

Oregon School District
Youth Sports & Athletics Task Force Report
Full Report (8/21/18)

Background

The Oregon School District Board of Education recently adopted a strategic plan paper titled “The Path Forward.” In the paper, a set of interrelated pillars were outlined which form the foundation for a successful school district. These pillars, labeled the Five Values, are designed to work in conjunction with each other and serve as guideposts in moving the District forward. The values are:

- **Whole Child Emphasis:** Each child is healthy, safe, engaged, supported and challenged.
- **Equity for All Students:** All learners reach their full potential.
- **Relevant and Empowering Learning Experiences:** The District is learner-centered, focused on the abilities, interests and goals of each individual.
- **Caring and Professional Educators:** Skilled, motivating educators are critical to student success.
- **Strong Family and Community Partnerships:** Families and the community are our partners.

Boards of Education for the Oregon School District have long held the belief that student participation in co-curricular activities like youth sports (pre-K - 6th grade) and athletics 7th - 12th grade) provide a learning environment conducive to and consistent with the above mentioned values. Section 1.01 of the Oregon School District Co-Curricular Code states “The Oregon School District believes that co-curricular activities are an integral part of the total educational process. Through participation in these opportunities, students can experience activities that will enrich their lives and teach them lessons of personal growth, sportsmanship and teamwork.”¹

In addition to the above, participation in youth sports and athletics also provides a forum for developing and cultivating communication skills, honing the ability to work with others and put others needs ahead of one’s own, and having an opportunity to learn from both successes and failures.

Sports participation helps develop discipline, leadership skills and respect for others. It encourages healthy choices, leads to increased physical activity to benefit overall health and well-being, helps students learn how to cope with difficult situations and provides an outlet for enjoyment and fun.

A significant percentage of Oregon School District students engage in sport activities through community youth sports organizations and the more than 20 athletic programs offered through Oregon Middle School and Oregon High School.

¹ Oregon School District (OSD) Co-Curricular Code. <https://www.oregonsd.org/domain/107>.

Because the Oregon School District has a proud tradition of deliberate reflection on how we educate our students, opportunities we offer to learners of all ages and partnerships we cultivate with families and community organizations, the Oregon Board of Education established a Youth Sports & Athletics Task Force in early 2017 to examine the following:

- Recommendations and results of the 2005 Youth Athletics Task Force, which included: (1) Creation of an Oregon Youth Sports Program Advisory Board; (2) Development of an on-going education program about youth sport best practices; (3) Implementation of a commitment sheet to be signed by every player, parent and coach; and (4) Alignment of facility use policies with the philosophy and guidelines as stated in the 2005 Youth Athletic Philosophy paper and Youth Athletic Task Force report;
- Purposes, shared values and expectations for youth sports organizations and athletic programs in our district;
- Desired future outcomes and best practices for youth sports organizations and athletic programs in our district and the creation of cooperative opportunities between youth sports organizations and District athletic programs; and
- Need for our youth sports organizations and athletic programs to ensure that all students have opportunities consistent with the Oregon School District value of educational equity for all students.

The Youth Sports & Athletics Task Force, which met from March 2017 - June 2018, was comprised of leadership from area youth sports organizations, community members, parents, teachers, coaches, administrators, the Director of Athletics and a member of the Board of Education.

Research

The Task Force conducted research looking at national trends in youth sports and athletics, examined Oregon School District sports participation numbers and hosted a two-night Youth Sports Summit in February of 2018 to engage community members and solicit feedback. The following is relevant research with regard to the charge put before the Task Force.

Participation Costs

Youth sports in the United States is a \$15.3 billion industry that has grown 55 percent since 2010 and continues to grow according to WinterGreen Research, a private firm that tracks the sports industry.² Components of this burgeoning industry are team fees, sports equipment, apparel and travel, among other things. The United States Specialty Sports Association (USSSA), a non-profit organization with a 501(c)(4) tax designation to promote social welfare, generated \$13.7 million in revenue in 2015 from the youth sports tournaments it hosts. The conclusion to draw is that parents in the U.S. are spending significant sums of money for their kids to play sports.

