Policy 915 outlines that Booster Clubs can only be involved with district programs.
  - Booster organizations must conduct their activities in a manner that is consistent with the district's policies and administrative guidelines... in compliance with Title IX as observed both as a separate organization and as combined with district programs and initiatives; with PIAA rules and regulations...

## Option 2: Little League Pathway

- Upsides
  - More control for community.
  - Direct pipeline from LL into HS, which is already in place at LL, but we can make it even more linear and perhaps bring in more kids to that level.
  - More access for female athletes and no red tape if they want to play baseball.
  - No cuts.
- Considerations
  - Coaching would be on a volunteer basis and if volunteers aren't available.
  - Handling numbers depending on kids coming through.
  - HS and this organization are separate, but perhaps could work together on fundraisers to support both.

## Option 3: Lancaster Youth Baseball League Pathway

- None of these teams are run by their school. They all run by a private league/organization, so an association would need to be created.
  - Board Policy 915 outlines that Booster Clubs can only be involved with district sponsored programs.

# Option 3: Lancaster Youth Baseball League Pathway

- Upsides
  - Grants more control for the community as it relates to baseball rather than the school.
  - More access for female players compared to MS Baseball.
  - Tryouts
    - JV and Varsity Baseball coaches would be in charge of tryouts.
      - Outside agency could be contracted to do tryouts so it is fair and unbiased.
    - Created Board would be in charge of hiring coaches.
  - Control not in the hands of an outside party or entity.
- Considerations
  - Separate organization and Board would need to be created.
  - HS and this organization are separate, but perhaps could work together on fundraisers to support both.
  - Kids could not play LL at Junior level, only rostered on LCYBL team.

# Possible Lancaster Youth Team Formats





- No cuts - Players are leveled similar to HS.
- Format 1:
  - Get all 13 and 14 years olds together, have an outside agency come in, hold a tryout, and level teams.
    - Prioritize 14 in Lancaster Youth and select appropriate level for that season.
    - Higher level 13 years olds could also play on a Lancaster Youth team.
    - Kids still developing encouraged to play 50/70 or we create a Section 3 team in Lancaster Youth.
- Format 2
  - 13 year olds play 50/70 and LL handles tryouts, etc. for that age.
  - Only 14 year olds try out and are leveled for one or more Lancaster Youth teams.


# Baseball Boosters

*Board Policy 915 and Moving Forward*





# Board Policy 915

The bylaws/constitution of the organization must satisfy the following requirements:

1. The bylaws must be approved by a majority of the group it represents. 
2. An annual budget must be approved by the governing body. 
3. Two (2) signatures are required on all accounts for disbursement of funds. 
4. Statement indicating that coaches and/or district advisors shall not handle funds of the booster club. A coach's/advisor's role in the functioning of the booster club is solely in an advisory capacity. 

**We are now a Non-profit (501c) which is allowed by Board Policy 915** - “Groups should consider filing with the Commission on Charitable Organizations, Department of State, as a charitable nonprofit organization, and they shall follow any IRS State Reporting requirements.” 

# Board Policy 915

1. A process is in place for members to vote upon how funds will be used. 
2. The criteria for membership and voting rights in the organization. 
3. The mechanism by which an internal audit is conducted annually. (Note: This may be assigned through bylaws to an audit committee of the membership.) 
  - a. Annual budget from July 1 - June 30; including organization's name and date submitted to be submitted one (1) month prior to the start of the organization's season.
  - b. Annual Treasurer's Report or external audit no later than ninety (90) days following the conclusion of the season, or June 30 if a year-round activity, and forwarded to the Board upon request.
4. A description of how assets will be disbursed in the event the organization is disbanded. Equipment or funds shall become the property of the district in the event a booster club chooses to disband. 



# Next Steps

\*Expect Booster Meeting in Oct./Nov.

\*Expect 2024 vote of officers before end of year.

1. Bylaws need to be amended in certain areas and voted on by members.
  - a. Change voting eligibility standards to make access to voting more feasible.
  - b. Membership wording addressed.
    - i. *As per Board policy 915 - "organization comprised of parents/guardians or community members who choose to support an extra or co-curricular activity."*
  - c. Statement regarding the role of coaches in a Booster Club.
  - d. Process in place for for members to vote on how funds will be used when the dollar amount is above a certain amount. (\$1000)
2. Provide AD the following:
  - a. Amended/Updated Bylaws
  - b. Updated officer information (names, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses).

# Next Steps

1. Reorganize and re-vote (we re-vote every year anyway as per Bylaws)
2. Board Positions:
  - a. President
  - b. VP
  - c. Treasurer
  - d. Secretary
  - e. Operations Coordinator
    - i. Helps execute fundraising events and work on sponsorships.
    - ii. Liaisons with MS Baseball in whatever format chosen.
  - f. Bylaws, Section 5.2 - VP and Operations Coordinator added.
  - g. Bylaws, Article VI - add what VP and Operations Coordinator do.

# Community Responsibility

- More people attending Booster meetings so that your voice is represented.
- People from different perspectives sitting down and working out the best way forward.

# What Each Role Entails in our Booster Club

01

President

- In charge of scheduling and running Board meetings.
- Works with the HS Administration on behalf of the program.
- Planning team picnic, Senior Night, banquet (and all that's included).
- In charge of getting volunteers and establishing committees for any events as necessary.

02

VP

- Supporting the President in any roles that they he/she needs help with.
- Filling the role of the President if necessary.
- Handle inquiries from parent(s)/guardian(s) as it relates to Board operations.

# What Each Role Entails in our Booster Club

03	Treasurer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Financial responsibilities (credit card, bank account, maintaining our non-profit status, taxes, quarterly and end of year report, purchasing, working with fundraising companies, etc.)</li><li>• Need to have a knowledge of spreadsheets and record keeping (Excel, Google Sheets, bookkeeping, taxes).</li><li>• Works on organizing schedules and financials as it pertains to fundraising.</li><li>• Maintenance of website.</li></ul>
04	Secretary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Record keeping.</li><li>• Communicating with families about Booster business of all types.</li><li>• Other duties assigned by President and/or VP.</li></ul>
05	*Operations Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In charge of planning and implementation of fundraisers and sponsorship work.</li><li>• Liaison with other organizations as necessary.</li></ul>