



Workforce Development Coalition

January 9, 2015

Attention: Stephenson County Board Court Committee

I am writing in support of the “YES” Club Vision, an outstanding initiative developed by Mr. Carl Cole and his team, to empower and inspire students of our school systems to improve their academic and behavioral statuses while increasing their positive attitudes about life.

I had the opportunity to witness some of these programs at the Freeport/Stephenson County Boys & Girls Club in the fall of 2014. Prior to attending, I heard positive comments about these sessions but was interested in forming my own opinion as to the impact these programs could have on our school kids. Needless to say, what I observed, exceeded my expectations.

Being active in our community with our school systems and working closely with District 145 through the Workforce Development Coalition, an initiative I founded, I left these sessions excited about what I observed. The sessions were presented in an open but disciplined environment. Students showed respect for others, all those who attended were engaged in two way communication—both speaking and listening, energized but respectful body language, and sharing insights that related to all participants. Considering the relatively young age of these students, one had to be impressed with what one heard, saw and envisioned. All these students not only learned, but they had fun doing it!



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In doing a bit of research on line, I also found that “YES” has programs that lead to students establishing stronger bonds with their family, a relationship so needed in today’s technology driven society. Parental involvement is so important in the development of one’s children and “YES” has plans to address these opportunities.

In closing let me leave you with a few thoughts to ponder. Our children need to be supported as they grow. They all have tremendous potential and need guidance and love as they move forward. We need to continue to instill in them a positive perspective, such as focusing on their hopes and dreams, not their fears. They, like us, will experience frustration; however, we need to have them be aware of their unfilled potential. They need to look to the future and not only be concerned with what they tried and maybe did not accomplish, but with what is possible for them to do. One initiative alone will not address all these elements, but the “YES” program is a positive experience that can serve as an underpinning to build on as they move forward.

Whatever the County can do to make to help our students’ dreams become a reality, I encourage it to happen. At this time, supporting the “YES” program is a place to start.

Sincerely,

Dick Drogosz