

# Captains Council

The who, what,  
where, when, why  
and how behind  
developing an  
athletic leadership  
council at your  
school or district.



*Presentation and program created by:  
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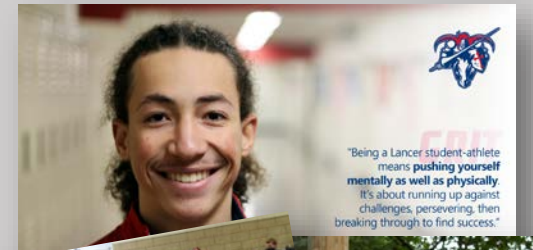


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## Why

- Our best athletes and team captains are already leaders – for better or worse – and most have not received a single day of training on what that *really* means.
- Good leaders don't get to pick and choose when to lead, when to do the right things, and when to be responsible. I've seen many captains who fail to realize this.
- Oftentimes there can be a divide between those in elected student government and those in athletics – the whole Athletics vs. ASB debate.
- In many buildings there is a perception that certain sports are “better” than others.

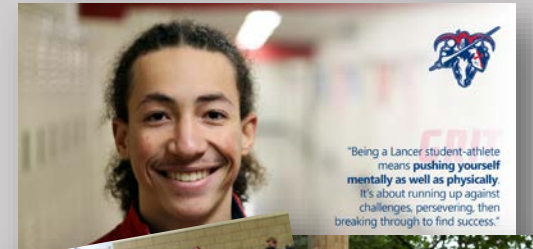


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## What

- A Captains Council is a group of student-athletes brought together to empower and build new and better leaders.
- An athletic leadership council aims to develop leaders within each individual sport, which can help coaches, build a healthy culture between programs, and eliminate intentional or unintentional harassment and bullying at the team level.
- It can serve as an important pipeline of information and communication from AD/Administration directly to the student-athletes.



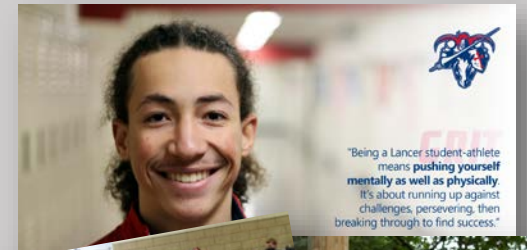
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## What

The side of the coin that is often overlooked is the mental health of student-athletes. Whether it's a mental health crisis or a physical injury, the impact of these events can be significant. It's not just about the physical aspect of sports; it's about the mental and emotional well-being of the athletes. Captains Council can play a role in providing support and resources to student-athletes who are struggling. This can be done through various means, such as providing access to mental health services, offering peer support groups, and providing education on mental health issues. Captains Council can also help to create a supportive environment for student-athletes, where they feel comfortable seeking help and support. This can be done through various means, such as providing access to mental health services, offering peer support groups, and providing education on mental health issues.

It's a challenge to find a way to support student-athletes who are struggling with mental health issues. However, it's not impossible. Captains Council can play a role in providing support and resources to student-athletes who are struggling. This can be done through various means, such as providing access to mental health services, offering peer support groups, and providing education on mental health issues. Captains Council can also help to create a supportive environment for student-athletes, where they feel comfortable seeking help and support. This can be done through various means, such as providing access to mental health services, offering peer support groups, and providing education on mental health issues.

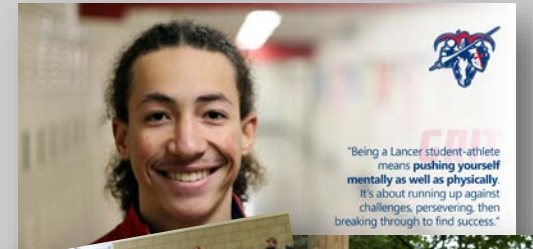


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## Who

- The beauty comes from using sports as a platform for developing leadership skills and building culture, reaching your audience at a place of interest and passion.
- Work with coaches to nominate student-athletes that 1) already/will hold a leadership role on a team, or 2) have potential to be a leaders - one way or another - but either don't know it or don't see themselves in this light.
- Ensure that all programs have a voice and opportunity to participate.
- Look at the group dynamic, looking to create a room full of diverse thoughts, actions and experiences.



