

Sally Saddler  
President, Board of Education

January 10, 2014

Dear Ms. Saddler,

At its January 8, 2014 meeting the Activities Advisory Committee (AAC) heard the draft report from the Stakeholder Committee on Middle School Travel. While we have no recommendations at this time to forward to the School Board, the following are the aspects of Middle School Athletic Programs that the AAC, which operates by consensus, took positions on:

1. At no time has the AAC recommended to the School District or the School Board that middle schools not be allowed to travel for athletics or other activities. The public statements previously made indicating that the AAC supported a ban on middle school athletics travel is incorrect.
2. The AAC affirms that travel should be allowed for all middle school activities, including athletics.
3. The AAC has established a subcommittee to develop a middle school athletic program philosophy that reflects what is known about developmentally responsive athletic programs for middle school students. A clearly stated philosophy will give coaches, administrators, parents and players a framework for decisions regarding these activities.

Furthermore, the AAC believes that athletics, as with all afterschool activities offered by the school district, support a school's commitment to academics and are in fact an extension of the academic day. As reported by the Center for Disease Control (2010, The Association Between School-Based Physical Activity, Including Physical Education, and Academic Performance):

Nineteen studies (reported in 14 articles) focused specifically on the relationship between academic performance and activities organized through school that occur outside of the regular school day. These activities included participation in school sports (interscholastic sports and other team or individual sports) as well as other after-school physical activity programs. All 19 studies examining the relationships between participation in extracurricular physical activities and academic performance found one or more positive associations.

We will be hearing a final report from the Stakeholder Committee on Middle School Travel in the coming month and will decide at that time whether to take a position on their report.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Members of the Activities Advisory Committee

cc. School Board Members