² “Sean Gregory, “Sports Inc. How Your Child’s Rec League Turned Into a \$15 Billion Industry.” *TIME Magazine*, September 4, 2017. 42-51

The USSSA also serves as the body that competitively ranks youth teams in basketball, baseball and softball, as early as age 6-and-under for softball and age 4 for baseball, fueling the desire for parents to spend money on their child to achieve public recognition.³

While some parents seek out these competitive opportunities for their kids, many other families do not. The proliferation and rising costs of select teams have created a divide between families who can afford this level of coaching, training and travel, and the families who cannot. Average annual costs may range from just over \$1,000 for basketball and soccer to several thousands of dollars for sports like baseball, softball, lacrosse and hockey.⁴

What further exacerbates the problem is that travel teams are replacing the traditional model of community-based recreational leagues and teams which shuts out more kids from participating in organized sports because of financial limitations and the transportation burden for families.

Data indicates that children who come from households earning at least \$100,000 participate in organized sports at a rate of 41 percent compared to 19 percent of children who come from households earning \$25,000 or less.⁵

Sport Specialization and Cessation

In the United States, 40 million children play youth sports each year. However, 70 percent quit by the age of 13 which means nearly three out of four children in the U.S. are done with organized sports by the time they enter high school.⁶

Another trend is that the average number of sports played by children ages 6 to 17 has declined for three straight years. In 2008, almost 45 percent of children ages 6 to 12 played a team sport regularly. By 2017, that number had fallen eight percentage points to 37 percent.⁷

Participation rates in team sports, including football, soccer, baseball, tennis and track and field have been on a steady decline over the last decade. The only exceptions are gymnastics, lacrosse and ice hockey.⁸ Compounding these numbers are the statistics that only one in three children are physically active every day. And, one in five children are considered obese.⁹

³ Gregory.

⁴ Gregory.

⁵ Gregory.

⁶ John Sullivan, "Changing The Game In Youth Sports/ILoveToWatchYouPlay.com" *TEDx Bend*, June 20, 2014.

⁷ Jacob Bogage, "Youth Sports Study: Declining Participation, Rising Costs and Unqualified Coaches." *The Washington Post*. September 6, 2017.

⁸ Jon Solomon, "7 Charts That Show Why We Need To Fix Youth Sports." *The Aspen Institute*. September 5, 2017.

⁹ Tom Farrey, "Have Adults Ruined Children's Sport?" *BBC*. December 28, 2017.

There are a handful theories about why kids are giving up playing multiple sports or quitting organized sports all together. Some experts ascribe to the “up or out” mentality.¹⁰ As mentioned previously, many communities have adopted competitive youth travel teams at much earlier ages and take the most talented athletes for their teams. As a result, many of the kids that aren’t chosen for these teams either don’t have a separate opportunity available to them, grow disillusioned with the recreational team or hear a message that they aren’t skilled enough to play that particular sport. So, they quit.

An additional theory regarding declining participation is that young athletes are specializing too soon, a trend that can have negative consequences for their health and well-being. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, “burnout, anxiety, depression and attrition are increased in early specializers.” Furthermore, they say delaying that specialization until late adolescence increases the likelihood of athletic success.¹¹

In his “Too Much, Too Soon?” editorial in *The American Journal of Sports Medicine*, Dr. Bruce Reider addresses the debate around early sports specialization and the focus on two issues: whether early specialization favors optimal performance and whether it increases the risk of injury, both physical and psychological.¹²

Dr. Reider includes a study conducted by a group of researchers from the University of Wisconsin-Madison which found that injuries in general or overuse injuries were more likely among highly specialized athletes vs. low specialized athletes, young kids who whose weekly participation exceeded more hours than their age in years and youth who played their primary sport more than eight months per year.