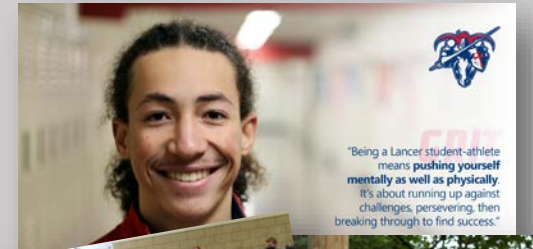
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## Where & When

Captains Councils can be developed at any level, any age, at any school, district or league.

- **Year-round:** Regular meetings with a group of leaders, with different lessons and outcomes from each meeting.
  - **Benefits:** Group dynamic develops over time, relationships are built outside of social circles, student-athletes develop pride with being in group, create a pathway for student-athletes to have access to AD/admin.
  - **Drawbacks:** Finding a regular schedule that works with everyone, developing fresh content on a regular basis, dealing with the realities of working with youth.



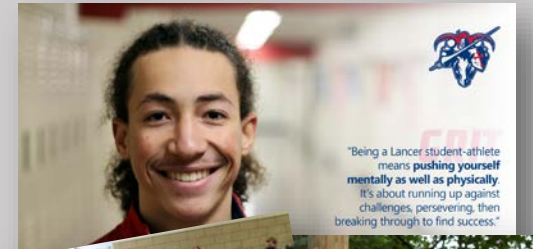
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- **One-time workshop-style:** Bring your high school kids to your middle school, bring in an outside speaker to target a specific group of kids or hold a leadership workshop (interhigh-style) for your league.
  - **Benefits:** Allows for the ability to package a program and deliver it to multiple groups, spreads the wealth and reaches a broader number of students, can build common experiences across schools and sport.
  - **Drawbacks:** Short time frame can keep the level of impact more surface level, format can cause missed class time, no/little relationship build among leadership w/ students



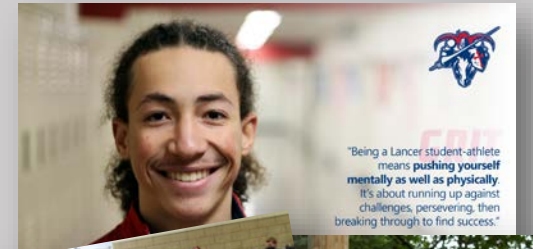
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- **Multi-day retreat-style:** Hold an off-campus 2-day intensive-style retreat where leaders can focus on the task at hand and break down barriers that might be hard to do otherwise.
  - **Benefits:** Removes outside distractions and lets students get comfortable being uncomfortable. From there, true relationships can be built in a relatively short amount of time.
  - **Drawbacks:** Logistical and monetary challenges. Time commitment. Lack of guaranteed follow-up afterwards.



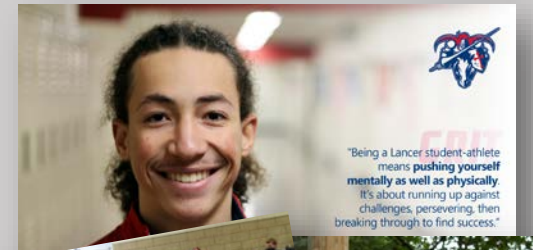
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## How

In order to ensure success, keep them engaged and encourage deep thought, I try to ensure the following:

- All participants should have fun, be relaxed and stay excited throughout.
- Get them comfortable with being uncomfortable.
- Hear from a number of different voices in a number of different settings.
- Nothing happens without a purpose. Allow plenty of time to reflect.



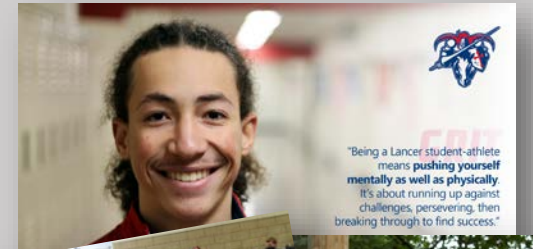
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## How

Meetings and retreats are built to balance an equal mix between academic lecture, small group work, purposeful activities and competitive games. This may include:

- Motivational speakers
- Icebreakers
- Breakout lessons
- Readings, bookwork and real life examples
- Games and competitions





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## Thank you!

I am happy to share any resources (see handout) and help you enact and sort of programming that you might be interested in. Feel free to reach out!

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