



# Pittsburgh Public Schools Athletic Reform: Working Recommendations

Pittsburgh Community Meeting  
November 8, 2010



## Agenda

- Athletics Situation Overview
- The Athletics Committee: Process, Vision and Strategy
- Recommendations Overview
- Breakout Overview
- Recommendations and Breakouts



## Excellence For All

- Great cities and school systems place rigor on all areas of a student's education
- Athletics is a lynchpin of a community and a key part of the fabric of a school system
- For the past five years, Pittsburgh Public Schools has focused on the foundational issues affecting our schools. It is now time to raise the bar on athletics!
- Now is the time for Pittsburgh Public Schools to address athletic reform and to ensure that it is woven into all other reform efforts



## The Case For Change

What We Know About PPS	What National Statistics Tell Us
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our district is smaller—so too are our athletic teams               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High school enrollment is -30% from 2003-2010</li> <li>• Participation in athletics is -20% comparing 2009/2010 to 2006/2007</li> <li>• In no sport do all of our high schools have the minimum number of athletes required to form a team</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The Title IX audit exposed problems across a wide array of topics:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation: female equality and overall</li> <li>• League Structure</li> <li>• Facilities</li> <li>• Transportation</li> <li>• Scheduling</li> <li>• Coaching</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Constituents in the district want change!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students who compete in athletics make higher grades and have better attendance (NFHS as cited by the PPS Title IX Audit)</li> <li>• University of Chicago research suggests:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Student-athletes’ parents are more involved with their educational process</li> <li>• Student-athletes demonstrate a higher level of self-confidence than non-athletes</li> <li>• 92% of student-athletes do not use drugs</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 96% of dropouts in 14 school districts in seven regions of the nation were not participating in an athletic program. (<i>National Federation of State High School Associations</i>)</li> <li>• In 2008, 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)</li> </ul>

# Athletic Reform: Approach





## The Athletics Committee

Name	District Affiliation
Duane Ashley	Mayor's Office
Mark Brentley	School Board
Sophia Facaros	Principal
Robert Fadzen	School Police
Mike Gavlik	PPS Administration
George Gensure	PFT
Jake House	PPS Administration
Phyllis Jones	Teacher/Coach
Tim Keefer	Teacher/Coach
Derrick Lopez	PPS Administration
Amy Malen	PPS Administration

Name	District Affiliation
Aaron Mickens	Referee
Walt Milinski	Teacher/Coach
Rich O'Brien	Teacher/Coach
Vern Phillips	Parent
Mark Rauterkus	Parent
Ken Saybel	Teacher/Faculty Manager
Suelynn Shiller	Parent
Sarah Sumpter	Principal
John Tokarski	Parent
Ted Vasser	PPS Administration
John Vater	Principal
Christine Wolski	Teacher/Coach

