

**Topic:** Increasing diversity of a program, how to appeal to kids from all backgrounds. How to recruit students to become involved in your program.

For this topic we started with discussing how to recruit students to your program. Through that discussion it was felt we also hit on how to appeal to students from all backgrounds. Reaching out to students in middle school is important. This helps in getting them to know what guard is early on before they get to high school. Since all districts are different as to how the middle schools feed into the high schools some of these ideas may be trickier to implement than others.

Looking around at Wentzville Liberty HS, there are flyers everywhere, as I'm sure is the case at most middle schools and high schools. Putting a flyer on the wall at school just doesn't get the attention you want any more. When using flyers, make them interactive with links to FB pages, Instagram, etc that they can go to and see what guard is all about.

**Thoughts on how to get the attention of and recruit future guard members:**

-Reach out to middle school students in person. Making yourself accessible to them is important. This can be done by coordinating a performance by your high school students at the middle school (ie.-at a spring assembly). Having an opportunity to talk to the middle school students directly and give them information in person is helpful. The students will get to know you as the director and see what fun the high school group is having.

-Put together a 'Spin Club' at the middle school. This could be done after school once a week or during the school day depending on what the schedule is like at the middle school (does the middle school have an 'Encore' or 'Exploration' block during the school day once a week or every other week?).

-Organize a 'Mini Clinic' or two. This clinic can also serve as a fundraiser for the high school program. It can be for elementary and middle school students and taught by your high school group. The students can learn the fight song or other fun songs and then perform at a basketball game, parade, or for their parents at the end of the Mini Clinic.

-If you have a middle school guard or you are advertising your audition camp (or any camp/clinic you have at the middle school level) encourage them to BRING A FRIEND! Also, have your middle school guard students put a 'locker poster' on their lockers to show they are in guard. On this poster can be a QR code that when clicked on takes students to more information and pictures about guard.

-At many high schools, they will have a 'Connection Night' or a night for incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders to tour the building, sign up for classes, or see what clubs and activities they can be involved in. Make sure to set up a table, hand out information, show a video and interact with the incoming freshman (maybe even have some current high school students there to spin for them).

**Biggest Takeaway:** Start recruiting and reaching out to students early—late elementary and middle school. As students to bring a friend to camps or clinics. Make any flyers that put up or hand out have links or QR codes so they are interactive and/or gives information and pictures.