The recommendations from that study included: 1) Don’t specialize in one sport; 2) Limit participation in one sport to less than 8 months per year; and 3) Limit participation to fewer hours per week than a child’s age in years.¹³

He concludes his editorial by stating that “the degree to which specialization is desirable and the optimal age for beginning this transition will depend on the specific sport chosen and the physical, social and emotional maturity of the individual athlete. It seems ideal that specialization would be part of a natural maturational progression, motivated by the desires of the young athlete rather than dictated by controlling adults. Whether an athlete is specialized or diversified, excessive volume and intensity of training are independent risk factors for physical and psychological injury that demand careful monitoring in the growing competitor and continued research by the sports medicine profession.”¹⁴

¹⁰ Bogage.

¹¹ Gregory.

¹² Bruce Reider, MD. “Too Much, Too Soon?” *American Journal of Sports Medicine*. May, 2017.

¹³ Reider.

¹⁴ Reider.

What is the goal of the sports participation? Many parents hope that their child's sports prowess may lead to a college scholarship and, for a few, the potential for a pro career. Unfortunately, the odds of kids playing sports competitively after high school are not good.

While the NCAA does distribute \$3 billion in college scholarships per year, only two percent of high school athletes go on to play Division I athletics. Travis Dorsch, the founding director of the Families in Sport Lab at Utah State University had this to say about the decisions many families are making. "I've seen parents spend a couple of \$100,000 pursuing a college scholarship. They could have set it aside for the darn* college."¹⁵

TIME magazine sourced scholarshipstats.com to report that 541,000 boys play high school basketball in the United States. Only 1 in 99 will go on to play Division 1 and 1 in 1,860 will play in the NBA. For soccer, only 1 in 73 will play Division 1 and 1 in 835 will play MLS. For baseball, 1 in 47 will play Division 1 and 1 in 764 will play for MLB. And for football, 1 in 41 will play Division 1 while 1 in 603 will play in the NFL.¹⁶ Similar statistics for girls were not available.

Utah State's Dorsch says these high stakes can have a detrimental effect on kids. In his 2016 study, Dorsch and his colleagues' findings indicated that the more money families spent on youth sports, the more pressure for their kids and the less the kids found enjoyment or had a commitment level to the sport.¹⁷

The news isn't all bad though as there are some positives to note. Some kids thrive in a competitive environment and can greatly improve their skill level when paired with higher level coaching and training. In addition, being a member of a travel team brings kids together from different schools and backgrounds in a way that local recreational teams do not. Parents bond with each other and kids make new friends.

The key is for parents to be aware and knowledgeable about the needs, wants and developmental stages of their child. And, to employ critical analysis skills upon entry into the world of youth sports.

Parent Expectations

To many who study youth sports and child development, and even for those employed in the industry, parents are a key component.

Kevin Payne, head of U.S. Club Soccer, thinks parents would be best served to check themselves and focus on the development that is best for their child. "To keep ambitions in proportion and avoid player burnout, parents need to learn how their child can develop properly as an athlete."¹⁸

¹⁵ Gregory. (*language change made)

¹⁶ Gregory.

¹⁷ Gregory.

¹⁸ Farrey.

According to John Sullivan at ILoveWatchingYouPlay.com, the number one reason kids play sports is to have fun with their friends. He believes that the trend of hyper-competitiveness and kids doing more and more at younger ages equates to a “great, giant race to nowhere” where kids end up hating sports, have damaged relationships with their parents, and physical and emotional scars that last a lifetime.¹⁹

Canadian Sports for Life is one of the leading organizations in the development of age-appropriate steps of development for children and sports. Called the “7 Stages of Long Term Athletic Development” (LTAD), the model was developed to address the decline in sport participation and physical activity. They found there are negative consequences of not matching skills and activities to a development stage, which include: 1) Children don’t have fun; 2) They develop bad habits because of the over-emphasis on winning; 3) Their skill development is poor; 4) They don’t reach optimal performance level; and 5) Many burn out and drop out of sport. The seven stages of LTAD are:

