

YOUTH ATHLETIC TASK FORCE MINUTES: JUNE 7, 2004 MEETING

(6:15)

1. Called to order. Approved proposed agenda.
Member(s) absent: Dan Kissling
2. Voluntary "check-in" comments.

As the Task Force moved from summarizing relevant research to forming their belief statements, Cal took the "check-in" opportunity to emphasize some points he deemed important. He said he noticed as the Task Force moved to form belief statements there appeared to be a greater tendency on the part of some members to question the positions advocated by the author of the resource the Task Force had chosen. (Just Let the Kids Play, Bob Bigelow). Cal reminded the group this reference was chosen because of the background research studies and organizations cited. While it is prudent to question positions taken, the main question should be if it is just opinion or supported by acceptable research. Similarly, if a member has an opinion he/she wants considered by the Task Force, it should also be supported by research with sources cited. He also stressed the unique opportunity the Task Force has to make a significant impact on the future of youth sports in the community. He encouraged the Task Force to stay true to the charge from the Board of Education; that each individual should be committed to ending up with a quality set of guidelines that accurately reflects the main cautions raised by the growing body of research. The impact of what the Task Force provides to the B.O.E. could well serve the youth of the community well past the direct involvement of the individual members in the youth sports programs.

In an attempt to address some stated and implied concerns of members, Cal emphasized that this Task Force was recommending guidelines deemed important to consider in setting future policies and procedures for the various youth sports programs. The Task Force is not setting policies. That task would be left to other bodies to develop in the future but hopefully, influenced by the recommendations of the Task Force.

Lastly, the recommendations being advanced by the Task Force were developed from the philosophical premise the programs are geared to facilitate the development of **all** students enrolled in the various community athletic programs. Not the "sort and select the best from the rest," especially not prior to the onset of puberty.

3. Open communication from community members.
No community members present.
4. Approve/modify minutes from May 3, 2004 meeting.
Clarification needed on #9 point. Changed to read. Comments on chapter: Big emphasis in chapter that fun is being taken out of youth sports. Minutes were then approved with this modification.

5. Resolve "elite" team question (Suggest members review text for context definition provided as a starting point).

A recommendation from the May meeting was to revisit what is meant by the "elite team" term. The general belief is it is important that all members have a shared understanding in addressing that issue. Members were encouraged to review the reference text, Just Let the Kids Play, for the definition(s) provided in context. Two definitions were cited on pages 34 and 35 of the reference handbook.

- P.34 Elite team ("...are those that attempt to select out the top "talent" in a particular age group and travel to play the "top" talent in other communities. (...also known as select, travel, competitive (vs. recreational), "A" (vs. "B") and all-star teams.")
- PP. 34-35 ("...selecting "the best" and eliminating "the rest" at an early age.") ("...youth sports create systems that rank children according to their athletic abilities and entrap children (*at too early an age)").
*Pre-puberty, prior to grade seven.

As part of the ensuing discussion, Bruce Tway raised the concern about the truly advanced athlete in a particular age group. If the program is to serve "all" participants, how should the program handle a situation where the normal age placement is not suitably challenging for an advanced athlete. The gifted and talented academic program implemented in the school district was used as an analogy. The Task Force did agree that some avenue to address the placement of the exceptional should be in place. However, the deliberation should take into account emotional and social considerations in addition to skill development.

6. The "core issues" for belief statement development was given by from Jim Hagstrom. He suggested the following and asked the committee for any additions?

- Uniform/consistent rules and procedures
- Governing board
- Fair/balanced teams
- Sort/select approach
- Specialization
- Abusive treatment
- Value of program
- Connect with School District
- Formal Commitments
- Modify activity to fit purpose
- Event control
- Time allocation
- Skill development
- Recruiting/training of coaches
- Purpose/focus of program

No additional items were recommended.

7. To use meeting time efficiently and to allow all Task Force members equal opportunity to have input into the development of belief statements, the Task Force was divided into four work groups. Each group was composed of a youth coach, a parent, and a school coach. (Ryan Mangan filled in for Dan Kissling).
Group 1-Jim Hagstrom, Sue Nelson, Dan Kissling (Ryan Mangan)
Group 2-John Dellemeun, Mike Statz, Marcia McDermid
Group 3-Tom Fischer, Tracey Rosemeyer, Rita Olson
Group 4-Todd Bresser, Bruce Tway, John Breidenbach

Each of the four work groups was directed to develop a belief statement for each issue derived from the research. There was a large sheet for each issue displayed on the meeting room walls. At the end of this activity, each issue sheet had at least four (4) possible belief statements recorded.

Facilitator Callaway asked for a sub-committee of volunteers to meet to condense the belief statements recorded under each central issue into one inclusive statement. The volunteers are Marcia McDermid, Todd Bresser, and Rita Olson. (Jim Hagstrom was also added to the sub-committee). The resulting belief statements will be presented for approval/modification at the July meeting.

8. A similar work group approach was accepted by the Task Force to develop stakeholder commitment statements. (see proposed process sheet included). However, since meeting time was dwindling, the work groups were asked to meet as sub-committees prior to the July meeting to develop commitment statement to present to the Task Force at the July meeting.

Ryan Mangan, Athletic Administrator for the school district, was asked to come to the July meeting prepared to discuss with the Task Force how he envisions a youth athletic advisory council working with the school district to facilitate communication and use of resources.

Adjournment at 8:10 p.m.