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Pros and Cons of High school Athletics

For as long as fans can remember, high school athletics has a love-hate relationship with the public eye. It has the potential to be a serious time commitment, which demands teens to face the pressures of balancing academics and athletics at such a young age. However, with the acknowledgement of the demands and risk that are involved with this sport, it continues to grow in popularity and more high schools continue to invest more into athletics rather than the academic aspect of their schools. This can cause to both have negative and positive effects for the athletes and the schools as well. However, being a former high school and college athlete, I believe the benefits of participating in high school sport outweigh the negatives.

Disadvantages

One major disadvantage that high school sport has is the time commitment it demands on its players. According to Amanda Ripley, eighth grade, American kids spend more than twice the time Korean kids spend playing sports. This is also comparing two countries where the U.S is ranked 31st and Korea is 4th amongst education ranking on a global scale (Ripley, 4). Perhaps this country is investing too much time and effort into athletics in our school systems and not into academics.

Another disadvantage high school sports have is that sports have become so powerful; some schools are favoring athletics more than they are education. “Marguerita Roza, the author of Educational Economics, analyzed the finances of one public high

school in the Pacific Northwest, she and her colleagues found that the school was spending \$328 a student for math instruction and more than four times that much for cheerleading- \$1,348”pending less on the educational aspect and more into the athletic departments” (Ripley, 6).

Advantages

While there are multiple disadvantages of high school athletics, there can be many advantages. For example the benefits of an athlete participating can lead to the result of teaching life skills and values to athletes. Even for the select few athletes, participating in high school sports can provide a better opportunity to earn a college degree if their talents meet the standards.

Another example of how high school sports are beneficial to a student is it helps them develop better roles in leadership. When players first start participating in these sports, they tend to look towards the older athletes who have more experience and better leadership. As athletes progress with the program, they will eventually embody what they have learned from the older athletes and pass it on to the younger ones. They will develop a better understanding of how having leadership qualities can benefit them in not only the playing field, but off the field as well in real life situations. This is often where student athletes get a first experience at what its like to play a major leadership role, causing them to try and find out what type of leadership style best suits them.

Third, a benefit of participating in high school sports is that it teaches social skills with other athletes. Students who participate in sports often develop close relationships with other team members simply because they have a common ground of having an

interest in the particular sport they are playing. Though a negative to participating in high school sports is the time commitment, spending a certain amount of time with a select group of people will cause the athletes to become closer together and develop relationships with one another during and long after high school sports are over.

In conclusion, though there are many negative sides to participating in high school sports, the positives seem to outweigh the negatives. For as long as there will be high schools, there will be high school sports. The popularity and participation will continue to rise and more money will be spent on favoring athletics over education. Though there will always be negative sides to participating in high school sports, I believe the negatives can be modified to become positives such as; trying to distribute the money evenly between academics and athletics. The positives will remain the same because I believe the reason why high school sports started in the first place were due to the fact that participating in organized sports at such a young age develops leadership as well as develops social skills.

Work Cited

Ripley, Amanda. (2013, September 9). *The Case Against High-School Sports*. https://courseware.ku.edu/bbcswebdav/pid-4102593-dt-content-rid-6090734_1/courses/4149-21255/The%20Case%20Against%20High-School%20Sports%20-%20Amanda%20Ripley%20-%20The%20Atlantic.pdf