- **Active Start (ages 0-6)**. Physical activity is fun and part of daily life. Free-play.
- **FUNDamentals (males ages 6-9; females ages 6-8)**. Learning fundamental movement skills and building overall motor skills.
- **Learn to Train (males ages 9-12; females ages 8-11)**. Ready to learn and refine the general sports skills needed for athletic development and participation in sport for health.
- **Train to Train (males ages 12-16; females ages 11-15)**. Start to specialize in sport of choice. Major focus during competition is on applying what they’ve learned, not on winning at all costs. Starts when child’s major growth spurt starts. Parent role is more advisory, not hands-on.
- **Train to Compete (males 16-23+/-; females 15-21+/-)**. Specialization in one sport and working on event- or position-specific skills and physical demands. Athletes must fully develop their Train to Train skills and physical preparation before starting Train to Compete skills and activities.
- **Train to Win (males 19+/-; females 18+/-)**. Training to win at the highest level of sport. Working with highly trained and qualified coaches.²⁰
- **Active for Life (enter at any age)**. Transition from a competitive career to lifelong physical activity and participation in sports. Can occur at any age, it usually occurs after the Learn to Train stage.

Using these LTAD principles as a foundation, the U.S. Olympic Committee along with National Governing Bodies created a five-stage American Development Model in 2014.

- **Discover, Learn, and Play (ages 0–12 years)**
- **Develop and Challenge (ages 10–16 years)**
- **Train and Compete (ages 13–19 years)**
- **Excel for High Performance or Participate and Succeed (ages ≥15 years)**
- **Mentor and Thrive (for Life)²¹**

¹⁹ Sullivan.

²⁰ Canadian Sport for Life: A Sport Parent’s Guide. *Sportforlife.ca*.

²¹ Joel S. Brenner, “Sports Specialization and Intensive training in Young Athletes.” *American Academy of Pediatrics Clinical Report*. September 2016.

The Olympic Committee acknowledged that sports specialization is becoming the norm in youth sports for a variety of reasons and when sports specialization occurs too early, detrimental effects may occur, both physically and psychologically. They also stated that if the timing is correct and sports specialization is performed under the correct conditions, the athlete may be successful in reaching specific goals.

Having parents who are knowledgeable about child development as it relates to sports and who are tuned into the needs and goals of their child is important. The same holds true for coaches and the children on their team. A study by George Washington University found that what children wanted most from sport was “the chance to play and to try their best, guided by a coach who respects them.”²²

Coach Training

Finding individuals who have the necessary training to be a coach appears to be a significant problem for youth sports and athletics throughout the United States. According to research from both the Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) and The Aspen Institute, seven in 10 youth sports coaches are not trained in six core competencies required to be a qualified coach. These competencies are:

- General safety and injury prevention
- Effective motivational techniques
- CPR and basic first aid
- Physical conditioning
- Concussion management
- Sport-specific skills and tactics.²³

Furthermore, the gap between the number of male and female coaches is significant. In the U.S. today, 72 percent of youth sports coaches are male, 28 percent are female.²⁴

Oregon School District Student Data

The following data outlines participation in Oregon School District athletic programs.²⁵

School Year	OHS Enrollment	Athletic Participation	Participation %
2017-2018	1,167	522	44.7%
2016-2017	1,139	527	46.2%
2015-2016	1,177	535	45.5%

²² Farrey.

²³ Bogage.

²⁴ Solomon

²⁵ Oregon School District Athletic Department.

2014-2015	1,123	538	47.9%
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As outlined in the above table, enrollment at Oregon High School for the 2017-2018 school year was 1,167 students. The number of students who participated in school-sponsored athletic programs was 522 or 44.7 percent. Participation by grade level is outlined in the table below:

	Athletic Participation	Male	Female
9th Grade	136	75	61
10th Grade	131	64	67
11th Grade	137	73	64
12th Grade	118	70	48

The following table outlines Oregon School District student enrollment and athletic program participation via the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) enrollment data categories:

	Total Enrollment	Athletic Program Participation
2017-2018 School Year	1,167	522 (44.7%)
Hispanic	76 (6.5%)	20 (3.8%)
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0	0
Asian	23 (2%)	9 (1.7%)
Black	24 (2.1%)	8 (1.5%)
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	2 (.1%)	0
White	1,015 (87%)	475 (91%)
Two or More	27 (2.3%)	10 (2%)

