



For Immediate Release

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Homestead Athletes Kick Off Week of Servant Leadership

Champions Together promotes acceptance for students of all levels and abilities.

FORT WAYNE, IND., January 11, 2016 — Student athletes at Southwest Allen County Schools' Homestead High School will kick-off a week of servant leadership on Monday centered around promoting acceptance for students of all levels and abilities. The week of awareness and outreach will culminate Friday night with an exhibition basketball game featuring students with intellectual disabilities from Homestead High School.

The events are part of Homestead's participation in Champions Together, a partnership between the Indiana High School Athletic Association and Special Olympics Indiana. The collaboration promotes servant leadership among student athletes by encouraging them to discover ways to give back to their schools and their community. Each year, IHSAA member schools can work to earn a Champions Together banner by organizing at least one Whole School Engagement activity, hosting at least one Unified Sports activity, and raising a minimum of \$1,500 for Special Olympics Indiana.

"We think this is an incredible opportunity for our student athletes to not only serve, but also lead," Homestead Assistant Principal and Athletic Director Joe Updegrove says. "Homestead has an amazing group of student leaders that have committed themselves to Champions Together, and they have worked very hard to make this a successful program for our school and our community."

Preparing today's learners for tomorrow's opportunities.

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Homestead has 11 Champions Together students leaders: Nik Gogos, Will Milne, Savannah Buck, Madisen Parker, Ellis Yoder, Austin Render, Kailyn Scott, Sami Laws, Adrianna Natoli, Paige Eakright and Raechel Mullen. Their efforts this week include a school-wide Respect Week promoting awareness, acceptance, anti-bullying and inclusion, as well as selling fundraising t-shirts for Friday night's game.

That exhibition game will include seven students with intellectual disabilities from Homestead High School. It will take place in between the Homestead Girls' and Boys' Varsity Basketball home games against Snider High School this coming Friday, January 15. Those games have tip-off times of 6 p.m and 7:30 p.m.

This week's events are just the start of Champions Together initiatives at Homestead High School. Plans are already being made to partner with other area high schools to have additional events this basketball season. The school's Champions Together student leadership is also exploring hosting a Unified Track meet this spring.

"We are very proud of our student athletes who have stepped up to demonstrate this leadership here at Homestead High School," Homestead Principal Park Ginder says. "I can't wait to see where this takes us as a school and as a community."

About Southwest Allen County Schools

Nationally recognized and locally known for its award-winning programs, high-quality staff, and strong parental and community support, [Southwest Allen County Schools](#) is dedicated to a shared mission of preparing today's learners for tomorrow's opportunities.

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