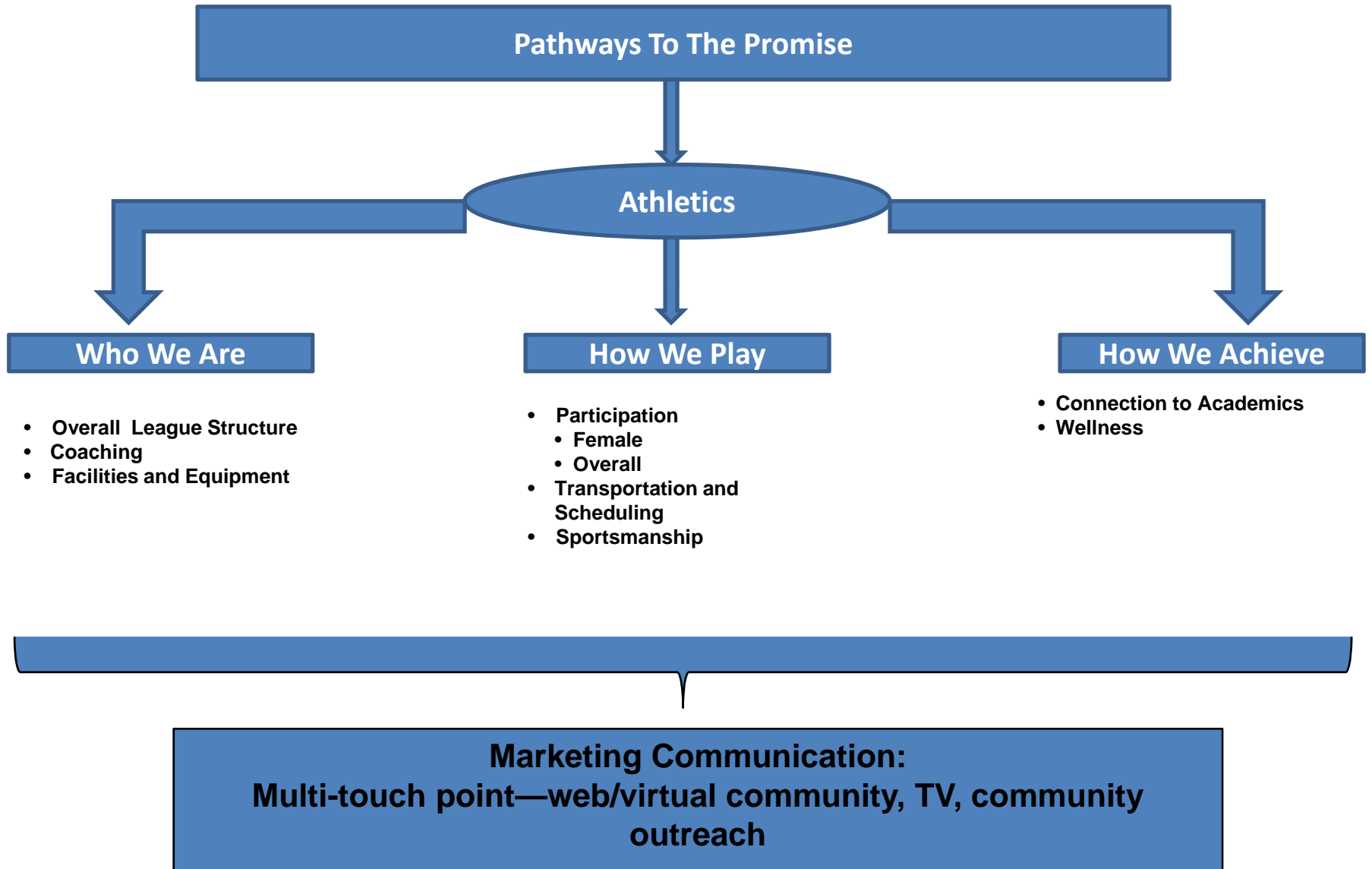


## PPS Athletics: A Vision For The Future

**The Pittsburgh Public Schools athletic program is interwoven into the fabric of our schools and the community. Our student athletes dream big and work hard both on the playing field and in the classroom. Our coaches and administrators teach not only the skills of the sport, but also the skills of life, and ensure that the PPS student athlete is driven to develop positive behaviors and habits, and to explore their ambitions and dreams. PPS athletics is synonymous with character and class. The PPS student athlete represents their school and community with dignity and pride, and ultimately uses the lessons of sport as a springboard to success in life.**

