



**Pittsburgh  
Public Schools**

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*The Pathway to the Promise.™*

# **Athletics Reform**

## **Executive Overview & Summary**

### **Education Committee**

### **May 10, 2011**

# Why Athletics Reform?

- Constituents in the district have begged for an improved athletic system for years
- The district previously placed other reform efforts above athletics reform
- The Title IX self audit undertaken by the district in 2009 exposed an array of problems across PPS athletics and proved that we have to make changes
- The work is tough, emotional, but extremely important—research shows that students who compete in sports are more likely to stay in school, do well academically and be “college going” (National Federation of State High School Associations)
- A strong athletics program is a key component to a “attract and hold” strategy

# The Problem

- The Title IX self audit exposed problems with gender equity, but it also exposed systemic problems with the athletics system in Pittsburgh Public Schools
- Fixing the system requires a holistic approach across multiple areas as there is no magic bullet to dramatically improve the athletics offerings for our children

# Athletics Reform: Approach

**A collaborative approach was taken that included input from parents, teachers, administrators and the community at large**



# Evidence For Change: Feedback From Those Involved

***“We have to schedule too many games against city league teams that are terrible.” (student)***

*“We should schedule more games that are a challenge for us. Our softball team plays games that are no challenge for us because they are inner city.” (student)*

*“This program was made in to such a success by the former coach. Her coaching position was taken from her last year because she retired from teaching.” (student)*

***“Many coaches are just collecting the money.” (coach)***

*“I think coaches should have a background in the sport and actually know what they are talking about.”  
(student)*

***“City league facilities are not comparable to suburban schools, which puts the city sports teams at a huge disadvantage” (coach)***

*“Our facilities are archaic, almost non-existent” (coach)*

*“Students don’t like girls’ sports.” (student)*

***“The school district must develop ways to actively recruit girls into athletic programs...” (PPS Title IX Audit)***

*“Game times do not permit reasonable opportunities for an audience. Game times are not convenient, they are too early.” (student)*

# Evidence For Change:

## Linking Athletics To Academic Achievement

- 58 percent of twelfth-graders who planned to complete four years of college participated in school athletics, compared with 43 percent of twelfth-grade students who did not have such plans (Child Trends Data Bank 2008)
- Students who compete in athletics make higher grades and have better attendance (NFHS as cited by the PPS Title IX Audit)
- 96% of dropouts in 14 school districts in seven regions of the nation were not participating in an athletic program. (National Federation of State High School Associations)
- By a 2-to-1 margin for males and a 3-to-1 margin for females, student-athletes do better in school, do not drop out, and have a better chance to graduate from college. (University of Chicago)
- Student-athletes demonstrate a higher level of self-confidence than non-athletes. (University of Chicago)

