



REDEFINING THE STANDARD
YCS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

2013-2014

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this document is to recommend a **FRAMEWORK OF EXCELLENCE** for the Ypsilanti Community Schools Athletic Department. Contained within it are the values, beliefs and expectations for what a great co-curricular athletic department should embody. This framework **REDEFINES THE STANDARD** of high school athletics within the state of Michigan.

Co-curricular athletics is a **PART OF** the districts overarching curriculum and supports, promotes and reflects the district in fulfilling its mission. Co-curricular is **NOT EXTRA** or separate from or in addition to. A co-curricular athletic program uses sport as **PREPARATION FOR SUCCESS IN LIFE.**

In a co-curricular center of excellence, athletics is a tool to establish a foundation upon which the district's **KEY PILLARS** are supported so that we can build a **CULTURE AND CLIMATE** that promotes **LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENT**, provides **ACCESS TO COLLEGE AND CAREER OPPORTUNITIES** and **EMPOWERS YOUTH LEADERSHIP.**

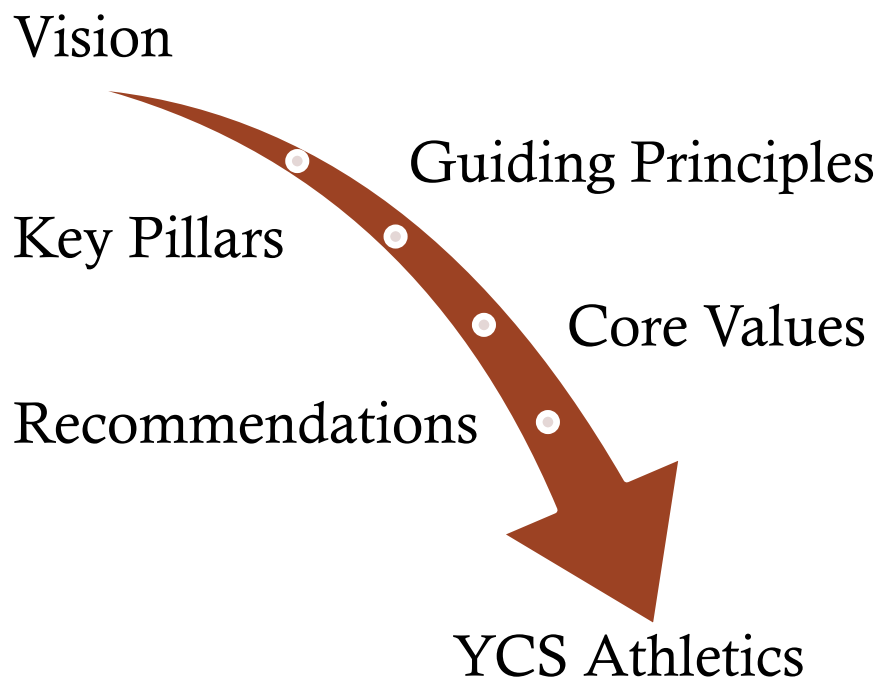
By redefining the standard, co-curricular activities has the ability to...

- Influence student enrollment
- Encourage student achievement
- Impact graduation rates
- Motivate students to stay engaged
- Teach life skills
- Develop leaders
- Engage and empower the student voice
- Provide a path to higher education and career opportunities
- Inspire spirit in the new district
- Encourage parent involvement
- Develop tradition
- Set the tone and identity for the district and surrounding community
- Enhance community partnerships

PROCESS

The Co-Curricular Community Advisory Group gathered the information contained within this document over an eight-week period. We were guided by the principles of **HIGH EXPECTATIONS, EVIDENCE BASED “BEST” PRACTICES WHILE ALLOWING FOR INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY**, utilizing **FAMILY AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**, listening to **STUDENT VOICES AND EMPOWERING THEM** to take part while also being mindful of the **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS** of our recommendations.

