Memo about Swimming PE classes in a virtual setting

To: Buffalo Public Schools – Administrators and Teachers
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The International Swim Coaches Association, a nonprofit organization, would love to share our resources with BPS in the weeks to come to assist with your efforts to teach swimming to the district's 9th and 6th grade students.

We would love to have an opportunity to work together to customize lesson plans and outcomes so that the students and faculty have meaningful projects and interactions.

ISCA's mission is to provide swimming coaches and teachers with an exceptional, science-based education, while fostering an international network of professionals who will define the future of swimming. As an organization, ISCA's 10-year history includes the hosting of plenty of big, showcase events with participants from around the nation. Another background strength is ISCA's relationships and network of scientists, coaches and aquatic practitioners.

Throughout the summer of 2020, ISCA served as a sub-contractor with Pittsburgh Public Schools to sponsor a "cyber swim camp" for summer-school students, 1-hour per day for 27 days using Microsoft Teams.

The ISCA online resources include a number of courses and activities that are well suited to your students. This memo gives a peek into this suite of digital assets. We hope to schedule a future, online meeting with you so we can better suit your desires and answer questions.

#1) STORIES work wonders in educational settings.
They teach various perspectives. Students gain insights and come to understand various aquatic and sporting settings. In 2020, we've built a collection of more than 60 stories, generally 5-minutes in length, from various sources. All of the stories have appropriate discussion points and are of an uplifting nature. After listening to the stories, classroom discussions can be used to engage the students. Quiz questions can be crafted and shared with other classmates, classes and even across the entire district.

https://S6.CLOH.org

Tip: Assign the stories for the week. Get the students to listen to the stories on their own. Then the students can come to the class ready to engage with their own thoughts. In the early weeks of the semester, the stories can be played via TEAMs so all listen to the stories at the same time.

With the older students in 9th grade, students can be instructed to write one or two quiz questions on stories in their domain. Then 6th grade students, and fellow classmates, can take the quizzes. Students can also build a concept map for each story or set of stories. And, the kids can help with the map making too. https://map.cloh.org/ C-Maps is an open-source software tool that some advanced students might enjoy.

Later in the course, we'd want the students to share or gather their own stories of water as well. Researching, authoring, building student voice, tech mastery, gaining feedback.

The challenge with the stories is getting them to fit well with the age groups. Some are well suited for high school while not so good for those in 4th grade. We should not do baby stories for the older students. Another similar challenge with the stories is to keep them upbeat. There are plenty of stories with negative, horrid endings that can become too heavy and serious.

#2) Get Your Feet Wet - Swimming, an online course, is something that all of the students should experience.
> https://read.swimisca.org/courses/get-your-feet-wet-swimming/

This course takes about 4 hours -- or less if they kids fly through it. We suggest that the kids do the course in an asynchronous style. Visit the course, one lesson at a time, spread out, every other day, perhaps.

Older and younger students can look at the course as a framework that can be built upon. Students can do artwork illustrations, questions for review quizzes, gather photos, craft concept maps, and add onto the existing lessons of the course.

#3. Connected writing and reflective statements with online web forms can be included in the course agenda.
Students can make online web form contributions of text that can then be stitched together by classes and schools into web pages. Students should be able to give their opinions and ideas for these pages. Students can upload photos too. One example: https://cloh.org/wp/connected-words-and-actions-at-swim-water-polo/

Everyone has a relationship with water, from rain to fears to simple hydration. Getting students to think, express and write can help them with the ownership of their learning.

#4. Doing A-B-Cs projects, as in, A is for Athlete, leads to deeper understanding of the language of swimming, sports and fitness.

The A-B-Cs project scales well from little kids to older ones. Older kids build a letter first -- often with the first letter of their first name. Then the decoration of letters flow into that concept / word. Then build words with illustrations.

Going further, the lingo of sports, its jargon and the terms can turn into MULTI LANGUAGES. How do you say "dive" in German, Spanish, Japanese, Mandarin, Polish, Zulu, etc. That would be fun for ninth graders to discover and confirm with people from those parts of the world. Then those words can

be record. Students from Buffalo can interact with school students in other parts of the world, asking for specific translations and short audio files. Then these collections can be put into ebooks to the end of the term and shared with students throughout the district and beyond.

Even in English speaking nations, such as South Africa, different words are used that don't have much if any meaning to the students in the states. An example. We'll have a "lank" of a month hitting that multi-lingual project with sports terms and jargon. "Lank" is hard, as in a "lank workout."

We'll use a WIKI, as in the same software that drives WIKIPEDIA, for the A-B-Cs effort.
Editing a wiki is cool.
https://aforathlete.fandom.com/wiki/Multi-language
https://aforathlete.fandom.com/wiki/ABCs_Ds

#4. Water safety quzzes at SKWIM.us offer teachable moments and accountability.
http://SKWIM.us
These can expand into lifeguard training materials and taking the actual tests that lifeguards need to pass to get certified, by the end of the year. These tests can be delivered online, with random questions and answers.

#5. The Global Library for ISCA Members is a resource of more than 200 lessons that can be opened, in part, to the students of BPS.

Additional ebooks on Yoga, Mindfulness, Eating Paleo, and swimming – of course – can be shared with students and classes for extra credit and ambitious students. Activities on goal-setting, sportsmanship, sports-psychology, visualization, focusing, team culture, and racing can be crafted for the students in easy to deploy ways. A greater menu, more like a smorgasbord of activities, can be crafted with BSD students in mind. See the less-than-4-minute talk from a guest coaches and teachers, Wayne Goldsmith, on confidence. https://youtu.be/kc4-wfDMIoA

Summary:
       This effort is going to require username and passwords on a few of different platforms. Most will happen at Read.SwimISCA.org. Videos are often hosted at YouTube.com.
Of course, the BPS teachers are needed to facilitate discussions, offer help-desk functions and lead their classes. Should you desire, we could re-brand much of these digital resources into a subdomain for BPS. Administrator and group leader privileges with the LearnDash software and WordPress environment can be provided too.
       As the subcontractor, my role is as the executive head coach and webmaster who has a prime mission to teach the teacher about these resources as the weeks progress.
       Hope to hear from you soon. Best of luck to you and the students in the new school year.

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