



## SAMPLE MATERIAL

### Role of the Academic Coach

Sleepy Hollow High School, New York

**Topic:** Dropout Prevention

**Practice:** Adult Advocates

These documents describe the role of the academic coach at Sleepy Hollow High School. The academic coach is a member of the school faculty who works with student-athletes on the football team. The academic coach communicates regularly with teachers to review each student's performance and expectations. Teachers notify the coach when students are missing assignments, prior to important tests to facilitate study sessions, or when a student disrupts instruction.

The academic coach also helps prepare student-athletes for New York State's Regents exam. Review classes with the coach are specially designed for the team and are mandatory prior to the exams. The program's goals are to improve students' grade point average; to engage students in community service; to enhance life skills development; and to increase graduation rates, opportunities for higher education, and family involvement.

## **SLEEPY HOLLOW HIGH SCHOOL 2008-2009 PROGRAM**

The Play It Smart Coach is already a member of the faculty of the high school. The Academic Coach is also the “Permanent Substitute Teacher” for the building and is on the school grounds each day. The Academic Coach has his own workroom complete with three computers and a printer, a conference table, chairs, reference material and bookshelves that hold a copy of textbooks in use around the school.

Letters have gone out to both the faculty and parents introducing the Academic Coach and have outlined what his responsibilities are. The Coach has ongoing communication with each and every teacher; constantly reviewing each student/athlete’s performance and expectations. Teachers contact the Coach on a daily basis with assignments that student(s) are missing. They also contact the Coach prior to important tests to facilitate study sessions with the coach. Teachers also contact the Coach if and when a student is causing any form of disruption in the classroom. Student/Athletes are always being reminded that they are to serve as examples and role models for the other students in the class and be of the best character always.

Another great responsibility of the Coach is to prepare student/athletes for NYS Regents examinations. Review classes especially designed and organized for the team will be mandatory prior to exams in June. For example, Juniors on the team will be required to attend review sessions for the United States History Regents Exam which will be conducted by the Academic Coach and monitored by seniors and team captains.

Space has already been allocated for team study sessions, however, there are no formal, scheduled study halls as yet, for the team as a whole or for separate classes for the upcoming year.

Sleepy Hollow's administration has already provided support from the faculty and the guidance department in giving access to any and all academic records. Guidance counselors have been extremely helpful in determining which individual student/athletes require assistance. They have also been beneficial during individual counseling sessions to review individual achievement and developing programs for the team members. Both the Principal and the two Assistant Principals have been of enormous help in providing for the individual team members.

Parent involvement in Play It Smart will receive increased attention for the 2008 – 2009 school year. Team coaches and the "booster" club will insure, along with the Academic Coach that parents will seek out the help of the Academic Coach in providing for the student/athlete.

**NEIL S. GROSS**  
**SLEEPY HOLLOW HIGH SCHOOL**  
**[ngross@tufsd.org](mailto:ngross@tufsd.org)**

**September 17, 2008**

**Dear Parents and Guardians,**

**I am indeed fortunate to have been given the opportunity once again to work as the Academic Coach for the members of the Sleepy Hollow High School football team, the Horsemen, this school year. I have seen firsthand how valuable this program is for our students.**

**Through day-to-day interaction with the teachers, I have been able to monitor and check up on our students' progress. I consider myself to be an educator who believes strongly in the partnership that must be formed between student, parent and teacher.**

**I will be working closely with Mr. Chuck Scarpulla, Coach Borys, the entire coaching staff and the faculty at Sleepy Hollow including the Guidance Department and the administrators. Together, we will insure that all of our players have the necessary tools to reach their true potential – “ . . . let each become all they are capable of becoming.” I will also be encouraging them to explore and contemplate all the options that are available to them after graduation.**

**The focus of the Play It Smart Program continues to be: 1) to improve GPA, 2) to increase the number of students taking the SAT/ACT and to improve scores on those tests, 3) to increase graduation rates and opportunities for higher education, 4) to enhance life skills development, 5) to increase opportunities for community service, and 6) to increase parental and family involvement.**

**Please feel free to contact me with any and all suggestions and concerns at [ngross@tufsd.org](mailto:ngross@tufsd.org) or at (914) 260-9624.**

