

Title IX Compliance Steering Committee - Meeting Minutes

February 11, 2015

7:00 – 8:20 am

Members Present: Dean Mack, Randy Bolerjack, Traci Brandon, Carol Gullstad, Morgan Peyou, Fred Rundle, Becky Shaddle and Mark Zmuda

Absent: Brett Ogata, Erica Hill, Stacey Bjarnason, Mindy Blakeslee

Review of Athletic Participation for 2013-14

The committee reviewed the Athletic Participation Numbers for the 2013-14 School Year. The district has made great progress in meeting Title IX commitments. The unduplicated count for boys participation is 64.0% and the girls is 63.9%.

General Discussion

Discussion revolved around the necessity for both boys and girls to balance the many components of their high school experience with the demands of participating in multiple sports. It is important that girls have equal access and opportunities, but that does not mean we make multiple sports the priority for every student. They must balance sports, school work, band and choir along with the many other activities.

Zmuda, AD at MIHS, then went over the team winter sports report that 13 teams submitted in the spring of 2014. Drill and cheer are both exemplary programs but their numbers do not count in our reporting. They are more spirit based and not strictly competition groups competing in only one season.

- Equipment – The district/school did help the wrestling team get a new mat this season. Due to construction, some track equipment may be moved
- Schedules – in anticipation of not having a week 10 football game like last year. The athletic department found a week 10 game this year for the players and it was played at home.
- Facilities – construction is underway with the new elementary school and will be starting soon for the middle school gym. Once complete the elementary school will be a full sized functioning gym space. Track areas like shot put and pole vault will be moved this summer. Currently, our girl's locker room has not been used for showering. The space was used for storage. The athletic department quickly added shower curtains and moved the equipment for girls to use the showers. Girls prefer to have more privacy, not the communal showers. They often wait to use the facility to then go watch the boys' games.
- Publicity – teams are getting recognized more publicly in announcements. Signing Day was held for 18 MIHS seniors where they came in, were recognized and got their photos taken with their coaches and parents. If teams want to be in the Reporter, they just need to write an article and send it in.
- Group discussed the seeing of "Mens" and "Girls" team names. It needs to be consistent and say "Boys". It gives the impression boys are more mature than girls.
- Medical and Training – the weight room is now being used by several teams including football, basketball, LAX and water polo.

Traci Brandon reported to the committee concerning her continuing exploration around the possibility of adding Stunting to the girls' sports program. She continues to be excited about the development of the sport in the region, but feels that it could be another year or two before the sport is ready for prime time. The sport takes a significant investment of time for participating students, but is very popular in districts in other states. Traci will continue to stay abreast of events and report back. The major cost of implementing a program on Mercer Island would probably be in having appropriate mats for the activity.

Mark Zmuda also presented student athletic interest from the 2014 Interest Survey. Ninety-four surveys were returned – 42 male, 52 female. Students would be interested in playing badminton, bowling, crew, fencing, rifle, skiing. We currently offer badminton for females and there is a ski bus to take students to the different passes. The school is limited w/ space and funding. We do not have a boat for crew or a bowling alley on the Island.

The committee discussed “no cut” sport opportunities:

- Fall – XC
- Winter – wrestling
- Spring – track/badminton

Can students who get cut join a no cut sport? The answer is “yes!”

The committee was asked to write down strengths and weakness of the MIHS athletic programs. These are summarized as follows:

Strengths –

- Good facilities
- Parent and community involvement. Many former players follow their sports and attend games regularly
- Community support
- Funding
- Encouragement towards girls to play
- Sense of community
- Teamwork
- Work ethic – seeing that there is no easy path to success. It takes perseverance and hard work.
- Pride in individual achievement.
- Pride in contribution to team success.

Weakness –

- Storage, gym space (should be corrected after construction).
- Communication (within teams, with players)
- Publicity of certain sports, like over the announcements.
- Adding too many sports in spring that have an indoor component (takes away from other sports)
- Perceived bias against athletics vs other school activities
- Coaches stretching practice time out of WIAA compliance by having voluntary or captain's practices. Weight lifting 90min – 3hrs

In conclusion, the meeting was very positive and the consensus is that Mercer Island School District is doing a very good job with Title IX challenges.

Next Meeting:
May 20, 2015
7- 8:30 am