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Unionville Sports Council Plans “Extreme Makeover” of Fitness Room

The Unionville Sports Council (USC) has finalized plans for an “Extreme Makeover” project. In cooperation with the Unionville-Chadds Ford School District (UCFSD) administration and contributing community members and students, the existing high school weight room will be renovated during the New Year’s holiday period. Plans include roof and ventilation repairs, power-washing, fresh paint (and art!), mirrors, new floor, and new equipment.

“The cooperation of the school and specifically Rick Hostetler (Supervisor of Building and Grounds) has just been phenomenal,” says Joe Carney, President of the Unionville Sports Council. “The project is a demonstration of how the community and the school can continue to move forward to address the much needed improvements at the high school that have been outlined in the plan for renovation. We look forward to the community supporting our next project, which will be the much-needed installation of a synthetic surface on the stadium field”

The Unionville-Chadds Ford School District has faced annual revenue challenges, which require additional community support. Of the 13 school districts in Chester County, 8 districts have higher tax rates than UCFSD. UCFSD also has the lowest commercial/industrial tax revenue contribution (7% of annual budget). While maintaining per-pupil spending that ranks 6th, the physical plant of the high school has not kept up with the growing student population. The overcrowding of the entire school has been documented by the Sports Council in citing the Physical Education facilities, and their comparison with other Chester County high schools. That documented research shows the high school last in every overcrowding metric, while the proposed renovation moves the school only to the middle of the pack in the same comparative studies.

Many community members have assisted in the Extreme Makeover. Dave Fortunato (Dewson Construction), Steve O’Neill (O’Neill Homes), Bill Miller (Miller Flooring) and Tom Pancoast (Pancoast Construction) assisted in finalizing the plans and work schedule. Rick Kaiser (USC) will be coordinating the student painting hours, which have been approved as NHS service hours. Kennett Glass has also donated to the cause with their expertise and materials. Lele Galer and the Public Art student group will be adding an artistic flair to the room.

The room is currently a challenge to properly schedule physical education and team training, as it is the second smallest in Chester County. Equipment is old and does not work properly. The new equipment was selected with the priority being a safe and efficient environment, where a greater amount of kids can exercise and train. Joe Herman of the PE Department and Pat Clark, Fitness Room Supervisor, led the effort to pick the right equipment. New equipment includes a Leg Press machine donated by Penn Oaks Fitness. In addition, six new spin bikes will be installed, allowing for the cardiovascular goals of the Physical Education curriculum to be met easier. The Unionville Sports Council will be funding 100% of the purchase of new equipment, mirrors, and flooring and will be gifting those materials to the school.

Renovation plans were developed keeping in mind that the Gym is due to be renovated in 2012. Material purchases such as fitness equipment and mirrors will be able to be removed and placed in new Fitness Area, when that becomes ready.

The move-out of current equipment will occur on Thursday December 18th. A live auction will be held at 5PM for any equipment that community members would like to bid on. Sealed bids will be accepted in advance for the equipment and floor panels. Those interested in a tour of the equipment before 12/18/08 should contact Joe Carney at jcarney@derema.com. Sealed bids will be opened in public at 4:30 PM on 12/18/08 by district personnel. Checks for ‘sealed bid’ or ‘live auction’ equipment should be made out to Unionville-Chadds Ford School District. To see the entire plan and equipment on line, see the NEWS at www.usportsc.org.