This group was made up of over 30 members and included administrators, teachers, students, community members, parents, and various community organizations. After establishing a unified vision, guiding principles, key pillars and core values the group was broken into two sub-committees. One focused on athletics and one focused on all non-athletic activities. Although this document is presented to the board in two parts, it is important to point out that there is one co-curricular community and one strategic document.



THE RESEARCH

The value of athletics in education is often debated and much research has been done on the subject. In fact, Bowen & Greene (2013) found the more that a high school produces winning teams, offers more sports, and expands the number of students who can participate in athletics, the better the entire school does academically. The information below is taken directly from the Bowen & Greene study. The entire study is attached to this document.

IMPACT ON THE STUDENT-ATHLETE

- High school students that participate in sports have higher grades and standardized test scores in mathematics and language arts courses (*Broh, 2002*)
- McNeal (1995) found that student athletes were 1.7 times less likely to drop out of school
- High school student athletes have also self-reported higher education aspirations, diligence in homework completion, and lower absenteeism, compared to students that do not participate in sports (*Marsh, 1992*)
- Lipscomb (2006) estimated that athletic participation is associated with a 2% boost in math and science test scores. Meanwhile, student participation in other extracurricular participation (e.g. yearbook, drama club, etc.) was also associated with significant increases, though effect sizes were only half as large
- Guest and Schneider (2003) have also found that this positive athletic-academic association was even stronger for students attending schools serving more disadvantaged populations.

IMPACT ON THE ENTIRE SCHOOL

- A school's commitment to athletics is positively related to academic performance
- The addition of one sport increases the estimated graduation rate by 0.3%
- The addition of 10 students directly involved in sports raises the graduation rate by .4%
- For winter sports, an increase in one sport improves the high school graduation rate by 1%
- For winter sports the addition of 10 students directly participating in sports is associated with a 1.5% increase in high school graduation rate.
- A 10% increase in overall winning percentage is associated with a 0.25% point increase in the number of students at or above academic proficiency
- As for participation and achievement, the addition of one sport increases the number of students at or above academic proficiency by 0.2%
- The addition of 10 students directly participating in a sports team improves the proportion of students at or above proficient by 0.4%

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ Affirm the values, beliefs and expectations contained within this document
- ✓ Hire a full-time Co-Curricular Athletic Director
- ✓ Accept and utilize the recommended coaching competencies in hiring practices
- ✓ Affirm the YCS Athletics Code of Conduct & Expectations handbook
- ✓ Create the Student-Athlete Development Center (SADC)
- ✓ Assign a stipend position to coordinate the SADC
- ✓ Accept the list of recommended athletic teams
- ✓ Join the SEC Conference

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REDEFINING THE STANDARD

MISSION

The mission of the Ypsilanti Community Schools Athletic Department is to support, promote and reflect the district's vision of being the first choice for an exceptional cradle to career education. We will do this by educating, developing and serving student-athletes through a culture of academic, athletic and service excellence.

VISION

The Ypsilanti Community Schools Athletic Department will be recognized for excellence in the classroom, in competition and in the community.

CORE VALUES

We will remain true to our values, unwavering in difficult times and steadfast during victory. These values define who we are, what we stand for and establish a foundation to support the mission, vision and goals of the district.

DIVERSITY

We embrace diversity and equity throughout our department. We will hire coaches, lead student-athletes and select teams without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, age, height, weight, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, or any other legally protected characteristic. We recognize the need to work as a team while valuing each individual's self-worth.

HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL

We are committed to excellence on the field, in the classroom and in our service to community.

STUDENT VOICE & EMPOWERMENT

Our students are the cornerstones of why we are here. We will encourage and empower our student-athletes to take an active role in their own success.

RESILIENCE

A loss on the field is inevitable. So too is our commitment to get back up, improve, and use that hurdle as a motivator for success. Students may struggle within the class, but we refuse to give up on them or allow them to give up on themselves. We are relentless in our pursuit of success in the classroom, on the field and in the community.

