

Pilot Program for
Adopt a School Program in Maine

Hi Everyone

The Maine Tennis Association is happy to announce grant opportunities for every indoor facility in Maine

The grant is to support an Adopt a School Program in your surrounding communities. The MTA will invest \$400.00 in the form of a grant, with an anticipated \$100 investment made by the facility, or a 4 to 1 grant program.

The Central Lincoln County YMCA and Maine Pines Racquet and Fitness Club have been running pilot programs this spring and have some suggested programs to help get your Adopt a school program off to a good start.

We welcome your feedback as you go forward with your Grant Initiative.

One thing we know for sure, every area is unique and success will depend on the flexibility and creativity of the tennis providers.

We firmly believe that this opportunity, coupled with the 10 and under Play Day concepts could be explosive in recruiting and retaining children to tennis.

Have fun, and keep us in the loop!

Lisa Gilbride
And Kelly Anchors
on behalf of the MTA

Key components to a successful AAS Program

There are three key factors in making this program a success

1. An enthusiastic principal
2. An enthusiastic P. E teacher
3. An enthusiastic Tennis Provider

Once you get your foot in the door the two most important ingredients seem to be:

1. Use the red and or orange balls, use the 36 foot nets/
 - a. Make it EASY to play tennis
2. Play games/ DON'T TEACH!

What's on the menu?

We approached each school with a menu for them to select from.

Our menu included the following choices:

1. An after school program
2. A before school program
3. A recess program
4. A P.E class program
 - a. You come to us
 - b. We come to you
5. A Field Trip to the club/Y for an on court Kids Tennis Experience
6. Welcome the PTA/ PTO Involvement with options such as
 - a. Family Fun Night to invite the parents and children to come play tennis at the Y
 - b. Invite the PTO to host a meeting at the Y/club
 - b.i. While the meeting was taking place, a pro could play with the kids
 - c. Invite the PTO to play tennis as part of their meeting.
7. Invite the school staff to have a “staff night outing” at the Y/ Club

What they picked from the menu, and why it worked.

The two most important ingredients are:

STOP TEACHING TENNIS AND JUST LET THEM PLAY!!!!

USE THE RED AND ORANGE BALLS

The Nobleboro School picked

1. Bring the fifth and sixth grade P.E. class to the Y for the month of March/
 - a. the PTO paid for the bus to bring them to us once a week for a month
2. We had 18 kids , one pro, and one P.E teacher
 - a. We set up 10 red ball nets on two courts and had them play red ball matches for 25 minutes with absolutely no instruction. Just supervision
 - b. We then played champion of the court with orange balls and 60 foot courts for 15 minutes.
 - c. Pick up and head to the bus. The class lasted 45 minutes.

SEVEN OF THE 18 KIDS registered for our spring programs, 5 of them are registered for our summer camps.

We then set up a recess program with the school

1. Once a week a tennis provider goes over for the noon recess. She brings 36 foot nets and red balls and sets it up on the basketball courts. The kids come running out yelling TENNIS!
2. We purposefully only bring two nets and 8 racquets so that some kids have to go on the swings while waiting. This has created some of the excitement. “It’s my turn” syndrome.

We do not have numbers yet to indicate the success of this program. We are quite certain the return will be successful.

- We do know that we left our equipment with the P.E teacher and she was bringing it out at recess whenever she could.
- We do know that from this the P.E teacher applied and was awarded a grant that includes nets/ balls and racquets

We have a fall family night planned with them.

We are considering this a lifelong adoption and will continue to collaborate with the Nobleboro school long after the grant money has run out.

We are planning on adopting three other schools this fall in the area.

We have already started setting this up with them so we can start the fall quickly.

Maine Pines Program

Maine Pines was able to run two five week session once a week, before school. They adopted the Williams Cone School, which has “late start” on Wednesdays.

12 children registered for each session. Many were repeats from the first session.

They also said it was important to have

- Minimal teaching/
- They used a kids club concept. Four square/ champion of the court.

They finish a session, and offer a follow up PLAY DAY as part of the session. This Monday they will have play day from 5:30-7:00. \$10.00 per kid includes pizza. This gets the kids in to the club and hopefully exposes them to a slew of other tennis opportunities.

Good luck with your programs. Please feel free to call or email if you have any questions, and remember, we welcome feedback of what works and doesn't work. Together we can really make tennis easier and better than ever for kids to enjoy.

Lisa Gilbride and Kelly Anchors