Balling for Heart March Madness

During the month of March, the American Heart Association will partner with Cincinnati Public Schools to promote and engage in a month of healthy heart awareness. On March 2, students from Mt. Airy and Carson Elementary joined together to officially rollout “Balling for Heart March Madness.” Students went through an afternoon of fun and excitement while focusing on living an active lifestyle by running basketball drills with the Shroder High School Varsity basketball team, who attended to support the kids and facilitate the workout.

Moving forward, Elementary students throughout the entire district will participate in weekly challenges during the month of March in their physical education classes centered on the theme of March Madness, as students will exercise through a series of basketball workouts that keep them fit. In addition, they’ll be able to track their level of activity in efforts to make it a point to continue exercising and being active to help themselves develop and maintain a healthy heartbeat!

Preschool Engagement

Athletics Manager, Josh Hardin, with the help of district interns has been making visits to several CPS preschools in efforts to connect with the youth of our city. The objective is to reach developing students and inspired, young minds to create a positive relationship with athletics through brief, fun, and engaging exercises. Each lesson combines gross motor skills with language skills that are important for school success such as listening and following directions, colors, shapes, spatial concepts, vocabulary enrichment and expressive language skills.
**DISTRICT GOLF OUTING**
Cincinnati Public Schools has officially formed a committee to plan the first CPS Golf Outing. **SAVE THE DATE!** The outing will be held at Avon Fields Golf Course on May 6. Visit [www.cps-k12.org/schools/athletics](http://www.cps-k12.org/schools/athletics) to stay in the loop as all the details are released!

**WALNUT HILLS HOSTING OHSAA DIVISION 2 GIRL’S SECTIONAL BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT**
For the past several years, Withrow High School has hosted the OHSAA Girl’s Division 2 Sectional Basketball Tournament. This year, the tournament moved down the road to Walnut Hills High School as a result of the flooding that Withrow’s gym experienced this past fall. District Athletics Manager, Josh Hardin, was announced the Sectional Tournament Manager and organized the first 3 rounds of play with help from district coaches, student-athletes, and interns. This resulted in an excellent opportunity to showcase Walnut Hills High School and the Cincinnati Public Schools District as 14 different Cincinnati area high schools participated.

**NATIONAL LETTER OF INTENT SIGNING DAY**
February 1, 2017 was signing day for prospective NCAA student-athletes all around the country. Cincinnati Public Schools had a handful of students from a variety of high schools that made their commitment to continue their academic and athletic careers at the next level! Aiken, Clark, Hughes, Walnut Hills, and Woodward each held ceremonies to honor and showcase their students as they signed National Letters of Intent with their peers and administrators joining them in support.

**Hughs football signees, seated left to right:** Terrell Sparks (Olivet Nazarene College), Kevon Cephas (Urbana University), Tony Buckley (Urbana University), Juwann Blair (Hocking College)

**Walnut Hills signees, seated left to right:** Alex Hines (Soccer-Mount St. Joseph University), Skye Lewis (Swimming-Wright State University), Isabella Leisgang (Softball-Thomas More College); standing left to right: Randall Smallwood (Soccer-Capital University), Quinton Mincy (Wrestling-University of Chicago), Michael Davenport (Football-Miami University), Kai Kremer (Football-Quincy University), Justin Lockett (Football-Tiffin University)
What made you decide to coach basketball?
Basketball has always been a part of my life. From grade school until high school, basketball kept me off the street, helped me to develop friendships, and gave me a place to hide my frustrations and any problems that I had while growing up. I wasn’t the most talented player during high school, but I learned the game and was able to help my friends/teammates who were better develop their game. Once I graduated from college I wanted to get involved in coaching because I wanted to help develop young men into men and I knew sports were a great way to have this impact on young men who came from the same environment that I did.

With this being your first year as the Shroder basketball coach, what is the most important thing you’ve learned so far?
As a coach, x’s & o’s is the smallest part. As a coach, I am responsible for student-athlete’s grades, making sure players have food, teaching about manhood and how you are to carry yourself (on and off the court). The most important thing I’ve learned in patience. When coaching and mentoring young men, you have to remain patient with them as you are trying to influence change. A majority of young men have never been held accountable about anything, and when trying to influence change, it’s not going to happen right away. You have to stay consistent and helpful throughout the entire process. If you develop a positive, hardworking mentality, the win on the court will eventually happen.

Can you elaborate on the M.O.R.E. program that you conduct and your future goals with the program?
The Men organized, Respectful and Educated (M.O.R.E.) Program nurtures academic success and strong character development among African-American and other at-risk young men from grades 4-12 in Cincinnati Public Schools (CPS). M.O.R.E. helps to promote measurable improvements in academic achievement, grade-level promotion, graduation rates, and college readiness.

Each of the 26 M.O.R.E Clubs (15 elementary, and 11 middle/high schools) include after-school programs and monthly and quarterly enrichment opportunities that focus on financial literacy, leadership development, good citizenship, health/wellness, college/career awareness, social skills development, academic support, and more. I am responsible for program development and implementation of new innovative ideas. These ideas will enhance the academic and social growth of the young men in the Cincinnati Public Schools district. I am responsible for developing yearly goals that will increase growth throughout the program. My future goal is to make the M.O.R.E. Program an actual academic class. I truly believe a “M.O.R.E.” class will have a great impact on how the young men in our district view themselves, and it will help develop our young men as they transition from boys to men.

As an alum of Shroder High School, how has it been to come back and coach at your alma mater?
It has been great! Although it hasn’t been perfect, my coaching staff and I – three of which are graduates of Shroder High School – have been able to get our alumni involved with the school and our sports programs. There’s no greater feeling than being able to lead a place that has had profound impact on adolescent year as well as my professional career.

What does the future/your vision of the Shroder basketball program look like?
Shroder basketball will be a program where students and parents know that academics are first and sports are second. Players will have to practice and play at the highest level in order to remain. Our program will be known as a program that develops their players on the court and in life. We want our players and parents to know that they are a part of a caring program that puts young men first. Every decision will be based on the improvement of our boys!