**Sincerely,**

**Neil S. Gross**  
**Academic Coach**



**Dear Teachers and Staff,**

**This program is designed to transform our student-athletes' passion for sports and intense dedication to their team into a force for "greater good in their lives". Thus far, I have witnessed the promise of this program. Students who were once in need of assistance are beginning to take responsibility for their future not only on the playing field, but in the classroom and in the community at large.**

Sincerely,

**Neil S. Gross**  
**Academic Coach**

**PLAY IT SMART  
SLEEPY HOLLOW HIGH SCHOOL  
TARRYTOWN, NY  
Academic Coach: Neil S. Gross**

**“BEST PRACTICES”  
2008**

<p><b>EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WITH CLASSROOM TEACHERS</b></p>
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**EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES**

- **Stay in contact with the teachers – make them feel as if they’re part of the team also**
- **Share your ideas and strategies about how to work with a student. Many teachers are receptive to positive and constructive input**
- **When a student is off-track, listen intently to the classroom teacher and offer suggestions – sometimes just being able to listen will help**
- **When a student is off-track let the student know that the teacher and the coaches know what is going on**
- **Maintain a teacher-contact log – constantly update with all communications**
- **Maintain a parent-contact log – parents are often the subtle solution to any problem**
- **Insure weekly contact with all team members, not just the ones who are in need**

**The National Football Foundation's Play It Smart Program  
Promoting Academic Coaching Excellence – Fall 2008-2009**

**School:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Academic Coach:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Sleepy Hollow High School

New York

Neil S. Gross

11/15/08

<b>Parental and Family Involvement:</b> Contacts, workshops, group meetings, individual meetings, organized activities, etc.	AC worked closely with the Booster Club at each and every Friday night dinner before a game and helped with Booster sales during each game	Athletic Director, Principal, Team Coaches all assisted	
<b>Additional Activities</b>	AC worked with Booster Club to provide end of season activities that stressed continued work as Student/Athletes	GAF applications will be forthcoming	
<b>Career Planning for Participants</b>			
<b>College Planning</b> Activities that foster student-athlete's college search and planning process	Worked with individual team members to initiate and plan for college planning process. Assisted team members with essay writing and interview process practice		
<b>NCAA Clearinghouse</b> – Providing necessary core course and initial eligibility information for students	Reviewed what was learned at the Convention this past summer	NCAA material received this past summer	
<b>Financial Aid</b> – Individual or group assistance with FAFSA, scholarships, etc.	Helped several students with preparing for scholarship process	Guidance counselors provided necessary forms and brochures	
<b>Community Service</b> - See "Art of Giving Back" for Level I, II, III descriptions.	Along with team coaches – encouraged team members to immerse themselves in the concept of "giving back" to the community	Booster Club and Team is already involved in several community activities	



**The National Football Foundation’s Play It Smart Program**  
**Promoting Academic Coaching Excellence – Fall 2008-2009**

**School:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Academic Coach:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PLANNED AND CREATED BY:** Neil S. Gross (Academic Coach)

SIGNATURE	TITLE	DATE

**REVIEWED BY:**

SIGNATURE	TITLE	DATE



**The National Football Foundation's Play It Smart Program  
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School: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Academic Coach: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>ORBIT and Data Submissions</b>			
<b>School Contact Information – ORBIT</b> Superintendent, Principal, AD, Head Coach, Additional Administrator	All information complete and accurate (email, phone #, address) <b>September 30, 2008</b>	<b>ON FILE WITH PLAY IT SMART NATIONAL OFFICE</b>	
<b>Personal Data Sheets</b>	90% of students on roster complete Personal Data Sheet –Submitted to National Office (TX) by <b>September 30, 2008</b>	<b>ON FILE WITH PLAY IT SMART NATIONAL OFFICE</b>	
<b>Rosters entered in ORBIT</b>	Roster entered by <b>September 30, 2008</b>	<b>ON FILE WITH PLAY IT SMART NATIONAL OFFICE</b>	
<b>Program Mid-Year Information – ORBIT</b>	Information entered by <b>January 15, 2009</b>	<b>ON FILE WITH PLAY IT SMART NATIONAL OFFICE</b>	
<b>Senior Future Contact Information – Each</b> senior on the team completes and submits this form	90% of seniors complete Exit Interviews sent to National Office (TX) by <b>June 30, 2009</b>	<b>ON FILE WITH PLAY IT SMART NATIONAL OFFICE</b>	
<b>Program End-of-Year information - ORBIT</b>  Student information on SAT/ACT, GPA, graduation status etc.	Information entered by <b>June 15, 2009</b>	<b>ON FILE WITH PLAY IT SMART NATIONAL OFFICE</b>	

