RECRUITING STUDENTS AND COACHES
TO YOUR ACADEMIC PROGRAM. HOW TO
FIND OPPORTUNITIES AND MAKE
SUCCESSES POSSIBLE IN SMALLER
PROGRAMS WITH LIMITED RESOURCES.

Robert Blain

(Houston) Aldine G.W. Carver Magnet HS



BEFORE WE GET STARTED

Register your attendance.

Complete this form for each session you attend.

Session numbers are in the program.

This one: Session 750.



Rosters



Native of Beaumont; UIL Academics competitor in middle and high school

QUICK CV ON THE PRESENTER (BECAUSE HE HATES **TALKING ABOUT** HIMSELF)

2nd-Career Educator (data analyst for Universal Computer Systems for ~5 years)

Got into education in 2006; jumped to learn from great coaches both at Westfield and around the state... still learning and gleaning

Coaching and working as UIL Coordinator for past decade

Coached or served as Coordinator/Coach for state finalists in multiple events

NOW THAT THAT IS OVER...LET'S GET DOWN TO BRASS TACKS

The main issues we all deal with- whether we're in a large or small school, whether we have a developed or developing program are:

- Committed coaches
- Committed students
- Stretching the dollar
- Campus community "buy-in"
- Your most valuable resource is the HUMAN resource.
- Any other overarching ones y'all have experienced?

FULL DISCLOSURE

PARTS OF THIS PRESENTATION WERE CROWD-SOURCED FROM OTHER COACHES AND COORDINATORS BECAUSE HE KNOWS HE DOESN'T HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS.

"A SMART MAN HAS ALL THE ANSWERS. A WISE MAN HAS ALL THE QUESTIONS."

SO, LET'S TALK.



It all starts with the people- the coaches and the students.



Understand your campus- each has its own challenges... whether a 6A HS with 3000 students or a 2A HS with 200... or a 6A HS with 700 students.



Smaller schools = Smaller pools of students



Larger schools = More programs to compete with for attention

FIRST CHANCE TO PROGRAM BUILD > TALKING TO THE DECISION MAKERS





Talking to district staff about stipends for coaches

Talking to the campus principal about support for the program

SO, LET'S GET OVER A HURDLE

We know Admin has their focus on items like:

- Not unwanted attention for test scores
- Getting positive publicity for the school
- The budget

Sell UIL Academics to Admin with points like:

- TEKS connections in UIL
- Opportunity for local media coverage
- Use UIL to ease class sizes
- ... and yeah, all the stuff that Dr. Stevens mentioned in his session.

Recruit during inservice days.

NOW, THAT YOU HAVE SOME IDEAS ON GETTING BUY-IN, IT'S TIME TO GET SOME COACHES!!!

Pay attention to who the students are always talking about.

Newer teachers are often looking for their niche.

Never know- there may be a veteran teacher who never got asked. We have a ComSci sponsor NEXT YEAR because he saw "We never have anyone. I can at least get a positive score!"



To me, it's easier to find the committed students than coaches who believe they have the time.



I was a smart kid (though not dedicated enough to make it to UIL State)... but they're out there!

TIME TO GET SOME STUDENTS



The problem being: they've got so much going on.



Talk to the middle school sponsors – great way to get the freshmen before they even show up.



Find the AcaDec students; 2/3 of teams are done in January (99% are done by March 1^{st}). Great way to fill out the team to replace someone who had to drop.

TIME TO GET SOME STUDENTS ACT 2 IDEAS FOR RECRUITING STUDENTS

- If you feed them, they will come (both recruiting and for meetings)
 - Ice Cream Party (even get the principal to pay for it)
 - Punch, Chips, and Cookies
 - Literally put snacks on my Amazon Wish List.
- Talk up:
 - The travel
 - TILF Scholarships
 - Chance to be involved
 - Prove you're "smarter than the average bear"
- Talk to the 9th Grade Teachers about:
 - Who's doing well in September
 - · Who did well the previous year for new recruits
- Special invites
 - "Your Teachers Nominated You" (everyone likes to feel special)
- Google Form. Just like the campus sends out updates and announcements about everything else, have them blast out a link to a Google Form, post a QR Code, make an announcement.
- Upperclassmen- well, we know their value.

TIME TO GET SOME SOME STUDENTS - THE FINALE (PROGRAM PROMOTION)

Success breeds success! Your current kids are your best recruiters.

Oh yeah! Take pictures of the fun stuff!

Use in-house sources

- Morning Announcements
- · Campus newspaper, if you have one
- "Team placed 6th at _____ Invitational" ← as Stevens would say, "No one needs to know there were only 6 schools there and Number Sense had a negative team score that time!"

T-shirts also breed success!

- Great advertising for the program (esp. if the team designs it)
- Gets people talking
- Offer the shirts to the staff to help defray the per-unit cost

"BUT, ROBERT, MY CAMPUS IS SMALL LIKE YOURS. THEY'RE ALREADY IN BAND... AND THEATER... AND TAKE CARE OF SIBLINGS AFTER SCHOOL... AND EVEN WORK!"

