

EXEMPLAR POSITION PAPER/LETTER

Dear Mayor Bloomberg,

For many young people in America, sports are their dreams and hopes. And this is not without reason. Research has shown that children who participate in athletics are happier and more goal-driven than their non-athletic peers. High school athletics are still a highly beneficial activity for young people everywhere, and this is why it is important for sports programs across the country to stay right where they are. Sports programs should be kept in high schools because they have a positive effect on academics, they improve determination, and they bring people together.

According to the article "Are High School Sports Good for Kids?," over 5 million young people in America play high school sports each year. In Michigan alone almost 300,000 play every year. And the potential education benefits skyrocket with more adolescents participating. In Jesuit High School, a coach states that when kids play sports, it has a positive effect on grades. In fact, when the season ends, grades actually tend to drop as kids are less excited and motivated for their life in and out of school. Not to mention the many sports scholarships colleges offer. Usually, altogether, doing sports has a positive effect on teenagers across the nation.

While many claim that sports are negative for young people, with many injuries and wrong lessons, I find that sports are actually very rewarding for young people. Jeffrey Perkel in his article, "High, School, College Football Comes With Risk," describes how football can be particularly dangerous. But he doesn't describe the many sports that are much less dangerous, or the dangers of obesity, inactivity, and loneliness. Some say that children are being taught that winning is the only thing that matters, and it is true that in recent society there has been an emphasis on winning. It is also said kids who are enveloped in pressure stemming from sports are more likely to "burn out sooner," but a study in Michigan reveals that kids who play sports actually have more aspirations and are more likely to set and achieve goals. This highlights how though impressionable kids may be being taught questionable lessons, the journey they take to winning is much more rewarding.

The National Federation of State High School Activity Associations promotes "participation and sportsmanship" which helps to "develop good citizens through interscholastic activities which provide equitable opportunities, positive recognition, and learning experiences to students while maximizing the achievement of educational goals." This quote illustrates how sports and teamwork in young people are a national effort, a successful one too.

As can be seen, I have revealed the positive benefits of athletics to young people across the country. Confidence, hard work, and close friendships are only a few lessons sports teaches to young people. So keep the sports programs, and keep the wonderful cycle going.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Olivia