Enrollment at Oregon Middle School for the 2017-2018 school year was 574 students. The number of students who participated in school-sponsored athletic programs was 254 or 44.3 percent. Participation by grade level is outlined in the table below:

	Total Participation	Male	Female
7th Grade	121	60	61
8th Grade	133	64	69

Youth Sports Summit Themes/Emphasis Areas

Over two nights in early February 2018, for three hours each evening, more than 90 community members gathered to discuss youth sports and athletics in the Oregon School District. The Summit included listening to a video from John Sullivan of ILoveToWatchYouPlay.com, hearing directly from a panel of OHS student-athletes about their sport experiences, small group work, prioritization of themes and brainstorming about potential action steps.

The Summit outcomes desired by the Task Force included listening and learning about the youth sports experiences of our kids, providing an opportunity for adult leaders to connect with one another on sport best practices, ensuring that our sports programs are built upon a foundation of learning, and growing the strongest youth sports and athletics culture for our kids.

Upon initial review of the themes and action steps that arose from Summit participants, the Task Force believes that the four objectives were accomplished. Please see Appendix A - Themes and Appendix B - Action Steps.

At a subsequent meeting, the Task Force continued to review the themes and action step ideas that arose from the small group work and began to develop recommendations to put forth to the Vision Steering Committee and ultimately the Board of Education. The framework used to drive the discussion centered on the following questions:

- What recommendations/action steps will have the most impact in ensuring that our youth sports and athletics programs are built upon a foundation of learning?
- What recommendations/action steps will grow the strongest culture in youth sports and athletics for our kids?

Resulting from the discussion, the Task Force arrived at consensus around these four areas of emphasis to serve as the basis for developing recommendations:

1. Gather student data to assist in the development of goals and benchmarks regarding participation with an emphasis on equity (address/eliminating barriers to participation);
2. Explore a "One Oregon" concept of collaboration amongst all K-12 sports organizations and athletic programs to adopt shared values, beliefs and informational processes;
3. Develop best practices regarding communication (methods, frequency and delivery) between coaches/parents, coaches/students and sports organizations/parents; and
4. Teach positive parenting and develop our coaches to provide the optimal sports experience in the context of personal growth and skill development.

Conclusions

Before finalizing the recommendations, the Task Force compiled information gained from the research, data collection and Youth Sports Summit outcomes to arrive at the following conclusions:

- More comprehensive data is needed regarding Oregon School District student participation/non-participation in sports.
- The OSD Athletic Department needs to continue to conduct post-season surveys of student-athletes and their parents about their athletic experiences.
- Children are quitting sports earlier than high school.
- Inactivity in children is a cause of obesity.
- Sport specialization at an earlier age has increased and may have negative consequences for children.
- The cost to participate in sports has risen for kids/families.
- Access to sports has been limited for children who have a lower household income, creating a participation rate income divide.
- Barriers to participation, besides cost, inhibit participation in sports by kids.
- Parents may not have the child development knowledge as it relates to sports participation and therefore their expectations may differ from that of their child. This may lead to anxiety, burnout and injury in the child and may be harmful to the parent/child relationship.
- Many coaches are under trained.
- Most coaches are male.
- The Oregon School District community is interested in youth sports and athletics, as more than 15 area youth sport organizations draw a combined total of more than 3,500 participants.
- The Oregon School District community is supportive of educationally-based youth sports and athletic programs.
- Oregon-area youth sports organizations vary in structure, governance, budget, requirements of players, coaches and parents, level determinations, season/out-of-season activities and costs to participate. (<https://tinyurl.com/y7ge3skr>)
- There is an appetite in the district for collaboration across programs and organizations.
- Best practices, benchmarks, processes and shared mechanisms/tools are needed to achieve our objectives.
- Parents are a key component in the youth sports and athletic program culture throughout the Oregon School District.