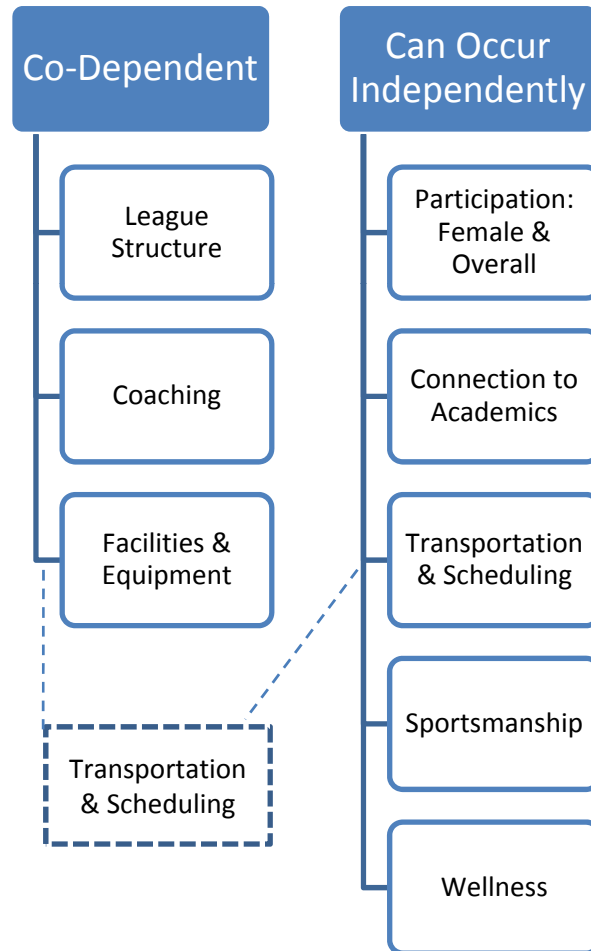


# Pathways To The Promise: Athletics Strategy





## Alignment of Working 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
- Certain recommendations can occur immediately, while others require time to implement



## Structure For Breakout

- There will be two breakout sessions
  - League Structure
  - Participation: Female & Overall
- Each breakout session will run for 15 minutes and then a representative will lead a report out to the room in the following format:
  - One positive
  - One challenge
  - One area the group is still wondering about
- All notes will be collected and used to inform future recommendations. They will be posted on the web and we will open the notes for additional commentary

## Coaching

### *Problems*

*"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)*

*"Coaches should be chosen by ability and knowledge." (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)*

*"The coach often has other things to do and cancels practice." (student)*

*"I spend more time with my faculty manager than I do my English teacher." (principal)*



# Coaching

## Recommendations To Address Problems

- 1. Establish a recruiting process and actively recruit, hire and retain the best person for the job**
  - Coaching applicants must exhibit a range of traits relative to coaching, sport, leadership and academics/athletics integration
  - Open positions awarded to the best candidate. Automatic hiring trigger when 10:1 ratio occurs in order to ensure equality as identified by Title IX
  - Panel interview process consisting of: teacher and/or coach from another sport, principal, athletic director/faculty manager, parent/community member, coach or specialist in the sport from outside the district (if possible)
  
- 2. Establish a consistent evaluation process for all coaches**
  - Implement a scorecard based on factors ranging from coaching performance to relationships and connection to academics
  - The scorecard will consist of four rating categories: Outstanding Performance (O), Exceeds Expectations (E), Meets Expectations (M) and Does Not Meet Expectations (D)
    - Coaches receive financial incentive for “O” ratings. Enhanced professional development opportunities made available for coaches receiving a “E” rating. Development of coaches who are evaluated at “M” and removal of coaches who are evaluated as “D”
  
- 3. Create full time Athletic Director positions in place of faculty managers**
  - Athletic directors would be responsible for the high school and the feeder middle school(s)
  - Certified position with full accountability for any and all issues related to coaches, training, Title IX (a recommendation brought forth in the audit), booster oversight, community outreach, etc.



# Wellness

## Problems

- Childhood obesity rates have tripled in the past 30 years. Nearly 20 percent of all youth between ages 6 and 19 qualify as obese (CDC)
- Schools present opportunities for reducing the risk of diabetes, since no other institution has as much contact time with children (New England Journal of Medicine—HEALTHY Study)
- 16% of children 6 to 19 years of age in the United States are overweight, and 19% are obese

## Recommendations To Address Problems

- 1. Create a “Get Out and Move” series of fairs**
  - Schools and community based organizations promote their efforts to encourage physical activity
  - Speeches and demonstrations from students and organizations committed to health, nutrition, and activity
- 2. Create recommended practice guidelines for coaches—ensure that physical activity is incorporated in to practices**
- 3. Partner with institutions and organizations seeking to promote physical activity and wellness**
  - University of Pittsburgh Department of Health and Wellness—workshops at schools, coaching certifications, marketing outreach, etc.
  - UPMC integration—knowledge sharing re: nutritional supplements from athletic trainers
  - Grass roots and national organizations e.g. Bike Pittsburgh, Mighty Milers
- 4. Facilitate the physical examination process for athletes—increase availability and offerings of physicals**
- 5. Create a Health & Wellness Academy framework for PPS**
  - Themed curriculum—obesity training, nutrition, kinesiology, sports medicine, sports management and marketing
  - Teaching/coaching academy



