

School Board Meeting:

February 8, 2010

Subject:

BCMS Fall Activities

Presenter:

John Hayden

SUGGESTED SCHOOL BOARD ACTION:

Board Review

DESCRIPTION:

BCMS FALL SPORTS WRAP UP

Fall is usually the busiest time of the year in the Activities Office at BCMS. Despite the loss of the activity bus, and the increase in fees, this past fall was no exception. The big story of the fall, was the increase in participants over a year ago. There are six sports in season in the fall. Four of those sports have two teams participating at each grade level. That number of teams, coaches and kids makes for a very busy beginning to the year.

The Cross Country team seems to be a program that does a great job of providing an opportunity for kids. They increased their participation by seven this fall. That number is going to really help the High School program as those kids get older, because not only did they get more kids out, they were able to nurture a love of running in these kids. The one negative is the continuing issues involved in communication from the high school down to the middle school. We will work to find ways to improve that next year.

BCMS football was again a popular program this fall. Numbers were up in our most popular program. Year in and year out football is an activity which attracts a large number of middle school boys. Football at the Middle School is really a community event. Each year, over 100 kids participate in football. If most of them have at least 1 parent come watch, it makes for a really busy afternoon outside our building. Those numbers also make us a competitive force in the strong Mississippi 8 conference. The High School continues to realize the benefits of our strong program at the lower levels. Financially, we were able to save some money in our transportation budget because of a combined effort within the conference to cut down on travel for middle school activities.

Soccer is a sport that can create headaches for an Activities Director. It tends to be a popular sport with boys and girls. Even though it is popular with the kids, it can be a struggle to find qualified coaches and officials. Long time boys coach Shelly Hoard decided to take some time off from coaching this year, making for some tense days leading up to the start of the school year. With the soccer season quickly approaching, we were lucky enough to hire Ben Watkins as a science teacher at the Middle School. Ben came to us with a lot of experience both teaching and coaching. He has a strong soccer background and is great with the kids. He proved to be a great addition for our teaching staff, and our coaching staff. Another change this year was a change in location. We moved our soccer program to Bentfield-Mills Park about five years ago. This year we decided to come closer to town with soccer. Practices and games were held at Northwinds Elementary. This change presented some problems with parking and with the

elementary parents picking up their kids. I believe the parking situation is a work in process, and depending on who you ask, we will overcome it and I remain optimistic that next year we will be able to use Northwinds again. Participation in boys soccer was up by only one from a year ago, but with all the change this year, I think that is very positive.

Girls soccer also proved to be a contributing factor to the grey hair on our Activities Director's head. Finding a coach was also problematic with this activity. At the last minute, Erin Soukup and Ruth Clark stepped up to take on the responsibilities that go with coaching at the middle school level. The two coaches each brought different strengths to the program. One brought lesser knowledge of soccer, but great skills with kids, while the other brought great knowledge of the sport. The two coaches provided a great experience for the girls involved, and are looking forward to continuing that growth next year. The numbers for girls soccer again went up. For both boys and girls, soccer was able to save money because of the scheduling done by the conference to try to reduce travel.

While soccer provided some worries, early this fall, tennis is the opposite experience. Theresa Corfman, who has done it for a few years, coaches tennis. Her experience means this activity runs very smooth without a lot of handholding from the Activities Office. Girls tennis numbers were down this year from last. This decrease was based on a low seventh grade turn out. We hope to correct that next year.

Volleyball participation was down from last year. That is no surprise nor is it a problem. In 2008 Volleyball saw it's most participation in recent memory. Therefore the fact that we were down in numbers is not a surprise. We still had a high number of volleyball players this fall. The girls who did participate were coached exceptionally well. Three out of four coaches in volleyball were new this year. Of those three, two were first year teachers at the Middle School, the other was our School Resource Officer. All three of these coaches did an exceptional job. Kids in volleyball all received a great deal of positive coaching and game experience. Our coaches were not just coaching, but teaching and mentoring.

Even with circumstances that seemed to lean towards a loss in student athletes, we had a very busy fall with no drop in participation. At BCMS a total of 432 students or about 34 percent of the enrollment participated in an activity. The only drop in numbers was a decrease in intramural participation. This drop was caused by a busy sports start causing a slow start to intramurals. Getting kids out for intramurals is an easy fix. One trend I hope to continue and build on was the addition of coaches who work in our building during the day. Having these coaches get to know their kids as more than just athletes is extremely beneficial to the growth of our students at BCMS.

ATTACHMENT(S):

Participation Report