Task Force Recommendations

Rooted in our District values and growing out of our conclusions, the Task Force believes that in order to deliver an optimum youth sports and athletics experience for Oregon School District students we must ensure that all students have opportunities to participate, are afforded fun and healthy sports environments in order to cultivate skills that prepare them for their futures, and are taught active lifestyle habits that will benefit them for a lifetime. In addition, we must do this together as a school district, youth sports organizations, parents, community members and students.

Tom Farrey, Executive Director of The Aspen Institute's Sports & Society Program, echoed the value of such a pursuit. "There's reams and reams of research on this. Kids who are physically active are less likely to be obese. They're better in the classroom. They go to college. They're more likely to be active parents. And because of that, their kids are more active. No one organization alone can build healthy kids and communities through sports. It will take like-

minded groups, even competitors, collaborating to get kids off the couch without running them into the ground.”²⁶

The recommendations of the Youth Sports & Athletics Task Force are:

Recommendation #1:

The Oregon School District survey both students and parents (4K to Grade 12) about participation and non-participation in sports in order to better understand access, equity and opportunities or lack thereof, to benchmark participation numbers and to determine goals for the future. We suggest the research be conducted by an outside firm in the Fall of 2018.

Responsible Parties: Oregon School District and Outside Research Firm

Timeline: Fall 2018

Recommendation #2:

The Oregon School District and Oregon Youth Sports Organizations form a consortium to collaborate and develop best practices, shared beliefs and information processes in the areas of coach preparation and training, communication to families and concept of age-appropriate development/seasons. Oregon School District physical education and health educators will also be included as members of the consortium.

Responsible Parties: OSD Athletic Director and Youth Sports Organization Leaders

Timeline: Begin Fall/Winter 2018

Recommendation #3:

Creation of an Advisory Council that is charged with developing tools and mechanisms to help parents become better educated in their role as a “sport parent” with the purpose of fostering their child’s development, ensuring that sports experiences are centered in learning and to help grow a strong and positive sports culture for our kids.

Responsible Party: New Parent Advisory Council

Timeline: Fall of 2018. Launch Winter of 2018.

²⁶ Farrey.

Youth Sports & Athletics Task Force Members

Oregon School District Staff

Mike Carr, Co-Chair, Director of Athletics

Dawn Goltz, Prairie View Elementary School Principal

Dave Jameson, Community Education & Recreation Program Coordinator

Kelli Pierce, Teacher at Rome Corners Intermediate and Head Cheer Coach

Jake Soule, Teacher at Rome Corners Intermediate and Head Baseball Coach

Sydnee Wyss, Teacher at Oregon Middle School and Head Softball Coach

Community Members

Krista Flanagan, Co-Chair, Oregon School District Board of Education Member

Eric Anderson

John Breidenbach

Tim Erickson

Dawn Koopman

Heather Kugel

Sarah Tarantino

Appendix A

Themes from Youth Sports Summit Day One

- **Purpose/Value of Youth Sports**

(Have fun, learning, life skill development, friendship/social aspects)

- **Access to Opportunities/Equity**

(Address barriers to participation)

- **Positive Parenting**

(Let this be the kid's experience, not the parents / "I love watching you play!")

- **Parent Information & Education**

(Help parents learn about opportunities/navigate the youth sports experience)

- **Coach Development**

(Increase number of coaches, sport knowledge, relationship building and communication with kids and their parents)

- **Age/Level/Program Offerings**

(Ensure program opportunities exist to meet all abilities)

- **Team Selection**

(Best practices about defining teams, when to begin travel/select teams)

- **Continuity between Youth Sports & OHS Athletic Programs**

(Varsity coach involvement in youth programs/consistency in teaching)

- **Concept of Sports "Seasons" and Defining Calendars**

(Develop "in season" and "off seasons" for sports and for facility usage)

- **Coordination & Collaboration Across Sports - One Oregon**

(Improve communication between sports orgs. and increase collaboration)

Appendix B

Compilation of Action Step Ideas from Youth Sports Summit Day Two

Youth Sports Purpose/Value/Mission

- Establish a vision statement and guiding principles for youth sports that align actions and decisions. (e.g. the “what we value” apple for sports)
- Develop a mission statement, including the definition of success and goals for “One Oregon”
- Clearly define a consistent mission across all youth sports; define accountabilities to ensure it's followed. Include key topics — fun, skill development, etc.
- Define SMART goal of involvement (i.e. percentage of kids involved) / Keep as many kids as possible playing for as long as possible in the healthiest environment possible.