# Evidence For Change: A North Side Story

**Mentor:** *Tell Me About Your Family.*

**Student:** *We love sports. My brother is in 8<sup>th</sup> Grade. He's the best football player around.*

**Mentor:** *That's awesome! Is he going to Oliver next year?*

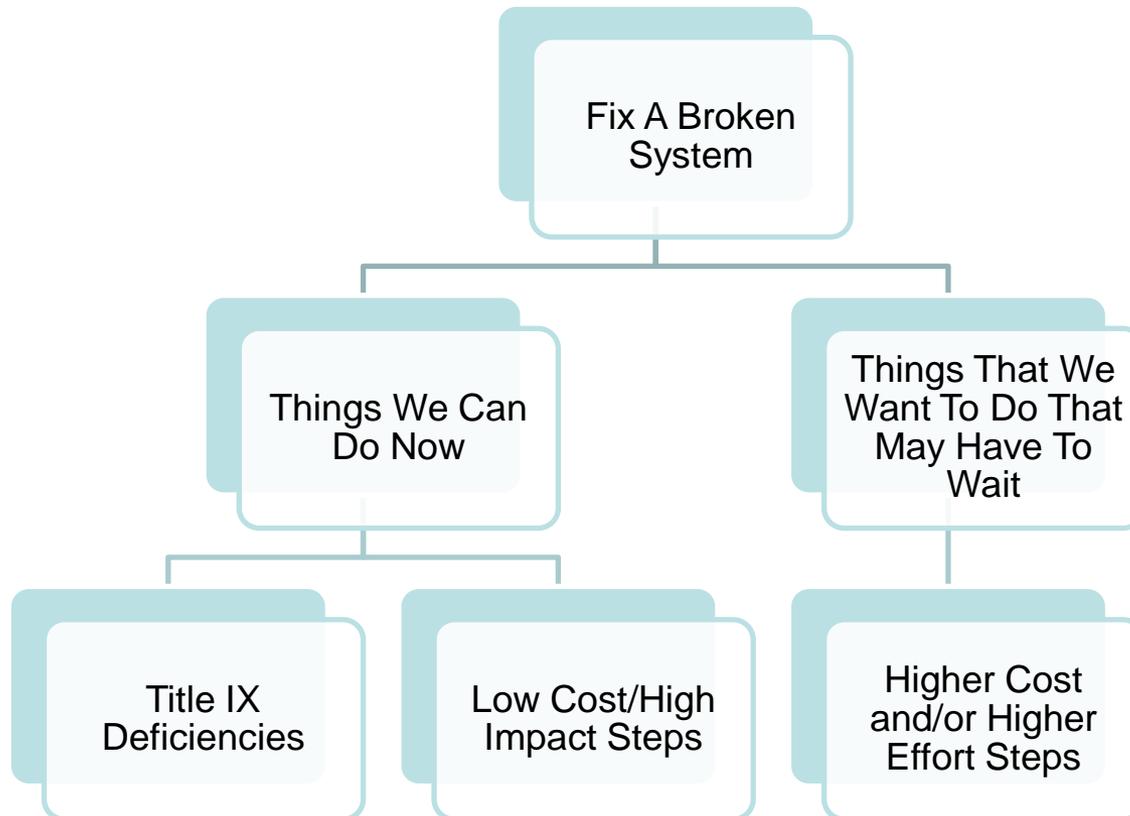
**Student:** *Oliver? No way! He's going to Central.*

**Mentor:** *Why is that?*

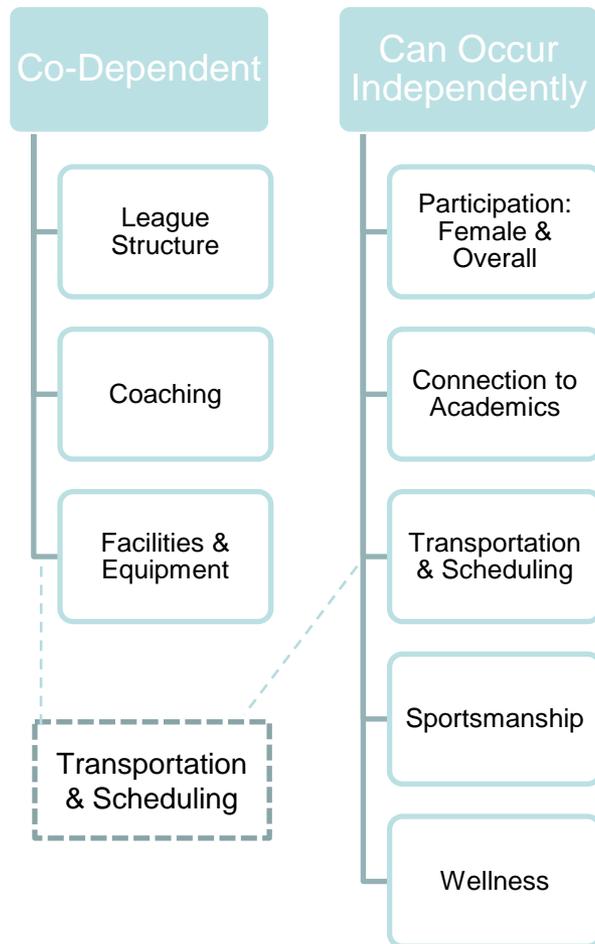
**Student:** *Because he's a good player and he wants to get noticed. Who is going to see him in the city league?*