VIBRANT COMMUNITY & FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS

We are cooperative and coordinated in our efforts with our student-athletes and their families, coaches, staff, and the larger Ypsilanti community. Our passion for sport, education and community will be second to none.

CREATIVITY & INNOVATION

We seek out best practices, but will also be a trailblazer that creates or redefines the standard. We will challenge the status quo by pursuing excellence through innovation and bold new ideas.

RESPECT

We will treat our students, parents, and community with dignity, kindness and respect.

EFFICIENCY

We shall at all times maintain a fiscally responsible and economically sound structure that provides the best environment for our student-athletes to be successful in the classroom, on the field and in the community.

STUDENT-ATHLETE SUCCESS

STUDENT-ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT CENTER

As a co-curricular center of excellence we seek to instill a sports culture that values and promotes teamwork, a winning attitude, respect, pride, passion, accountability and high expectations. To achieve these ideals we believe that we must create the Student-Athlete Development Center. The center would provide assistance in academic, personal development, and community service areas.

ACADEMICS:

- We will maintain tutoring services
- We will assign a dedicated academic advisor/counselor to monitor the academic progress of student-athletes
- We will provide a supervised study environment for student-athletes
- We will require our student-athletes to do a certain number of supervised study hours
- We will coordinate various educational workshops
- We will work towards implementation of a public-private student-athlete development center

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT:

- We will counsel individuals concerning issues of a personal, athletic and/or academic nature
- We will provide career counseling
- We will provide life skills speakers and workshops
- We will provide classes on study skills, nutrition and drug/alcohol awareness
- We will have mentors that work on the basic skills needed to be successful in the classroom and in life

SERVICE:

- We will develop a leadership academy
- We will require community service hours from our student-athletes
- We will coordinate and organize service learning projects

STUDENT-ATHLETE STANDARDS FOR PARTICIPATION

- The YCS Athletics Code of Conduct & Expectations handbook is what guides our student-athlete standards for participation
- Yearly we will review, amend and/or reaffirm the YCS Athletics Code of Conduct & Expectations handbook
- Participation in YCS athletics is an honor and a privilege, not a right
- We will set high expectations for our student-athletes and provide a structure to assist them in meeting those expectations
- High academic competence is a requirement for athletic participation
- Parental participation is an expectation for student participation in athletics

PREPARATION FOR THE NEXT LEVEL

- We will actively work to prepare our student-athletes to be effective students on the college level
- We will provide the resources and skills that prepare our student-athletes for a successful career
- We will produce student-athletes that excel on the field and prepare them to be exceptional citizens within the community

SPECIAL OLYMPICS

We support Special Olympics as an intricate part of the YCS Athletics commitment to diversity in athletics. Special Olympics is an inclusive program that encourages students with and without intellectual disabilities to develop important social, physical and team skills.

Through Special Olympics, YCS students participate in athletic training and competition, while building invaluable relationships with peers, fellow competitors, families and the community.

Special Olympics also provides co-curricular opportunities for students without intellectual disabilities. “Project Unity” is a classroom-based program that teaches understanding, acceptance and compassion.

COMPETITIVE SUCCESS

PERSONNEL

We will seek out and employ staff that embodies the values and mission of the Ypsilanti Community Schools Athletic Department. We will not compromise in our pursuit of excellence. We commit to recruiting, hiring and retaining competent staff to lead and educate our student-athletes.

CO-CURRICULAR ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

In order to redefine the standard quality leadership is essential. We commit to a co-curricular athletic director that has the time, support, resources, competencies and commitment to ensure we follow through on the plan laid out in this document.

- We will hire a full-time Co-Curricular Athletic Director
- We will be competitive in compensation
- We will support our Co-Curricular Athletic Director by providing the resources necessary to be successful

COACHES

Coaches, like teachers are essential to the education, growth and development of our student-athletes. They not only teach the fundamentals of sport while on the field, but also have the ability to teach the fundamentals of citizenship.