Data Collection, Information and Education

- Survey youth parents and high school students. A series of questions around their experience or lack of experience. Include: leadership, economics, experience, culture, barriers
- OSD collects data on reasons why students aren't participating in youth sports
- Identify the students who need additional support
- Talk to kids who choose not to play sports or who quit to get that info for task force
- Elementary school intake forms to find out kids' sports interest at beginning of each year
- Understand what interferes with youth involvement in sports - gather information about why initial involvement and why leaving sports.

Access to Opportunities/Equity

- Research: Survey what other larger and smaller school districts and other organizations are doing / Use results to identify best practices
- Access: Identify process for families with financial barriers to access youth sports (e.g. through school registration)
- Financial/Scholarships: A universal, standard procedure to apply for and have access to scholarship money or the scholarship process (with listed details) / Review process and guidelines for “scholarships.” Provide consistency across youth sports programs. / scholarships for kids/families who are borderline need but don't apply or can't afford equipment; use sponsorship \$; equipment resale event where all sports or seasonal / Offer more free camps and clinics for youth
- Transportation: A communicated ride-share program / Setting up a car pool system within the community or have organizations make sure they are offering something / Ask on registration form (Do you need help with rides? Can you give rides to students?)
- Opportunities: Work with OSD Community Ed to create more short term opportunities for students / Have more open gym opportunities
- Food: Set up after school programming/tutoring/meals to allow kids to stay in town until evening practice (meal/transportation barrier)
- Communication: Educate the community on the issue of equity / Make sure information is available to those who may have barriers (transportation, money, time commitment, communication, social & family factors, fear & lack of confidence) / Make sure flyers are being handed out at elementary schools (add that youth organizations are committed to accommodating all students) / Communication between physical education teachers and youth sports programs.

Positive Parenting

- Adopt “I Love Watching You Play!” and other values at all venues.
- Mandate that all youth sports organizations show the “Changing the Game” video to parents / Share videos like the ones we watched. Have all parents and participants watch the videos / Get “Changing the Game” video out to parents “I Love Watching You Play” message.
- Parent Code of Conduct: Universal parent code of conduct for all sports. Task force comes up with statement and reports that back to organizations for feedback / Develop parent contract, parent code of conduct. Clearly delineated and communicated avenue to report concerns regarding using positive language “Thank you for ...” / Mandatory parent meetings at all youth and OHS sports. Show “Changing the Game” video / For OHS Sports, one code meeting per season, one message for all parents and athletes, show video and then can do sports break-outs
- Open lines of communication with a)parents-to-parents; b)coach-to-parents
- Allow kids to express feedback to parents in a non-parent involved event, but have all parents watch reaction
- Youth Sports Orgs. have dedicated board position to observe youth parents to allow a 3rd party to give feedback to troubled parents
- Senior parents mentoring frosh/soph/new parents (“passing down the book/binder”)
- Teams created written statements about what they want to hear their parents say during their games (signed).

Coach Development

- Standards: Have set standards across all sports for each grade level or age groups: K-2: Have fun; Grades 3-4: Skill development
- Certifications: Each youth sports organization mandates that coaches are certified (Is certification the same for all age levels?) / Make all coaches go through “positive coaching alliance” training / All coaches should take NFHS courses, safe sport courses.
- Recruitment: “Thinking about Coaching?” workshop across all sports (overall coaching skills) / Brainstorm what our coaching pool is in Oregon (Inventory Oregon — empty nesters) / Are their organizations that can help us to find and train coaches / Consider programs that bring in students as coaches / Identify what interferes with recruitment of qualified coaches
- Skill Development: Individual sports skill development workshops for coaches / Coaching techniques passed down between varsity to youth / Have OHS head coach or assistant coaches run a practice w/parent coaches at the youth level /Offer universal trainings on sportsmanship, praise and offer feedback, tough situations, educating/managing parents.
- Communication: Develop coaches ability to communicate with players and parents / Determine communication expectations - different depending on age level; expectations are higher for kids at different level; add another meeting with parents after the teams are selected besides initial info meeting
- Evaluation: Coach-to-coach evaluation / Parent survey at beginning and end of season.

