

Engl 1013  
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### Should High Schools Stop Focusing on Sports?

Some people believe that high schools should stop focusing on sports and start focusing on strictly academics, but others disagree. There have been many research studies on how sports in schools are actually beneficial to students and how they can help students grow. The impact school sports has on high school students is enough reasoning for why schools should continue to focus on them. Sports not only keep students involved in their school, but they can also help them improve their academic and their fitness levels as well.

In research articles such as “5 Awesome Reasons Athletics Matter to Schools”, by Derrick Meador, the author points out that athletics give students a better reason to stay involved, and have school spirit with their high school. Almost every school administrator and teacher wants all of their students to get excited and love their school, but students typically will only get involved if there are sports teams involved because “athletics [are] the building block of promoting school pride” (Meador). Without athletics, the students would not have anything to look forward to because there would not be any football or basketball games, or any pep rallies, or even any celebration at all. The excitement students feel when their team beats their opposing team is unexplainable and it makes everyone so happy and so proud to go to a school that is better than the other schools around them.

Students would also not get the full high school experience if it was not for sports. Going to football games and sitting in the student section, and have a good time cheering on their team only happens because of the athletics that are going on by the school. Most students would say that the student section is the best part of a football or basketball game, and without sports, that student section would not exist and the students would not have any fun. School pride creates a “special connection between an individual and the school” (Meador) which can only be fulfilled by sports. School pride is all students coming together, putting all other aspects of life aside, and cheering for their team, no matter what. Athletic games and pep rallies do exactly that. They get all of the students to come together and celebrate their team even if they lose. This just shows how much students care about their school and how big of an impact athletics has on the student body.

Athletics can also help students grow academically and become better people in the future. This is because students who are involved in sports, usually have a better memory and can help cognitive functions of the brain, thus improving their academic ability. Sports enables better memory because athletes always have to know what to do next without stopping and thinking about it. They also have to be able to hear one word from their coach and know exactly what he/she is talking about. Athletes have to

remember these things because when you are in a game, there is no time to think about anything, you are relied on knowing exactly what is happening or being said. Students can use this muscle memory for academics as well. When a math teacher, for example, tells them to solve the quadratic equation by factoring, students who are involved in athletics might be able to do this much faster than those who are not because of their muscle memory for all things. Being physically active “helps [students] in their studies” (Edsys) because they have skills such as multitasking and situational awareness that allows them to enhance academic achievement. Meaning that students who play sports have a greater chance at being able to get things done on time and still be able to maintain all of their classes at once. This shows how much athletics can actually benefit individuals in their academics, making them better students.

Sports can also provide athletes with essential life skills, such as self-discipline. They have self-discipline because they know when they did not do their best, in sports or in school work, so on top of a teacher, coach, or parent getting them in trouble, they are usually harder on themselves. This is a good life skill to have because it will always push that individual to do their best at everything they do. The amount discipline athletes receive in sports “helps them to refrain from any bad deed which help them grow up as good social beings” (Edsys). This proves that sports will help individuals grow up with a sense of knowing what is good and bad and what they should and should not be doing. Self-discipline also “lends itself well to academic focus, helping to banish procrastination” (Gil). This shows that athletics not only can students grow in their academics, but also teach them life long skills that will benefit them in the future, at the same time.

As well as keeping students involved and helping them grow academically, high school sports also keep students physically active, which helps improve their fitness level. Students are always encouraged to exercise and eat healthy foods because of its “mood-enhancing properties and for good reason” (Gil), athletics actually force students to be active and exercise. Staying physically active benefits students in many ways. It helps them reduce the risk of heart disease, helps them maintain a healthy weight, and it reduces fat because the individual who is involved with the sport is constantly burning calories. Without sports, it would be much harder for students in school to be active because they would not have as great of an opportunity to be working out and burning calories on a regular basis. Exercise can also improve one’s mood greatly because you typically feel refreshed and feel good about yourself after your workout is done. This enhances their mood because when one feels good about themselves, they feel like they were productive and achieved many things for themselves that day. Overall athletics will help individuals grow in their academics and help them have a better, more positive mood.

Being involved in sports activities also help students to “avoid formation of excess fat deposits and thus stay fit and slim” (Edsys), meaning that it keeps them active and most of the time helps them eat healthier. The article points out that most athletes always watch what they are eating because they do not want to gain any unneeded weight to themselves. This is because athletes know how important it is to maintain a healthy weight and how much of a difference it makes when playing sports, so they will usually try to eat only healthy foods as much as possible to stay fit..

Individuals who are involved in sports are busy and has very little screen time for them and hardly any time to play video games when they get home, like most of the other high school students who are not involved in a sport, which improves brain function and keeps them very healthy. Staying fit and healthy is one of the many main focuses of sports and if high schools took that away from students, there would be no one encouraging them to maintain a healthy diet and live a healthier, happier lifestyle.

Although some people might disagree, sports are a very important factor for all high school students for many reasons. Overall sports keep individuals very involved with their school, improve their academic ability, and make sure every student lives a healthy lifestyle, all while having a great time doing it.

## Works Cited

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