**The National Football Foundation's Play It Smart Program  
Promoting Academic Coaching Excellence – Fall 2008-2009**

School: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Coach: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### III. Program Reporting Activities

Activity	Program Objectives	Documentation	Notes
<b>Reporting and Planning Documents</b>			
<b>2008-09 Program Application</b>	Program Application <i>was</i> completed and on file with National Office by appropriate 2008 Spring Deadline:  <b>April 1, 2008</b>	<b>ON FILE WITH PLAY IT SMART NATIONAL OFFICE</b>	
<b>Memorandum of Agreement</b>	Signed and submitted to National Office (TX) by <b>September 17, 2008</b>	<b>ON FILE WITH PLAY IT SMART NATIONAL OFFICE</b>	
<b>Academic Coach Résumé on File</b>	Updated résumé on file with National Office (TX) by <b>September 17, 2008</b>	<b>ON FILE WITH PLAY IT SMART NATIONAL OFFICE</b>	
<b>PACE Document - Fall</b>	Typed and Signed copy submitted to National by <b>September 30, 2008</b>	<b>ON FILE WITH PLAY IT SMART NATIONAL OFFICE</b>	
<b>PACE Document Mid-Year</b> Post Season Re-Evaluation to begin in December 2007	Submitted to National by <b>January 15, 2009</b>	<b>ON FILE WITH PLAY IT SMART NATIONAL OFFICE</b>	



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School: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Coach: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Sleepy Hollow High School

NY

Neil S. Gross

11/15/08

## I. Student Focused Activities

Activity	Program Objectives	Documentation	Notes
<b>Direct Service to Participants</b>			
<b>Study Hall</b> – Study groups or tables that take place after or during school hours.	The team study hall will be located in the AC's classroom and team members scheduled for academic work will meet 7:30 – 8:30 am and 2 – 3 pm	Lists of students and subjects will be maintained by AC	
<b>Individual Meetings</b> – College, career, personal, athletic, academic or social 1:1 counseling/mentoring.	AC has been meeting individually with each team member for academic and personal coaching – the AC will meet with guidance counselors for college and career counseling	AC will maintain lists of team members receiving coaching and counseling on an individual basis	
<b>SAT/ACT Prep</b> – Planning & tutoring for SAT/ACT prep. May include tutoring, registration process, test day support, etc.		Assistance in planning for a using study material was done on an individual basis	
<b>Smart Skills Workshops</b> - Formalized small group or team workshops, guest speaker events, etc.	Math team was established using team members who had a strong math background they met ten times under AC supervision with those team members having difficulty in math	Math Team Leaders met in small groups or one-to-one	

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## II. Program Focused Activities

Activity	Program Objectives	Documentation	Notes
<b>Program Branding and Identity</b> - all participants are aware of program through use of logo and name; signs, t-shirts, gear, banner, etc.	There are signs being completed that will insure that the community knows that we are a "Play It Smart" school		
<b>National Involvement</b> – active participation in important national initiatives that could include: becoming and identified resource for new programs, submitting best practices, volunteering for additional research initiatives, presenting at national or regional Play It Smart conferences, etc.	None at this time		
<b>Community Connections</b> - ways to connect local businesses, community agencies, churches, and individuals to the program	Involvement with Booster Club		
<b>Program Marketing</b> – program promotional activities that could be within the school or district, or the outside community	Later this year!		
<b>Additional Activities</b>			



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<b>Additional Activities</b>			
<b>Connecting Participants to Play It Smart National</b>			
<b>Collaborative Activity</b> with another Play It Smart program (e.g., Leadership conference, combined community service)	None developed – the amount of work that this particular team required (academic) – did not allow for any time to collaborate with other teams		
<b>Newsletter Articles Submit</b> -OR- <b>Student-athlete of the Month</b> nomination submitted	Will submit December Student – Athlete Nomination		
<b>Additional Activities</b>			