## Connection To Academics

### Problems

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)



## Connection To Academics

### Recommendations To Address Problems

- 1. Create a “Promise Report Card” and operating procedure for every student athlete**
  - Weekly report sent to coaches depicting: attendance, GPA, PSAT/SAT status and scores
  - Celebrate team and individual success—Promise Ready teams and individuals celebrated and rewarded at the end of the season
- 2. Integrate academic practice in to all athletic practices**
  - Require academic integration period a minimum of 1x/week before or after practice
- 3. Create an athletic intervention program to target borderline ineligible students**
  - Students with 1.5-1.99 GPA who volunteer with parental consent can remain eligible for sports if they comply with all elements of the intervention program
  - Intervention program to include mandatory attendance and academic progress. Non-compliance results in immediate ineligibility
- 4. Create a Pittsburgh Promise Playbook for Coaches and hold coaches accountable for its use**
  - Key information and tips for communicating the Pittsburgh Promise to student athletes
  - Recommendations for alumni outreach and integration
  - AP materials and key testing dates (e.g. PSAT, SAT, etc.)
  - NCAA regulations, eligibility criteria and key information



# Sportsmanship

## Problems

- **Pittsburgh Public Schools does not have a consistent sportsmanship policy for students, coaches and fans**
- **There is a perception problem outside of the city league around safety within Pittsburgh and PPS**
- **The idea behind a “spirit of sportsmanship” is not universally accepted or consistent in PPS**

## Recommendations To Address Problems

- 1. Create a consistent sportsmanship code for contest attendees, athletes and athletic personnel**
  - Have accountability measures with penalties for non-compliance
  - Hold sportsmanship workshops for coaches and faculty managers/AD
- 2. Introduce a “spirit of sportsmanship” and athletic leadership in PPS**
  - Grow and educate the community on the Student Athlete Leadership Academy (SALA)—communicate importance
  - Implement a uniform appearance policy for all athletes traveling to away contests
  - Create a annual district wide celebration of sportsmanship and student athlete achievement
    - Recognize schools and individuals who best exemplify sportsmanship and academic achievement
    - Name the award after a local figure who best exemplifies PPS pride and sportsmanship





## Facilities & Equipment

### Problems

*“City teams have basic items. WPIAL teams use more advanced equipment; editing machines and better cameras. Other than protective equipment, we get nothing from the school” (coach)*

*“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)*

### Recommendations To Address Problems

- 1. Create a standard and compliance policy for athletic fields and facilities**
  - Conduct internal audit of PPS athletic fields and facilities to understand scope of deficiencies
  - Recommend both improvements to existing and alternative locations for premier fields and facilities e.g. Northside and East End complex. This should also include non-contest facilities like academic resource centers
- 2. Create a policy and process around how equipment dollars are spent on site**
  - Track current spend on site and mandate roll up from AD/Faculty Manager to Director of Athletics to ensure equitable distribution of funds
  - Move to centralized negotiations, contracts and spending for all equipment and uniforms
- 3. Move to a transparent, online permitting process**
  - Create a centralized online permitting tool for all PPS facilities (potentially team with City on their new system-- ReCPro)
- 4. Raise money from outside sources to support facilities and equipment needs**
  - Identify funding needs based on facilities audit
  - Seek potential partners with vested interest in the city of Pittsburgh and PPS students



## Transportation & Scheduling

### Problems

*“There are so many fall sports that sometimes our team doesn’t get a practice bus”*

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

*“We don’t go out of town to play” (student)*

*“I don’t know why we don’t play the maximum number of games” (student)*

### Recommendations To Address Problems

- 1. Introduce new and different times for athletic contests (to be placed online)**
- 2. Form new and different relationships with bus companies**
  - Hire one dedicated athletics bus per school (or co-op) as a buffer to supplement existing buses used for athletics and activities



