



**SquashSmarts**  
Giving Kids Their Best Shot!



## **SQUASHSMARTS OVERVIEW**

Philadelphia's SquashSmarts is a free intensive out-of-school time program supporting the lives of public school students. SquashSmarts was founded in 2001 by a group of active, concerned parents and volunteers in response to a void in available high quality afterschool sports-based youth development programs. Following in the footsteps of program models created in Boston and New York, SquashSmarts was the third squash-and-education program established nationwide as a formal 501c3 non-profit academic and athletic mentoring program. Over the past twenty years, SquashSmarts has evolved in to an award winning non-profit with a proven track record of keeping kids in school, in shape, and on track for graduation. SquashSmarts website is [www.SquashSmarts.org](http://www.SquashSmarts.org)

Over two decades, through a series of strategic planning sessions, feasibility studies, and consulting engagements – including our partnership with the Squash + Education Alliance (SEA), the Philadelphia Youth Sports Collaborative (PYSC), Dunleavy & Associates, and The Pew Charitable Trusts' Evaluation Capacity Building Initiative (among others) and also with the United Nation's Sustainable Development goals in mind – SquashSmarts' internal and external stakeholders have developed and are guided by the following core statements, concepts and program model.

## **SQUASHSMARTS MISSION + VISION + THEORY OF CHANGE**

### **Mission: Dedicated Daily Focus**

*"SquashSmarts is dedicated to improving the lives of underserved youth from Philadelphia public schools by providing intensive, long-term academic tutoring and squash instruction, while imparting high standards of personal integrity, health and fitness, and service to the community."*

### **Vision: Aspirational Success**

*"SquashSmarts aspires to have 100% of its students graduate from high school, follow defined post-secondary paths toward college and/or career, and carry the values of the program forward into their lives and communities."*

### **Theory of Change: A Better World**

*"SquashSmarts fosters a family of inclusive, civically and professionally engaged citizens who maintain healthy, resilient, pro-social lives."*

### **Slogans: Catchphrases**

*Giving Kids Their Best Shot®*

*Out-of-School-Time Excellence*

*Keeping Kids In School, In Shape & On Track for Graduation.*



## SQUASHSMARTS PROGRAM MODEL + FACILITIES + PILLARS + SKILLS

SquashSmarts is a place-based program, meaning that its student-athlete participants are recruited from a specific set of schools (rather than relying on an open-door enrollment policy). In this way, SquashSmarts can more intensely identify a consistent base of students; support their daily development; establish multi-year partnerships with school officials; build a presence and community inside each school partner; and ensure that SquashSmarts audience is reflective of the local neighborhoods we serve.

SquashSmarts has a strong partnership with the School District of Philadelphia (SDoP), notably through its Office of Strategic Partnerships and Office of Athletics. The SDoP recognizes, and has a formal partnership with, SquashSmarts as an out-of-school-time provider and their official provider of squash.

SquashSmarts currently recruits and selects students in 5th-8th grade based on each student-athlete's commitment, effort and attitude – not their athletic or academic ability. Students are currently recruited from one of five School District of Philadelphia partner schools:

### School Partners

1. George Washington Carver Science & Engineering (North Philadelphia)
2. Esperanza Academy Charter School (North Philadelphia)
3. Mary McLeod Bethune Elementary (North Philadelphia)
4. Overbrook Educational Center (North Philadelphia)
5. Science Leadership Academy Middle School (North Philadelphia)

SquashSmarts is incredibly fortunate to operate out of two facilities: Lenfest Center (North Philadelphia since 2007) and Drexel University's Daskalakis Athletic Center (West Philadelphia since 2001). Through our school and facility partnerships, SquashSmarts provides intensive, instructional program through to three distinct cohorts:

### Program Cohorts

1. North Philadelphia Middle School Cohort at Lenfest Center
2. West Philadelphia Middle School Cohort at Drexel University
3. North & West Philadelphia High School Cohort at Lenfest Center

