

Unfair sports funding undermines athletics program

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Staff Reporter

The football team has impressive uniforms, many players, and a huge crowd that comes to every home game. They also receive 14 percent of the district sports budget. Though that figure doesn't seem like much by itself, it sounds like much more when you're told the next highest percentage of the budget, 8 percent, goes (shockingly) to Dance Team.

Other sports teams have much lower percentages, the lowest of which is the .9% which funds cross country. When a large, successful team like cross country, that recently made its way to seventh place in State, receives less than one percent of the sports budget, one might assume that sports funding isn't exactly fair.

Though funding from the district budget for different sports teams is allotted based on their financial needs for equipment, fees, coaches' salaries, and other items, teams are also given opportunities to hold fund raisers.

This may seem to make up for a bit of the huge difference between football's funding and the funding for other

| FUNDING | |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| where does the money go? | |
| SPORT/ DEPARTMENT | PERCENT RECEIVED |
| Football | 14.0 |
| Training Room | 12.0 |
| Dance Team | 8.0 |
| Athletic | 7.5 |
| Softball | 5.5 |
| Baseball | 5.5 |
| Wrestling | 5.0 |
| Boys' Track | 4.5 |
| Girls' Track | 4.5 |
| Boys' Soccer | 4.0 |
| Girls' Soccer | 4.0 |
| Volleyball | 4.0 |
| Boys' Tennis | 3.0 |
| Girls' Tennis | 3.0 |
| Swim | 3.0 |
| Boys' Golf | 1.0 |
| Girls' Golf | 1.0 |
| Cross Country | 0.9 |

sports, but when you consider that all the admission and concession money from football games is a fund raiser for the football team, things don't seem quite as fair. The football team can effortlessly raise funds every Friday night, while other teams have to put in much more effort to increase funding.

Sexism is another funding issue. Though the school is legally bound to meet the Title IX requirements of giving equal funding to boys and girls teams of the same sport (like boys' and girls' basketball,) that seems to be where the equality between boys and girls ends.

Both boys and girls are given "team rooms" in the locker rooms, but the boys room is indescribably nicer than the two tiny rooms the girls have. While both rooms have lockers, the girls' rooms only have a couple benches and a white board. The boys' room has these amenities, along with much more space than both the girls' rooms combined.

The boys even have their names displayed on their lockers. It is very unnecessary and unfair that the boys receive better accommodations than the girls in the locker

room, of all places.

The team room issue would take some difficult construction work to fix, but the distribution of funding could easily be made more equitable. The large number of football players increases the funding requirement, but the extensive fund raising they do will help them quite a bit to increase their funds, and leave room to give more district funds to other teams.

There are teams like volleyball that have consistently done very well and deserve a little extra money. It seems to be only right to allow every team and every player, regardless of their sport, fair funding.

The money from the district needs to be more fairly spread out, and the best way to do that would be to take some of the football team's funding and give it to other teams that need it.

Another possibility would be to take some of that money and give more funding to the weight room so it could be used by all the teams. As it is right now, sports funding isn't properly catering to the needs of the teams (other than football), which is an embarrassment to the entire program.

Political correctness overshadows positive characteristics

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In today's society, people are protected. We try not to offend others, hurt feelings or cause people to feel insecure. The phenomenon of political correctness pervades our culture. In general, this is a great idea, preventing people from spouting cruel and hurtful things. However, some people have managed to pervert this idea and turn it into a monster that is threatening sports in particular.

Recently, a group of students that are part of a nationwide movement, have appealed to various school boards around Oregon. The hot topic concerns the use of Native American symbols as school mascots. The complaint details the use of names such as the Warriors, Indians, Chieftains or Braves as offensive to Native American students and that they should be replaced.

This is hardly confined to one or two schools in Oregon; a total of 15 would be affected by this change. The main argument for the change is that the use of Native American names and symbols denigrate and degrade their traditions and lifestyle. The cartoon images used to represent the mascots can also be viewed as offensive, as they create and exemplify the stereotypes

that Native Americans have fought against their whole lives.

A national example of this is the Cleveland Indians, whose mascot goes by the affectionate moniker Chief Wahoo. The Indians and the Atlanta Braves have both come under fire for their mascots and the images that represent them. In Cleveland's case, Chief Wahoo is a smiling stereotype

of an Indian, complete with red skin and a feather in his headband. These are just the examples in professional baseball.

There are also 62 other teams in professional or semi-professional sports ranging from basketball to rugby and even hockey that feature nicknames with indigenous connections. Not every one of them has to do with Native Americans, but

if a precedent is set in this case, each of these teams could come under fire. In addition, 33 U.S. colleges have mascots with a Native American connection; each could eventually be forced to change, erasing or revising in some cases a hundred years of sports history.

This is wrong. It is wrong in ways that defy conventional definitions of wrong. Although the mascot

issue would be a problem if the mascots were demeaning, this is the very part of the argument that has the most holes. Ever heard of the Los Angeles Butterflies? They are 18-0 in league play and contending for the national championship. One problem, there is no team nicknamed the Butterflies, and if conventional wisdom prevails, there never will be.

Mascots

continued on page 10

Driving While Texting, the new Driving Under the Influence?

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A mere month ago I was still begging my parents to switch my text messaging plan from 1,000 messages a month to unlimited messages. My brother, who is only three years older, was astounded that I could possibly need more than 1,000 texts. Making sure my older brother didn't win this argument, I snapped back with a sharp retort and told him it was a 'generation gap.' Although, at the time, he scoffed, it's true.

Text messaging has rapidly become the medium of communication preferred by high school students. No longer are hour-long phone conversations held in rooms with doors closed; hours aren't spent chatting on instant messenger and letters surely aren't being written. In the world of today, texting is

booming. In December 2006, 18.5 billion text messages were sent and that number has grown by 250% each year over the last two years.

There is no denying this new fad in communication and technology. With a society that is progressively busier and busier, multitasking is essential. But where should the line be drawn?

Text messaging is most popular with those in their teens, and coincidentally, these are also the years in which teens learn to drive. Incorporating this latest communication fad into the new freedoms of driving is neither safe nor practical. With driving skills still being refined, this is not the time to add one more distraction.

A recent study by Harris Interactive Inc. showed that 91% of Americans believe that text messaging while

driving is just as dangerous as driving drunk. Not only is a driver's attention distracted from the road, but the driver is no longer even looking at the road. These seconds of inattention could mean someone's life.

Washington has already passed a bill banning driving

while texting and six other states are considering a similar law. DWT is a serious problem. Next time you hear the beep of a text message while behind the wheel, think twice about checking, it could mean taking a life—it could even be yours.



Accidents caused by driving while texting are becoming a serious problem since text messaging rapidly evolved into the medium of communication preferred by teens. Washington has already banned driving while texting, and other states are considering a similar law.
Photo by Malia Chong