

ECSU Coach's Meeting

INFORM, INCLUDE, INVITE, INVOLVE, INFORM, INCLUDE, INVITE, INVOLVE

There are many ways parents can be added to the strength of an academic team. The key to this process is the outreach of the coach. Following are some suggestions in this endeavor.

At the beginning of the season, **inform** parents about the parameters of team involvement. An evening meeting that both parents and students can attend is ideal. A student sample of the competition process is great for newcomers. An information sheet regarding competition schedules and student expectation is essential and should go to all team families.

Include parents in your thinking about team assets and supports. Bring them close to the fire and fun of competition and intellectual curiosity any way you can. They will be able to provide added support to their student, the team as a whole, and you as a coach.

Very directly, **invite** parents to attend any and all competitions. Event times and locations can be challenging, yet, it is significant if a parent can attend even once during the year. And being asked is always nice. Direct messages to parents circumvent any hesitation students may show about parent presence.

Involve parents in the activities of the team. If you host a meet, offer parents the opportunity to staff the many posts that are required. Involve parents in team celebrations scheduled at school or hosted by a team parent. Give parents an opportunity to put their fingers to the strips and their minds to the test. It is a sure way to get them hooked: academic challenge is fun.

Knowledge Bowl and Quiz Bowl are among the varied experiences that we support for our children to help them grow and learn. In these activities, they are given an opportunity to use their wonderful minds, enjoy the intellectual stimulation of data mastery, and build personal confidence in their individual and team problem solving abilities. So why would we as parents want to be excluded from witnessing this joyful learning experience? We've chosen not to, but some parents don't know what they are missing. This is where coaches can help; they can **inform, include, invite, involve**.

One of my favorite guidelines for parenting follows:

When we do things **FOR** our children, we feed and clothe their bodies.

When we do things **WITH** our children, we nourish their spirits.