*Note: SquashSmarts Program Cohorts are expected to grow as we expand services through the Arlen Specter US Squash Center. Notably, SqSm plans to add a fourth cohort by splitting our North and West Philadelphia high school program in to two distinct cohorts, and to also add a staff to support a 5<sup>th</sup> cohort that focuses on our Alumni.*

SquashSmarts student enrollment capacity for each cohort is dictated by our school partners and our facilities. Generally speaking, SquashSmarts operates by recruiting-and-maintaining a minimum of **30 students and a maximum of 40 students per cohort**. Each cohort is assigned and supported by two full-time staff – a **Director of Academics** and a **Director of Squash & Fitness** – along with additional part-time staff to lead instruction, recruit volunteers, handle daily transportation, and manage the family/facility/school partnerships needed in order to provide year-round support for each student.

Students are expected to attend instructional sessions and practices at each facility three days per week, year round. SquashSmarts curriculum has evolved over time (and its academic curriculum is independent from the SDoP) to provide: daily tutoring; athletic/fitness/nutrition instruction through squash; high school and college placement support (including financial aid assistance); and community service, camps, trips and other excursions.



# SquashSmarts

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Currently, SquashSmarts instructional program focuses on four specific pillars of programming which seek to incorporate, as applicable, seven skills across each pillar:

## 4 Pillars

1. Academic Learning
2. Squash & Fitness
3. Service to Community
4. Camps & Leadership

## 7 Skills

1. Communication
2. Goal Setting
3. Leadership
4. Organization
5. Physical Health
6. Positive Relationships
7. Self-Awareness

Finally, SquashSmarts make a long-term, seven-year commitment to each child to ensure success by providing a team, a family, a safety net and a sense of belonging. Strong, hyper-intimate, one-on-one relationships with our staff and volunteers are the key to fostering each child's success and breaking the cycle of Philadelphia's public school drop-out rate. Thank you for taking time to review this SquashSmarts overview and be an active part of our special network of supporters.

## SquashSmarts Awards, Recognition & Engagements

- ✓ 2021 Nonprofit Leadership Accelerator Program, *BridgeSpan*
- ✓ 2018 Evaluation Capacity Building Initiative Participant, *The Pew Charitable Trusts*
- ✓ 2018 International Youth Federation, *United Nations Global Sustainability Goals Project Participant*
- ✓ 2018 Mayor's Task Force Initiative, *Philadelphia Youth Sports Collaborative*
- ✓ 2017 Philadelphia Community Grant Award, *Insurance Industry Community Foundation*
- ✓ 2016 GSK Community IMPACT Award Winner, *GlaxoSmithKline*
- ✓ 2016, 2013 & 2010 Grant Award Recipient, *The Pew Charitable Trusts*
- ✓ 2016 Youth Coach of the Year, *The Philadelphia Coaches Conference*
- ✓ 2016 National Coach of the Year, *Up2Us Sports Coach Across America*
- ✓ 2013 STRIVE Organization of the Year, *National Council of Youth Sports & AIG*
- ✓ 2012 "Let's Move!" Anti-Obesity Initiative, *Host to Michelle Obama and 35 US Mayors*
- ✓ 2010 Robert P. Levy Service Award, *The Philadelphia Sports Congress*
- ✓ 2009 Champion-in-Action Award for Youth Programs, *Citizens Bank, NBC10, The Philadelphia Inquirer*
- ✓ 2009 Founding Member, *Philadelphia Youth Sports Collaborative* <https://pysc.org/>
- ✓ 2005 Founding member, *Squash & Education Alliance* <https://squashandeducation.org/>

## SquashSmarts: Student Testimonials

- **Video 1: "SquashSmarts Equals" by Alkemy X**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R6Ky2lIkDTM>
- **Video 2: "The SquashSmarts Program" by Shooters, Post & Transfer**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uqbMLSs-RDY>

***Put simply, SquashSmarts is Giving Kids Their Best Shot!®***