- YCS coaches will be employed within the school district. This encourages our coaches to be engaged in all aspects of the student-athletes education
- We will be competitive in compensation for our coaches
- We will invest in continued training and development for our coaches
- We will focus on retaining our coaches

COACHING COMPETENCIES

Established by the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) and recognized as a national standard for sport coaches, we will use the following competencies as the basis for hiring all coaches within the YCS Athletic Department.

PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS:

- Identify and communicate reasons for entering the coaching profession.
- Develop an athlete-centered coaching philosophy that aligns with the organizational mission and goals.
- Communicate the athlete-centered coaching philosophy in verbal and written form to athletes, parents/guardians, and program staff.
- Welcome all eligible athletes and implement strategies that encourage the participation of disadvantaged and disabled athletes.
- Manage athlete behavior consistent with an athlete-centered coaching philosophy.

SAFETY AND INJURY PREVENTION:

- Ensure that clearance for athletes to participate fully or partially in practices or contests is given by a parent, guardian, and/or medical professional.
- Recognize health status, body structure, and physical conditions that predispose athletes to common injuries specific to the sport.
- Be aware that an athlete's lack of sleep and/or emotional state could warrant a change in practice plans.

PHYSICAL CONDITIONING:

- Assist athletes in timing and selection of food options to fuel optimal energy production for practices and contests.
- Assist athletes in regulating safe levels of hydration.
- Provide accurate and timely information to athletes and parents/guardians about sound nutritional principles as part of training and preparation for competition.
- Provide accurate and timely information about body composition and healthy weight management.
- Be proactive in identifying potential eating disorders and referring athletes for appropriate professional assistance.

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT:

- Teach and encourage athletes to take responsibility for their actions in adhering to team rules.
- Design practices to allow for athlete input and self-evaluation.
- Communicate to athletes their responsibility in maintaining physical and mental readiness for athletic participation and preparation for competition.
- Encourage athletes to practice leadership skills and engage in problem solving.
- Provide athletes with different tools to manage conflict.
- Provide specific opportunities for athletes to mentor others.

TEACHING AND COMMUNICATION:

- Demonstrate appropriate use of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards to enhance motivation and learning.
- Share with athletes effective stress management coping strategies.
- Utilize sound mental skills to build athlete self-confidence.
- Help athletes to develop a mental game plan that includes pre-game preparation, a contingency plan for errors during competition, and how to avoid competitive stress.
- Help athletes improve concentration by learning attention control strategies.

SPORT SKILLS AND TACTICS:

- Analyze opponent's personnel to organize team for competition.
- Create game plans by observation of opponent play, athlete statistical information, and previous competitive experience.
- Make adjustments in strategies for practice and competition by identifying patterns and styles of play of opponents.
- Develop scouting tools for collecting and organizing information about opponents.

ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION:

- Organize and conduct effective informational meetings before, during, and after the season.
- Communicate policies and ongoing program activities to athletes, staff, parents/guardians, administrators, and/or the public.
- Prepare athletes to be involved with public relation activities.
- Advocate the value of the sport program through positive communication with the media and others.

EVALUATION:

- Collect input from athletes, parents, guardians, coaches, and other stakeholders regarding athlete satisfaction, perception of season goals, and coaching performance.
- Conduct periodic self-reflections on coaching effectiveness.
- Seek feedback from experienced coaches to evaluate practice sessions, discuss observations, and implement needed change at regular intervals.
- Use formal written evaluations to assist in selecting and retaining program personnel.
- Be diplomatic when providing feedback on personnel evaluations or hiring decisions.

TEAMS FOR 2014 AND BEYOND

The Advisory Committee took into account several factors (tradition, Title IX, student input, various research, school comparisons, and financial implications) when recommending which sports should be offered in 2014 and beyond. Each sport recommended offers an opportunity for students to participate in co-curricular activities and the elimination of any current sport would result in an even further decline in student enrollment, student achievement and school culture. We also considered the ability to have a feeder system by engaging our students in their middle school years. Therefore we will offer the following sports for 2014.