- Thanks for asking!
- There's no magic formula for this.
 - Remember: If they're talented enough to excel while in other activities on/off campus, there's a way to make it work!
 - Might mean having practice late (ooh, a day to get WSs printed, your next 2 tests into Eduphoria, and call that parent who never answers at 9:15AM)
- Again, success breeds success!



The dedicated class period.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THOSE OVERINVOLVED STUDENTS



Meeting them where they are.



Vary up where and when you meet.

Literally, met at Starbucks, DQ, Whataburger Dunkin



If possible, let them meet w/o you there. Can't be in the room when they testlet them work w/o you.

Also: more time for yourself... draw the line somewhere!

They can use Google Docs,
Google Meet GroupMe w/o

Google Meet, GroupMe w/o us.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THOSE OVER-INVOLVED STUDENTS

Doubling up meetings

- AM & PM
- Right after school AND after another practice

Create a schedule where sponsors give students a day off.

- Students feel valued, respected, and empowered
- Other sponsors get better meetings
- We all enjoy autonomy
- Helps new coaches by letting them "just coach"
- Again, gives you as a coach some time to have a life.



FINAL IDEAS ON LITTLE SUCCESSES

- Look at previous District/Region results for places where few entries occurred
- Anyone can coach- even outside their expertise
- Create achievable goals
 - If your district had 6 of the 10 WC teams (and you weren't one of them), shooting for Sweepstakes might be too lofty, but "fielding a full team for every event" can be.

NOW, TO THE LIMITED RESOURCES

You have the human resources... now, it's time to cultivate.

SUCCESS TIP #1 FREE SCRIMMAGES

- Steal a page from athletics- scrimmage someone you don't compete against (especially in another classification)
- We created an online world during COVID- keep using it!
- Use old tests as practice material, when possible
 - Doesn't work as well with Lit Crit, Social Studies, CIE, etc.

SUCCESS TIP #2 IN-PERSON INVITATIONALS

Attend them- UIL sponsors 2 sets of practice meets

- At minimum, you have more study material
- Offer to proctor, in exchange for a break on entry fees
 - They want the good proctor
 - You want the price break

Host your own invitational

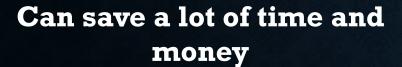
- Frame it to Admin as a fundraiser (they may even absorb the custodial and security charges)
- Brings in revenue
- Consider hosting a MS meet for your ISD's schools for both scouting and recruiting

Keeps the program in the news

Great practice in the real testing setting

SUCCESS TIP #3 ONLINE PRACTICE MEETS





No travel expenses

Often a flat fee regardless of the number of competitors

No giving up a Saturday- testing can be done during the day or after school



You create the "Day of District" experience in your own classroom... which can ease the stress of the real thing.



Some of the more notable ones:

Virtual Challenge Meets (flat fee for all events)

Best of Texas (charges by the event- so might be the better option, if only doing a few events to launch the program)

ADDITIONAL CROWD-SOURCED TIPS

- "Insist the places you go for meets... is the same standards as State."
- "Teachers who... make students believe they can be successful and show they care. That will forever be the main ingredient to success."
- "There are a lot of UIL gurus out there willing to... (virtually or in person)
 workshop your kids as well. Give them tips and such. Also, get them to a
 Student Activities Conference if you can it's free and a great way to build that
 team spirit/camaraderie!

Scheduled weekly practices and work sessions - these are not just for performance events (S&D, theater). And periodically have UIL Team fun days where the whole team does picnic, holiday or whatever fun stuff as a team."

SPEAKING OF STUDENT ACTIVITY CONFERENCES

- September 7th Tyler Junior College (Tyler)
- September 14th Lone Star College North Harris (North Houston)
- October 5th Texas Tech University (Lubbock)
- November 2nd University Of Texas at Austin

• Great information and you'll get into an "usie" like this!!!

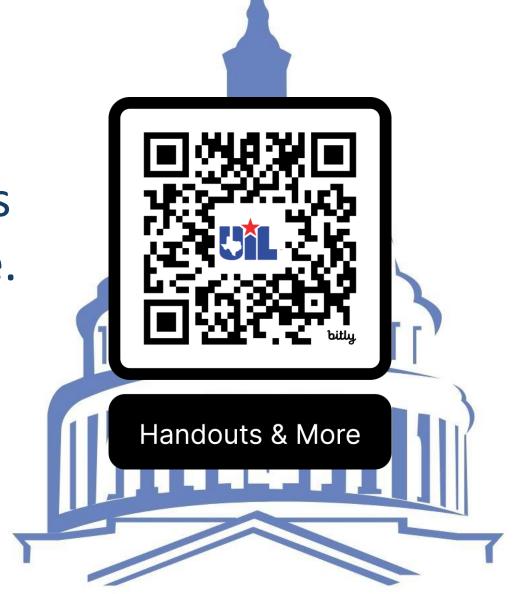


THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING

Registration link, presentations and handouts are available on the website.

Remember to register your attendance for each session.







RBlain@AldineISD.org 281-687-9955

THAT'S IT!!! HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!!! OH YEAH, CONTACT INFO: