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**PRESENTATION MADE BY VINCENT BEJGROWICZ TO THE LAUREL SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD
ON MAY 9, 2006, ALL MEMBERS OF THE BOARD REC'D COPIES**

My name is Vincent Bejgrowicz and I am the president of the Laurel Soccer Club. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to address this board regarding soccer.

My goal today is to ask the board to consider approving a cooperative arrangement with Lincoln High School in Ellwood City to allow 7 of our varsity age girls to play on their AAA soccer team.

The girls requesting this have been playing since as early as age 4, and it would be unfortunate to stop them at this age from continuing to participate in this sport. If there are costs associated with this type of arrangement, the laurel soccer club and the player's parents are willing to discuss sharing in the expense as well as providing any necessary transportation.

This first step by the Laurel School board will allow committed players to continue in the sport they love. The natural next step would be for the school board to allow a varsity soccer program for both boys and girls to be added in the future to the athletic programs presently offered. I understand from WPIAL, that there is also an option of the school sponsoring a club team, by lending their name and no financial support. This team would then be entitled to play a limited number of exhibition games against local high schools as long as the games were scheduled early enough in the year for the upcoming fall season. The Soccer club would consider this as an intermediate step for a year or two, if the school board was unsure about the viability of a varsity team at first, with the understanding that this would be for a specified period of time until a true Laurel High School soccer program would be established. I understand that both Neshannock and Wilmington high schools started their soccer program in this way.

The Laurel Soccer Club is willing to act as the catalyst to help get all of these ideas out of the dreaming stage and into action. Several years back, our club approached the board, regarding the implementation of a soccer program and was turned down. Since then, many of the areas of concern outlined by that board have been overcome. I would like to ask if the board would be willing to commit to a timeline for considering implementing a varsity soccer program. If possible, we would like a board member to assist on a committee in preparing a formal proposal that will be presented at a future board meeting. At that time we would then be better prepared to detail specifically, player availability, funding sources, coaching, etc.

This evening I can address some of the concerns previously raised.

Field: The C.J.Long / Spartan park being developed will incorporate a couple of soccer fields, one of which will be a regulation size high school field. Plans for the field include a concession stand and ambulatory access near the midpoint of the field. A scoreboard will be donated once the field is completed. Future improvements planned over the next few years include spectator bleachers and lighting. The field was sponsored with an \$ 8,000.00 donation made by our club and will be maintained by the club throughout the year. Access to the field will be no different than most schools around this county; it is not on adjacent school property.

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Many Laurel school teams already utilize the roads surrounding the school, therefore, the need for players to travel across Rt. 108 and down Bodziach should not be an issue.

Facilities: The issue of no locker rooms being available was raised by the previous board decision. Most schools do not have locker rooms available, out of the 20+ schools, the coach from Lincoln High School plays in AAA soccer; he has only ever come across 2 schools that have a room available for his players to utilize. As for the storage of equipment, the club is willing to purchase and continue to store all equipment for the school program along with the 8 sets of goals, 300+ soccer balls, uniforms, training aids & practice equipment it already has for operating the club program.

Budget: It is our estimate that the varsity program, consisting of one each boys and girls team may cost approximately \$ 10,000.00 per year to operate. The Laurel Soccer Club is willing to assist in funding this endeavor in part for a period of time, with a gradual transfer of responsibility placed upon the school and a soccer booster's organization.

The National Federation of State High School Associations ranks soccer as the 7th most popular school sport for boys and 6th most popular for girls. Number of students participating in a high school sports program, soccer ranked 4th in the country. 8 – 10% of our own 7th grade students at Laurel junior high lists soccer as their most favorite sport. Our club has increased membership every year since Bernie Muckian founded our club in 1991. Last year we had more soccer players registered than Neshannock, Wilmington & Mohawk, all schools with established high school soccer programs. Nationally soccer is the 2nd biggest youth sport, right behind basketball in overall youth involvement.

In closing, I thank the board for taking the time to seriously consider all I have discussed here this evening. Again, the issue of our 7 girls who are interested in playing co-op soccer with Lincoln High School is an issue which needs to be addressed for approval ASAP, due to a deadline set by the WPIAL. Last year Laurel accepted this as an option and unfortunately due to an ill perceived notion of the number of players needed on a successful soccer team, the issue died on the Ellwood City end. This year there is a new athletic director in place at Lincoln High School who understands how a soccer program should be run to be successful and some members of the Lincoln School board are in favor of this situation. I'll ask again, if a school board member would be willing to work with our club over the next few months to help develop a plan of action which would address any concerns that the school board would have concerning implementing a high school soccer program.

We, the Laurel Soccer Club have a well developed program in place that not only teaches the sport, allows youth to begin enjoying soccer as early as age 4, and educates players and their families the importance of proper nutrition & social skills. In addition, soccer is a team sport option for youth who may be physically unsuited for other sports requiring physical size. Our club would be the ideal feeder system for a high school soccer program, as it would guarantee a continuous supply of well trained and conditioned youth to grow up to best represent the Laurel School District on the high school soccer fields.

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2004-05 NFHS High School Athletics Participation Survey



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2004-05 HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS PARTICIPATION SURVEY

Conducted By
THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS
Based on Competition at the High School Level in the 2004-05 School Year

Sport (Number of states reporting for boys/girls)	BOYS		GIRLS		COMBINED Number of Participants
	Number of Schools	Number of Participants	Number of Schools	Number of Participants	
ADAPTED SPORTS					
Basketball	19	157	15	74	231
Bowling	29	100	29	98	198
Floor Hockey	67	251	67	128	379
Soccer	56	213	56	161	374
Softball	56	174	56	148	322
Track	14	128	14	81	209
ARCHERY	18	366	15	251	617
BADMINTON	213	4,030	408	10,683	14,713
BASEBALL	15,161	459,717	140	1,015	460,732
BASKETBALL	17,482	545,497	17,175	456,543	1,002,040
BOWLING	1,768	20,534	1,676	18,717	39,251
CANOEING	57	1,111	60	1,239	2,350
COMPETITIVE SPIRIT SQUAD	504	2,115	3,482	84,416	86,531
CREW	89	2,220	89	2,398	4,618
CROSS COUNTRY	12,727	201,719	12,345	170,450	372,169
DANCE TEAM			78	1,559	1,559
DANCE TEAM-HI KICK/PRECISION			134	3,599	3,599
DANCE TEAM-JAZZ/FUNK			147	3,681	3,681
DANCE/DRILL	1	1	59	931	932
EQUESTRIAN	31	76	86	773	849
FENCING	91	1,811	87	1,677	3,488
FIELD HOCKEY	5	85	1,684	62,980	63,065
FLAG FOOTBALL			110	3,538	3,538
FOOTBALL — 11-player	13,671	1,045,494	250	1,473	1,046,967
6-player	195	4,689	3	59	4,748
8-player	639	14,656	8	25	14,681
9-player	264	6,324	9	70	6,394
GOLF	13,152	161,025	8,249	64,245	225,270
GYMNASTICS	123	2,278	1,430	19,115	21,393
ICE HOCKEY	1,474	37,004	431	7,398	44,402
JUDO	41	605	38	294	899
LACROSSE	1,334	59,993	1,270	48,086	108,079
RIFLERY	242	2,462	211	1,285	3,747
SKIING — ALPINE	464	5,739	451	4,245	9,984
SKIING — CROSS COUNTRY	332	3,549	331	4,376	7,925
SKIING (XC & ALPINE)	98	1,190	93	996	2,186
SNOWBOARDING	55	818	50	579	1,397
SOCCER	10,392	354,587	9,695	316,104	670,691
SOFTBALL — FAST PITCH	49	918	14,493	364,759	365,677
SOFTBALL — SLOW PITCH	7	105	591	13,099	13,204
SWIMMING & DIVING	5,878	103,754	6,238	148,154	251,908
TEAM TENNIS	1,223	21,638	1,264	23,649	45,287
TENNIS	9,426	148,530	9,646	169,292	317,822
TRACK AND FIELD — INDOOR	2,295	56,626	2,220	51,878	108,504
TRACK AND FIELD — OUTDOOR	15,294	516,703	15,213	428,198	944,901
VOLLEYBALL	1,688	41,637	14,526	386,022	427,659
WATER POLO	645	16,822	668	17,241	34,063
WEIGHT LIFTING	676	16,508	255	5,430	21,938
WRESTLING	9,562	243,009	941	4,334	247,343
OTHER	275	3,354	267	2,762	6,116