SPORT	YCS RECOMMENDATION	YPS	WCRS
FOOTBALL	V/JV/9/MS	JV/V	JV/V (MS)
GIRLS VOLLEYBALL	V/JV/9/MS	9/JV/V (MS)	V (MS)
BOYS TENNIS	V/JV	V	-
GIRLS TENNIS	V/JV	V	-
BOYS CC	V	V	-
GIRLS CC	V	V	-
BOYS GOLF	V/JV	V	-
GIRLS GOLF	V/JV	V	-
BOYS SWIMMING & DIVING	V/MS COED	V	COED (CO-OP)
GIRLS SWIMMING & DIVING	V/MS COED	V	COED (CO-OP)
BOYS SOCCER	V/JV/MS COED	JV/V (MS COED)	-
GIRLS SOCCER	V/JV/MS COED	V/JV	-
BOYS BASKETBALL	V/JV/9/MS	9/JV/V (MS)	JV/V (MS)
GIRLS BASKETBALL	V/JV/9/MS	JV/V (MS)	V (MS)
BASEBALL	V/JV/9	JV/V	V
SOFTBALL	V/JV/9/MS	JV/V	V
BOYS TRACK	V/MS	V (MS)	V (MS)
GIRLS TRACK	V/MS	V (MS)	V (MS)
LACROSSE	V/JV	JV/V	-
COMPETITIVE CHEER	V	-	-
BOYS WRESTLING	V/JV/MS	JV/V (MS)	V (MS)
CHEER FOOTBALL	V/JV/9/MS	JV/V	V (MS)
CHEER BASKETBALL	V/JV/9/MS	9/JV/V	V (MS)

Code: 9-Ninth Grade

JV-Junior Varsity

V-Varsity

MS-Middle School

CLUB SPORTS

SPORT	YCS RECOMMENDATION	YPS	WCRS
BOYS BOWLING	V (COED)	V (COED)	-
GIRLS BOWLING	V (COED)	V (COED)	-

GENDER EQUITY

Including club sports from middle school to varsity, YCS is committed to offering an equitable number of sports for both boys and girls. Below are a total number of the recommended teams broken down by gender.

	Varsity	JV	Ninth Grade	MS	Total
Boys	12	8	3	6	29
Girls	13	8	5	8	34

SEC CONFERENCE COMPARISON BY TEAMS OFFERED

The table below shows each school within the SEC Conference and compares the number of teams offered by level. With the proposed teams YCS would rank 5th with 63 teams offered.

	Varsity	JV	Ninth Grade	MS	Total
HURON	31	15	5	14	65
PIONEER	31	15	5	14	65
SKYLINE	31	15	5	14	65
SALINE	31	18	8	7	64
YCS	25	16	8	14	63
MONROE	24	12	5	13	54
BEDFORD	24	15	5	9	53
DEXTER	27	10	7	8	52
TECUMSEH	23	15	5	9	52
CHELSEA	27	10	4	8	49
LINCOLN	21	11	4	8	44

Information gathered through each district's website.

FINANCIAL HISTORY

Although we will be fiscally responsible we are also committed to co-curricular athletics and will financially provide the resources to be a viable center of excellence. This commitment and fiscal responsibility are not mutually exclusive and can coexist.

The table below shows a history of each athletic department and their proposed budgets since 2008-2009. In 2008 the combined budgets equaled just over \$1million. Within four years there has been a 45% decline with a combined budget for 2013 of only \$464,608. Such a dramatic decline in athletic department resources has had several significant impacts:

- Fewer opportunities for students to take part in co-curricular activities
- Negative impact on student enrollment
- Decreased morale and district enthusiasm
- Negative impact on district identity
- Reduced ability to retain and attract quality coaches/educators
- Reduced parent involvement

	YPS	WCRS	Total
2012-2013	\$244,608	\$220,000	\$464,608
2011-1012	\$518,162	\$252,784	\$770,946
2010-2011	\$542,744	\$326,015	\$868,759
2009-2010	\$617,644	\$371,145	\$988,789
2008-2009	\$658,658	\$373,000	\$1,031,658

Information gathered through districts historical financial documents.

