

Community Conversation

March 29, 2017

Topic: High School Athletics

Why do we have high school sports?

So kids learn...

Time management

Commitment

How to compete – self-discipline, preparation, life lessons

Sense of belonging

Socialization

Belonging to something bigger than yourself

Legacy – of the league, of the tradition

Some individuals need athletics to stay active, to stay eligible

Extension of the classroom

Leadership

Character

Teamwork

Dedication

Accountability

Diverse groups

Persistence

Hard work

Win or lose with class

Life lessons

Pride

Other:

Scholarships

Opportunity to participate

Interpersonal communications

Conflict management

Inter-school networking

Female empowerment (also applies to young men)

What are the "hot topics" parents are talking about with each other in the stands?

Participation fees

Multi-sport athletes – pretend to encourage it, but it's actually hard to do

Facilities – keeping up with other districts

Time commitment

Outside recruiting (in both directions, i.e., into and out of Lakota)

Club teams talking bad about high school teams

Sense of unity, for non-stars

How kids need to understand their role and value they add

Strength and injury management

Communication directly from coaches to parents (not through the kids)

Lack of PE classes to develop kids for high school sports

Parents not trusting coaches...so doing the coaching themselves

Carloads of kids driving...busing issues

Lesser tier sports

Perceived inequality of boys vs girls sports (e.g., weight room, uniforms)

Open enrollment (athletes moving between East and West)

Huge time commitment for coaches

Retaining coaches

Winning vs. winning at all costs

Kids who don't come out...who don't see a path to playing time

What are the “polarities?” (inherent conflicts)

Can't have a meritocracy and also guarantee playing time

Sense of pride/legacy vs. losing kids to recruitment

We perceive Lakota as a destination district, but we are losing kids to other schools.

Can't rubber-stamp a solution for all sports – athlete who moves in legally can help the team, but what about the player who's bumped out of lineup?

Qualifications for personnel

Different levels on communications on athletic websites

Transportation – to and from games

Lack of coaches who work in the school (“Down 80 percent from 10 years ago”)

Paying for uniforms after paying participation fees

Drug testing of athletes (Lakota does not)

What should be in a district athletic philosophy?

We have to decide, do we want to be top of the top, best of the best, or be a place where everybody gets a trophy?

A sliding scale from freshman through varsity.

We have to understand all athletes not created equal. Different skill levels will be treated differently.

Fairness is not treating everybody the same way. It's giving them what they need to succeed.

Should there be encouragement to seek non-school sports if that's what's best for some kids?

Is there support from the schools for community sports programs?

Junior varsity is for mixing playing time. Varsity is for trying to win – by playing the best team.

High school ought to be playing the best kids.

Play the best but value the roles and develop all athletes.

Define expectations by sports – kids need to know what to expect.

How coaches are evaluated -- go beyond wins and losses.

Does telling a kid they're not good enough contradict our values?

Address whether seniors can/should play junior varsity.

There's value in more kids playing vs. winning.

Take pride in being part of a Lakota team.

Too many kids are quitting mid-season.

East vs. West should be a friendly rivalry. The big rivalry should be with other teams in the conference.

Playing time – “You will never get a coach to lay out clear-cut procedures for playing time.”

We’re judged on the values we espouse (as coaches).

Maintaining each kid and their value.

Role of coaches – what’s within the coach’s discretion?

Competing at a high level

Quality training to reduce injuries

School spirit – need to get younger kids to events

School building culture – create a galvanizing experience for all students, not just athletes

Expect good sportsmanship – also want the same from the students not participating, as well as parents and community

Role of the parent in athletics

Explain the expectation/philosophy of each sport, so that kids can pick sports that are a good fit.

Role of the coach and parents, especially with parents who are coaches

Need to include continuous improvement at all levels

How feedback from students and parents can be obtained

What the philosophy is regarding costs and fees. Some kids are still being excluded. Need to be transparent about what fees pay for

East vs West – need consistency about what fees pay for

Need some support for coaches in the building