

2016

WCSD Athletic Committee Recommendations Update May, 2016



GLOBAL Thinking
Limitless Choices

Waterloo SCHOOLS

*A full copy of the report is available in
the Superintendent's office.*

To: Athletic Committee

From: Willie Barney

Date: May, 2016

I wanted to provide you with an update on how things are progressing. Although we still have plenty of room to improve, we are making progress in many areas. In addition to monthly meetings, I maintain regular contact with the ADs to problem solve and address items in a proactive manner in order to assist us in moving our programming forward.

Below you will find some of our work to address the recommendations outlined by the committee.

Please see my comments **in red**.

Recommendations and Updates

A. Youth Sports

1. Foster relationship-building between the varsity coaches and those who are coaching/volunteering in the youth programs in their area.
 - As we hire new head coaches, we have included representatives from our feeder programs in the hiring process as well as included questions meant to probe the coach's willingness to work with the youth programs. Currently we have HS coaches supporting youth Basketball, Wrestling, **Swimming**, and Football.
2. Create a "gateway" website that would provide links/information on all of the youth sports programs in the area.
 - **The district webpage has helpful resources for coaches, parents and athletes.** We have created a link that youth programs can post contact info to assist parents in utilizing a centralized point to identify potential programs for their child. We note that none of the programs is being recommended by the district and that parents should take due diligence to make sure the organization is safe and appropriate for their child.
 - <http://www.waterloo.k12.ia.us/athletics/>
 - <http://www.waterloo.k12.ia.us/athletic-opportunities/>

COST: 100-150 hours of technology staff time.

3. Ensure that youth sports have increased priority access to school facilities, at a cost only rate—immediately following district athletics practices and events.
 - **Starting this summer, my office will take over the scheduling of all facilities. We have established a new scheduling document, fee schedule, and a scheduling process to assist us in keeping track of facility usage numbers. This year** we set aside gym time at the beginning of the year to allow school programs and community programs serving our kids priority to gym space. We are still identifying a strategy to accurately document the amount of time being utilized by external entities working with our kids. During an average week, we have approximately 62 different groups of kids utilizing our athletic facilities for approximately 200 hours. This use is outside of our normally scheduled school practices. These groups are using the facilities for basketball, wrestling, swimming, volleyball, baseball, and scouts/brownies. These counts do not represent the indoor hitting facility usage at this time as the usage has been more fluid. We will be identifying a strategy to increase documentation of use.

B. High School Sports and Policies

1. Fund a year-round, qualified, strength and conditioning coach at each high school.
 - **We have 2 hired and working. We** adjusted the funding process to appropriately fund the strength coach position year round. **Previously,** the position received a staffing allotment for the year that is more suitable for the semester and should be renewable for 1st semester, 2nd semester, and a summer allotment. By increasing the funds available, we **sought** to attract individuals who are nationally certified.

COST: \$25,000 to \$50,000

2. Ability to hire coaches in our buildings.
 - As a result of the 2013-14 negotiations with the WEA, the district now has discretion in the filling of all coaching vacancies.

COST: No cost, would require collective bargaining changes.

3. Lower the ratio of coaches to students/athletes.
 - (Previously 1:24) During the 2014-15 seasons we will be investigating which sports that ratio is appropriate and which sports need to see an adjustment. Adjustments **were** made for the 2015-16 seasons **to ensure there was basic support provided and then added as numbers increased (football at least 3, track HS 3, basketball, etc).**

COST: \$10,000 to \$50,000

4. Add a third gym to high schools and a second gym at middle schools.
 - **No update at this time.** This will be tied to any changes made as a result of the 21st Century HS reforms.

COST: \$10,000,000 to \$15,000,000.

Other notable Facility items-

- This summer a new video scoreboard will be installed at Memorial; the track will be resurfaced; an updated track timing system will be installed; we are exploring synthetic turf options; many of the fields are being resurfaced to flatten and thicken them up; and Central tennis courts are being reviewed for upgrades.
5. The district and city should collaborate with junior (club) sports programs.
 - There have been a number of collaborative efforts. Different programs have rented the sportsplex facilities. The city uses our facilities. HS school basketball league was held at the sportsplex with districts from all over the Cedar Valley participating.
 6. Explore the issue of moving to one high school system, with one high school sports program. Begin with selected sports.
 - The board should note that this recommendation dovetails with one or more of the options discussed by the 21st Century High School Task Force. As the district determines the appropriate delivery model of HS education, athletic options will be explored. In the short term, we have reviewed a number of sports to determine best approaches to maintaining. Athletic Collaborative Recommendations-**Currently sharing boys swimming, girls swimming, and boys tennis. With notable increase in team success for the swim teams.**
 - Through student surveys we identified a common color scheme (Old Rose and Orange) and mascot theme (Trojan/Wahawk combination). A request has now gone out to the students to design a mascot to be used for the combined program areas.
 - There have been requests to explore golf, girls soccer, and both boys and girls track. Numbers will be reviewed; meetings with coaches and/or parents may be scheduled.