Team Selection

- Re-examine process and age when “A” and “B” team levels are started (e.g. soccer starts A/ B teams at 3rd grade — why?)
- Evaluate whether teams should be “A” and “B” or mix of talent until a certain grade/level.

Concept of Sports “Seasons” and Defining Calendars

- **Collaboration:** Youth organizations have an annual meeting of board members to help reduce overlap pressures / Annual meeting that organizations discuss facility calendars for in season / Develop organization and coaches communication to put together a master schedule for Oregon Youth Sports, preventing as many conflicts (scheduling) for kids as possible.
- **Guidelines:** Aren't seasons defined by WIAA seasons - shouldn't it start with that? / Develop a set of guidelines for athletes/parents to inform them about risks of double seasons/playing year-round / Have understanding on what's acceptable for kids needing to miss practices (i.e. splitting practices ok during overlap of activities)
- **Facility/Space Priority:** OHS sports that are in-season get priority on facilities / Allow in-season sports to take precedence over out-of-season sports / Many conflicts would be alleviated through the use of more outdoor facility space
- Allow kids freedom to feel at ease choosing what sport they want to play.

Continuity between Youth Sports & OHS Athletic Programs

- Regular meetings of all OHS coaches across all sports — set values, align on priorities, build interpersonal relationships
- Have OHS coaches meet with youth sports organizations periodically (1-2x/year) / OHS Coaches should have input into youth program, but not control / Several youth sports organizations have OHS Head Coach as voting board member, which encourages input and engagement
- Organize a summit between OHS sports and all Oregon youth sports organizations
- High school coaches showing up at youth level events
- Coaching techniques passed down throughout levels / Varsity coach creates drills and maybe videos for coaches
- Mentoring — big brother/big sister concept; youth teams come to varsity practice / increase presence of OHS Coaches and Varsity athletes at OMS/RCI.

Coordination & Collaboration Across Sports (One Oregon) / Parent Information & Education

- **Sports Advisory Council:** Develop a youth sports advisory council / All sports leaders be present on a board to coordinate a mission plan across all sports / Create a group or committee governing all Oregon Youth Sports (could function like a booster club, could also function as a scheduling and facilities issues group) - includes sports organization heads and at-large parent seats / Regular meetings of Board members of all youth programs to establish consistent expectations, practices, program offerings, fees, etc. = consistency for families / Annual meeting of youth sports board presidents to discuss season, mission statements, etc.
- **One Oregon Entity:** Mission statement that encompasses and supports 4K-12, life lessons, defines success (player retention), access to opportunity, education-based,, coach, parent, and child relationship, community involvement, equity and equality, fun, qualified coaches with a website, that includes: all sports team info, background check, parent info/links/forms (ethics), age/level/programs, sponsorship opportunities, bus schedule, equipment swap, scholarship info/opportunities, fundraising for all sports to be shared, coaches corner - education and development, video links, coach evaluations, registration, payment (2nd child discount), athletic apparel, calendar, facility reservation.

- Hire a Youth Sports Athletic Director - coordinates with heads of youth sports orgs, OMS, OHS (YMCA model).
- Information & Communication: Sports Fair a few times per year to allow parents and kids to come to one location to learn from each youth organization / Website hub for all youth sports organizations / OregonYouthSports.org or OneOregon.org - one stop site for all youth sports information that communicates a mission statement, contacts and websites for youth sports organizations, registration process, code of ethics for parents/athletes, calendars, etc. / One format for sports program info and access / Investigation into central clearinghouse for youth sports sign-ups and program information / One Oregon” sports Facebook page.

Other:

- OSD considers plans for a high school pool and a middle school track.