# How To Get To Reform

**The district's current financial situation dramatically changes the scope and sequence of the athletics reform effort**



# Alignment of Reform Work



- Eight subcommittees developed their respective reform recommendations
- All components within each subcommittee are important and vital to reform in their own right
- Certain recommendations must occur together or the process will be compromised e.g. a change in league structure is tied to recommendations in the Coaching and Facilities & Equipment categories

# PPS Athletics At A Glance

What PPS athletics is...	What PPS athletics could be...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A collection of a few schools of different sizes playing against one another</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student athletes playing against better and different competition in places beyond the city limits</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A place where coaches are not evaluated consistently and the best person for the job is not always the one who gets the coaching position</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coaches who are 100% committed to the development of student athletes</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A place without a true feeder system or anyone to manage participation from youth leagues to high school</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student athletes who understand the benefits of athletic participation and yearn to participate</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fields and facilities in need of improvement so that they are suitable for play and contest attendance</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fields and facilities that make student athletes and their communities proud</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A place where academics and athletics do not always come together in the best way possible</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A place where academic success is as important as athletic success</li></ul>

# Recommendations: Executive Overview

Begin To Explore Now

Recommendation	Cost	Direct Title IX Implication
Modify hiring guidelines for coaches	N/A	
Explore alternative revenue sources for athletics	Savings potential	
Move to centralized purchasing of uniforms	Savings potential	
Track all interscholastic athletic participation centrally	N/A	
Develop and administer a Title IX survey to all students during homeroom period	N/A	
Engage community organizations in female outreach based on survey results	N/A	
Pilot emerging sports opportunities	N/A	
Create and implement athlete ambassador program	N/A	
Develop relationships with organizations/institutions capable of conducting clinics	N/A	
Create new policy on booster clubs ( <b>requires Board vote</b> )	N/A	
Create a consistent sportsmanship code for players, coaches and fans	N/A	
Implement a uniform appearance procedure	N/A	

# Recommendations: Executive Overview

Begin To Explore Now (Continued)

Recommendation	Cost	Direct Title IX Implication
Revise evaluation process for coaches	~\$8K	
Develop a “Promise Report Card” and track Promise Readiness at the team/school level	N/A	
Implement academic/athletic integration period into practices	N/A	
Create a new policy on eligibility ( <b>requires Board vote</b> )	N/A	
Issue recommended practice guidelines re: moderate to vigorous physical activity	N/A	
Form partnerships with organizations capable of promoting physical activity and wellness	N/A	
Facilitate the physical examination process for athletes	N/A	
Explore the development of a centralized online permitting process	N/A	

# Recommendations: Executive Overview

Explore When Financially/Operationally Feasible

Recommendation	Cost	Direct Title IX Implication
Notify PIAA of end of city league (odd number year)	N/A	
Move competition to WPIAL and begin city championship tournaments**	N/A	
Explore a bus leasing pilot with a bus company	~\$20K/year/school	
Create a “Get Out And Move” series of fairs	~\$5K	
Create district wide celebration events for sportsmanship and student achievement	~\$10K	
Create a Health & Wellness academy framework	N/A	
Implement Athletic Director position in place of faculty manager/activities director	\$450K	
Begin implementation of athletics facilities audit recommendations	TBD*	
Develop a “wake-up” sports experience event series	~\$5K	
Design a Pittsburgh Promise Coaches Playbook	\$11K	

\* Athletics facilities audit recommendations broken out by priority and site. See facilities audit for full details.

\*\* League structure recommendation tied to creation of athletic director position and facilities improvement.