C. Middle School Sports and Policies

1. High schools need to be more involved at the middle school level.
 - Determination has been made that coaches 7-12 will be considered a part of the Varsity programs. The Varsity programs will work to include the feeder programs in on coaching meetings game discussions, skill development ideas, etc. to assist the MS coach in developing a program that is operating with the Varsity programs ideals in mind while supporting the growth of the MS program and coach. When a building (Central) can't be identified as feeder program for a specific Varsity program, the feeder program will be connected to both Varsity programs. Additionally, MS Athletic Directors will include the Varsity Coach or representative in the hiring of head coaches and the middle school level.

2. Reduce the coach to athlete ratio.
 - Skill development of MS athletes is crucial. To support the increased emphasis on fundamental skill development, we will be investigating which sports that ratio is appropriate and which sports need to see an adjustment during the 2014-15 seasons. At this time we are considering a 1:10 coach/athlete ratio during winter sports. Adjustments will be made for the 2015-16 seasons.

Cost: \$25,000 TO \$50,000

3. Coaches present in the buildings.
 - Administrative teams seek to identify opportunities to get coaches on staff in their buildings. Adjustments to the negotiated agreements were made to allow buildings to hire the most qualified candidates despite seniority.

4. Right coaches, right places.
 - Varsity coaches are encouraged to review their programs to identify potential candidates to support and coach the MS programs. We have placed some former varsity program coaches at the MS.

5. Revise elementary and middle school physical education program.
 - In 2014-The district adopted the SPARK PE program. SPARK emphasizes physical activity, nutrition plans, and the development of athletic skills and social skills while challenging students to cooperate with one another, and to encourage problem solving and communication. Life fitness focus.

6. Rethink middle school season length
 - During the 2014-15 school year, the building ADs discussed the philosophy behind the current structure of allowing kids to participate in both wrestling and basketball during the winter months versus asking them to choose one or the other. At this time we plan to maintain opportunities experience the various sports without the selective process emerging until HS. **Introduced swimming as a sport this year that ran between wrestling and track. We included 6th graders. Participation numbers were in the mid-teens. Programming will also run this summer. Cross country continued this year.**
7. Not recommended by committee but being investigated- Investigating 5th and 6th Grade Extramural programs to assist students in gaining earlier structured exposure and skill development in sports offered at the MS and HS level to be implemented during the 2015-16 school year.
 - Sports focused on will be Football, Soccer, Volleyball, Wrestling, Basketball, Swimming, and Track & Field. **We piloted the program at Irving starting in March. They offered Volleyball (25), Football (30), Soccer (27) on Wednesdays/Thursdays from 3:40-4:40. The cost was written into our at-risk grant for 2016-17. Met and proposed to the rest of the elementary. We plan to implement in all elementary buildings (5th) and MS (6th)**

Cost approx \$3,000 per school per year.

D. Coaching Recommendations

1. Develop a comprehensive recruitment program. (Look in to offering training/licensure at the District level).
 - Dr. Smith began the process of working with Hawkeye to offer our own courses at a much lower cost in a more time efficient manner. Unfortunately we were not able to reach an arrangement with Hawkeye that would reduce the cost. We are now exploring other avenues to offer our own certification program. **The state was reviewing its licensure process. We are still planning to finalize something through Amy Moine (AEA) during summer of 2016. Either way we are considering offering a Waterloo Coaches' U for all new coaches to the district.**

COST: \$5,000 to \$10,000

2. Develop a comprehensive support system for coaches.
 - During the winter and spring of the 2014-15 school year we will begin exploring the development of a monthly training process around items related to coaching (nutrition, communicating with parents, goal setting for athletes, educational monitoring, practice planning, etc.). We have “reinstated” the Annual Coaches’ Classic. This event Kicks off the year for our coaches. Outside speakers and our AD’s provide training, review current issues, and discuss program structure and support for coaches. Last summer speakers were Lisa Brinkmeyer-IGHSAU, Jed Smith- Strength and Conditioning Coach from UNI, Dr. Pappas-West High, Dr. Heisterkamp-UNI gender/athletics, Jim Miller-Accomplished Alum. This year we have the IHSAA discussing legal and safety issues, a sports psychologist to discuss motivation, athlete stress, etc., and then we will work with our coaches on their perspective of the obstacles to success for athletics in Waterloo. **We would like to establish a mentoring program similar to what teachers receive. Funding may need to be identified to pay Mentor coaches.**
 - The evaluation process is also under review to assist us in making sure the standards of program leadership are being met by current and future coaches to assist us in making the appropriate changes. A new evaluation process will be used during the 2015-16 year. **Evaluations will be reviewed at the district level to provide feedback to building ADs regarding “next steps”.**
 - **We will be establishing metrics to assist the admin team in identifying if athletic programming is moving in the right direction. These metrics will include growth indicators like participation numbers, season and grade to grade retainment, data supporting individual athlete growth, wins/losses, point gaps, student/coach perception data, numbers of athletes participating in strength/conditioning programming, sportsmanship rankings from the conference, conference rankings/tournament play, team/individual awards, off-season opportunities and participation numbers**

COST: \$5,000 to \$10,000

3. Review structural administrative issues regarding athletic directors and administrative supervision.
 - Explore restructuring of the existing governance model, including our practice of utilizing part time Athletic Directors at both the district office level and building level.
 - New assignment of district administrator to oversee athletics.