

Sports Done Right Community Forum - Questions & Responses

Wednesday, May 4, 2005

MSAD51 Greely Middle School Cafeteria, Cumberland/North Yarmouth, Maine

Over thirty people our first *Sports Done Right* forum. Attendees were invited; they included community athletic leaders, booster club officers, and coaches from school teams and youth sports programs.

After an initial overview of the *Sports Done Right* report, three discussion questions were asked of five small groups. The results appear below.

Items that were mentioned by more than one group are indicated with parentheses with the number of times that response was given.

In summary, some community members do not care for the title of the report; they believe that the name suggests that sports are now done wrong. People commented that we already do a lot of things right.

Participants in our forum also do not think a single booster club would be effective or desirable.

Our community is interested in quality coaching and expanded coach education. The inclusion model in middle school is a priority along with an improved balance between family time and time devoted to sports.

People feel that winning is important in athletics; they want to keep winning important but within a competitive model that is best for the kids, not the parents.

Participants recognize that increased athletic programming and opportunities may be hard to implement due to limited funding, time and facilities.

1. What portions of *Sports Done Right* should be given a priority in terms of implementation?

- Coach Education & Training; coaches trained more like teachers (4)
- Quality Coaching, recognizing that coaches are a primary influence
- Encouragement of teachers to coach

- Increased intramural offerings & opportunities for kids (3)
- More resources to physical education
- Increase variety of "sports" activities

- Inclusion model/No cuts for Middle School Athletics (3)
- No-cut versus cut policy fairness between sports on Middle School teams
- Intramural model for Middle School Athletics

- Life balance, family time, time for family vacations (3)
- Priorities: #1 Family, #2 School, #3 Sports
- Life long love of sport and fitness for all students

- Community buy in; Community code of conduct for parents, spectators, players & coaches (2)
- Discussions about the roles of coaches, parents.
- Apply *Sports Done Right* approach to broad audience, not just Varsity athletics

- Convey to parents goal of good competition but with view of what is best for kids, healthier balance (2)
- Maintain concept of competition within other "*Sports Done Right*" values

- Focus on leadership, sportsmanship, citizenship, ethics & fitness (2)
- Training of team captains

- Consistent enforcement of rules and guidelines by coaches (2)

2. Are there any portions of *Sports Done Right* that do not apply to our communities or that should not be implemented?

- The title of the report, *Sports Done Right*, should be changed as it leads to an incorrect perception; we already do many things “right” (4)
- The principle that winning is not important, keep winning important (2)
- Change to the manner by which sports are offered now (ability, conditioning, grades)
- Additional athletic offerings will/could be a problem for school or community due to finances
- Can't always create an athletic opportunity if a kid gets cut from a team
- Single sports booster club
- No pay to play
- If an athlete wants to focus on one sport, they should not be discouraged to do so

3. What portions of *Sports Done Right* do you think it will be difficult for our communities to implement and why?

- Increased programs due to limited finances of school & community (2)
- Increased opportunity to play due to time & facilities (2)
- Money for middle school sports activities
- Changing the attitude & behavior of parents, recognizing sportsmanship & realistic view of child's potential (2)
- Parents pushing early specialization
- Separating parents' roles from the role of the coach
- Buy in of the out-of-school programs to the *Sports Done Right* principles
- Regular review of recreational programs for opportunities to both broaden healthy participation and prevent the growth of a “class” system in sports (p.23)
- No cut policy, noting the frustration of higher level players
- Incorporation of players of all athletic levels & keeping them challenge
- No cut policy opportunities for large number of students, not losing players as a result
- Equal playing time, even in middle school, does not always work
- Teachers as coaches
- Pulling away from competition
- Spectator behavior
- Not have pay to play
- Concept of a single booster club for all sports