	Weekday: 3PM	Weekday: 3:15PM	Weekday: 3:30	Weekday: 4PM	Weekday: 5:15PM	Weekday: 6PM	Weekday: 6:30PM	Weekday: 7:15PM	Weekdays: 7:30PM	Saturday	Sunday
<b>Fall</b>											
Cross Country		C		RW							
Volleyball (G)			C			RW	R				
Tennis (G)		C		RW	R*						
Golf		C		RW							
Soccer (B)		C			C	RW		C			
Soccer (G)		C			C	RW		C			
Football			C					C	RW	C, RW	
<b>Winter</b>											
Basketball (B)		C				RW			C, RW		
Basketball (G)		C				RW			C, RW		
Swimming (B)		C		RW							
Swimming (G)		C		RW							
Wrestling							C, RW				
<b>Spring</b>											
Baseball		C		RW						R*	
Softball		C		RW						R*	
Track (B)	C			RW						R	
Track (G)	C			RW						R	
Volleyball (B)		C				RW	R				
Tennis (B)		C		RW			R*				
C=Current											
R=Recommended											
R*= Recommended if facilities were improved to allow for the time change											
RW=Likely time of contests if WPIAL move were to happen (exact times TBD by school and/or conference)											



## League Structure

### Problems

*“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)*

*“The school district should review, research and analyze the structure of the City League/District VIII competitive opportunities to determine the potential for a change in that structure to better improve those competitive opportunities.” (PPS Title IX Audit)*

### Recommendations To Address Problems

- 1. Ensure change in league structure is supported by two additional changes**
  - Creation of athletic director positions (Coaching breakout)
  - Improvement to PPS fields and facilities (Facilities & Equipment breakout)
- 2. Change the existing structure of the city league and move competition to the WPIAL while maintaining a city championship for every sport (options in no particular order)**
  - Option 1: Allderdice, Carrick, Oliver/Perry, Langley/Brashear, Westinghouse, Obama/SciTech/UPrep
  - Option 2: Allderdice/Westinghouse, Carrick, Oliver/Perry, Langley/Brashear, Obama/SciTech/UPrep
  - Option 3: Allderdice, Carrick, Oliver/Perry, Langley/Brashear, Westinghouse/Obama, UPrep/SciTech
- 3. Form co-ops by sport (where needed) with the intention of maximizing participation, increasing opportunities to play for boys and girls, and ensuring teams have enough players to be competitive in their respective sport**
- 4. Create end of season city championship tournaments run by the district. Football to host “rivalry” bowl games**

## Breakout

### 1. Small group discussion

- What do you like?
- What don't you like?
- What do you have questions about?

### 2. Report to the group (one member)

- One positive
- One challenge
- One area the group is still wondering about



## Participation: Female & Overall

### Problems

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

*“The plan must include written criteria for adding interscholastic teams...” (PPS Title IX Audit)*

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

### Recommendations To Address Problems

- 1. Improve participation data capture and proactively target female students not participating in athletics**
  - RTI improvements and comprehensive survey
  - Communications strategy to female students and family members based on results
- 2. Ensure consistent youth sports organization outreach and accountability for communication and interaction**
- 3. Create a sports experience series designed to expose students to athletics in new and unique ways**
  - “Wake Up” series integrates keynote speakers, local athletes and the arts (music, dance, etc.)
  - Key theme is: Positive life lessons learned through athletics
- 4. Develop a grass roots sport and athlete ambassador partnering program**
  - Form partnerships with organizations like Play Rugby USA to introduce new sports to boys and girls
  - Create ambassador program and link male and female student athletes to their respective feeder schools—educate younger students about value of athletic participation
- 5. Reinvigorate intramural/extracurricular athletics through an enhanced policy on intramurals and sports clinics**
  - Mandate that all schools have intramural programs in place
  - Establish network of organizations willing to conduct clinics i.e. FC Pittsburgh, local colleges, etc
- 6. Develop and enforce the district’s policy on booster organizations and ensure that funding feeds the overall athletic program at the school and is not biased by gender**

## Breakout

### 1. Small group discussion

- What do you like?
- What don't you like?
- What do you have questions about?

### 2. Report to the group (one member)

- One positive
- One challenge
- One area the group is still wondering about



Thank You