SEC CONFERENCE COMPARISON BY ATHLETIC BUDGET

The information contained within this table was self reported by each district's Athletic Director. Each school lists a Pay to Participate in sports fee schedule, but those schedules range in amount and structure. We are not recommending a Pay to Participate structure for YCS but have listed it as a topic for further exploration.

School	Athletic Budget	Pay to Participate
Pioneer	\$900,000	Yes
Huron	\$828,000	Yes
Saline	\$800,000	Yes
Skyline	\$740,000	Yes
Adrian	\$713,000	Yes
Chelsea	\$600,000	Yes
Tecumseh	\$571,000	Yes
Bedford	\$555,000	Yes
Monroe	\$485,000	Yes
Lincoln	\$410,000	Yes
Dexter	-	Yes

Information reported by AD from each district.

START-UP TRANSITION COSTS

With any transition or start-up there are initial costs to be considered that are not annual recurring expenses. Here are a few key transition costs that we will need to account for.

- We will transition all uniforms to the new district colors and mascot.
- Facilities such as the basketball court, wrestling mats, track hurdles etc....will need to be updated.
- Scoreboards will need to be updated to reflect the new districts colors and mascot

CO-CURRICULAR ATHLETIC FACILITIES

- Facility decisions will take into account the impact those facilities will have on the competitive spirit and ability of our co-curricular teams to be successful
- We will develop a long-term athletic facility maintenance and repair plan
- We will be expedient in renovation of athletic facilities to reflect the new spirit, tradition and mascot of YCS
- We will establish of a physical space for the Student-Athlete Development Center (SADC)

SERVICE TO COMMUNITY

Service to community is more than just a one-time feel-good project. Service has the ability to build character, support the classroom through experiential learning and help to improve the local community. Service, in this context is a way to meet academic outcomes. Below are a few examples of the type of service projects that our athletic department will organize and that our student-athletes will be required to take part in.

GIVE BACK...MOVE FORWARD

Is a way for our high school athletes to give back by working with and mentoring our middle school and elementary aged students. This can be done through tutoring academically, working with them on service projects or assisting them in developing athletically.

COMMUNITY PRIDE

Each year our student-athletes will take part in the annual Ypsi-Pride clean up.

RESPECTING OUR SENIORS

Programs such as snow removal, yard maintenance or service through Meals on Wheels are just a few of the possible cross generational ways for our student-athletes to give back to our seniors.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS

Our student-athletes will give back through volunteerism with the Special Olympics.

TOPICS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

PAY TO PARTICIPATE FEES

Many schools have transitioned to a pay to participate in athletics fee schedule. We did not explore this in any detail but recommend further exploration.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents and their involvement is an important component to any successful athletic program. We will continue to explore how best to communicate with parents and provide them with much more information. We will explore a variety of volunteer opportunities, encourage parents to be part of decision making and implement parent-coach meetings for each sport.

DEVELOPMENTAL YEARS

A feeder system for our athletic programs is needed for a truly exceptional program. Further exploration of how best to cultivate k-8 participating in athletics is needed.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

This document does not delve into the depths of the co-curricular budget implications associated with a design such as this. There were many conversations throughout our design process and several innovative ideas regarding financial stewardship, but those are not contained within this document. Further exploration of the detailed financial implications is necessary.

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT AND COLLABORATION

There are several potential community partnerships that may be viable, but in a eight-week design phase those partnerships could not be fully explored. More exploration into those possibilities is needed. Some examples are related to the SADC and EMU, the Ypsilanti Community Foundation and an endowment or fund to support co-curricular programming. There are also several private businesses that are interested in an innovative public-private partnership.

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