



Staff Athletics Survey Report

Key Findings

1. Forty-four percent (44%) of staff report having to recruit volunteer coaches annually while that same percentage of staff report having to recruit paid coaches must less frequently, less than every 2-3 years.
2. The most common reason staff cited for students not participating in athletics was students *skills aren't good enough to make the team* (20%).
3. In the open-ended questions, comments pertaining to *Facilities* were the most frequent and consistent among the coded themes.

Background

As part of the work being conducted by MMSD's Cross-Functional Team on Athletics, coaches and athletics staff were asked to participate in separate surveys focusing on athletics participation and perceptions of MMSD's athletics program.

Data and Methods

Between January 22 and February 5, 2016, the electronic survey links were emailed to coaches and other athletics staff. There was a 42% response rate for coaches and other athletics staff. Response distributions were calculated for each closed-ended question. Responses to open-ended questions were analyzed using descriptive coding (summarizing in a word the basic topic of a passage of data) to categorize the topic(s) of each.

Respondents:

No demographic information was collected on the staff survey. Ninety-six percent (96%) of respondents to the staff survey identified themselves as coaches; 3% as support staff (game manager, volunteer, official); and less than 1% each as athletic event workers or other athletics staff.

Findings

The section below outlines the findings for closed-ended questions on the staff survey. For the closed ended questions, we have included response distributions for overall results and narrative descriptions of results. For the open ended questions, we have used descriptive coding (summarizing in a word the basic topic of a passage of data) to categorize the topic(s) of each.

Coaches and Athletic Staff Survey Questions

The table below shows the questions on the coaches and athletics staff survey.

Coaches and Athletics Staff Survey Questions
Q1 What is your role with MMSD athletics?
Q2 At what level do you work currently?
Q3 What is the total number of years you've been employed across all levels?
Q4 In your opinion, what is the most common reason students drop out of athletics? (Open Ended)
Q5 How easy is it for you to be connected to the feeder school's athletic programs?
Q6 What are you doing to connect with feeders? (Open Ended)
Q7 What support or resources do you need that are not currently offered? (Open Ended)
Q8 How often do you have to recruit coaches?
Q9 What athletic program(s) are you most closely affiliated with? (Check all that apply)
Q10 In your opinion, what is the most common reason students don't participate in athletics?
Q11 How could MMSD athletics improve? (Open Ended)
Q12 What is MMSD athletics doing well? (Open Ended)



More than half of athletics staff (57%) reported working at the Varsity Head level while 24% were Varsity Assistants; 12% Junior Varsity and 6% Ninth grade level.

Q2 At what level do you work currently?	Staff
Varsity Head	57%
Varsity Assistant	24%
Junior Varsity	12%
9th Grade	6%

The largest group of survey respondents is experienced staff (32%) with more than 10 years of experience, followed by staff with either 3-5 years of experience or 6-10 years of experience (24% each).

Q3 What is the total number of years you've been employed across all levels?	Staff
2 years of less	19%
3-5 years	24%
6-10 years	24%
More than 10 years	32%

The majority of staff (65%) reported that is somewhat or very difficult to connect with their feeder school's athletics programs. Feeder schools are elementary or middle schools within a high school's attendance area.

Q5 How easy is it for you to be connected to the feeder school's athletic programs?	Staff
Very Difficult	23%
Somewhat Difficult	42%
Somewhat Easy	25%
Very Easy	10%

Recruitment of coaches occurs most frequently for volunteer coach positions, with 44% of staff indicating they must recruit every year. Recruitment for paid coaching positions occurs less frequently with 44% of staff indicating they must recruit paid coaches less than every 2-3 years.

Q8 How often do you have to recruit coaches?	Never	Less than every 2-3 Years	Every Year
Volunteer Coaches	33%	24%	44%
Paid Coaches	31%	44%	24%

The sports that staff respondents were commonly affiliated with were baseball (22%); football (20%); and track (15%).

Q9 What athletic program(s) are you most closely affiliated with? Check all that apply	Staff
Basketball	22%
Football	20%
Track	15%
Volleyball	14%
Baseball	13%



The reasons cited by staff for why students don't participate in athletics differ somewhat from the reasons cited by parents and students in their respective athletics surveys. The most common reason staff cited for students not participating in athletics was their skills aren't good enough to make the team (20%), followed by the students' friends don't participate in athletics (16%).

Q10 In your opinion, what is the most common reason students don't participate in athletics?	Staff
Skills aren't good enough to make the team	20%
Friends don't participate in athletics	16%
Participating would interfere with a job	14%
Not interested in athletics	12%
Participating would interfere with studies or other school activities (clubs, fine arts, etc)	10%
It costs too much	10%
It's not fun	9%
There's too much pressure from adults	3%
They didn't know they could participate	3%
Concerned about physical injuries	1%
Athletics activity wanted isn't offered through the school	0%
Disability or medical condition limits participation	0%

Open-Ended Responses - Coaches and Athletic Staff Survey

There were 5 open-ended questions on the coaches and athletic staff survey. Just over three-quarters of respondents answered the open-ended questions.

Q4 In your opinion, what is the most common reason students drop out of athletics?

The most common coded themes among responses to this question were in order *Other Demands* and *Academic Reasons*.

- Comments related to *Other Demands* tended to focus on job, family or other academic pursuits and included: "A lack of time. Students get increasingly busier over the course of their academic career," "Demands of other sports, family, school," and "The need to help support their family, often times working to contribute to the household income, watching younger siblings, etc."
- Comments related to *Academic Reasons* included: "The most commonly seen for our sport is academics. They feel they need to put more effort into school work," and "Academic/athlete balance." Other comments were: "Grade and attendance problems," "poor academic success" and "they can't keep their grades up."

Q6 What are you doing to connect with feeders?

The most common coded themes among responses to this question were in order were *Personal Contact* and *Little/No Contact*.

- Comments related to *Personal Contact* describe staff's communication and outreach efforts and include: "I work very closely with our youth program. I'm on their board and I also go into the schools to speak with students,"



“Talking to a few point people in each school,” and “We have created our own independent youth program that communicates with the feeder schools, are present at their events, provide numerous emails and involvement opportunities for feeder families, etc.”

- Comments related to *Little/No Contact* include: “Currently, very little. It would be easy to connect with the YMCA or via a phone call or email to the principals of the buildings,” “The programs have not been well run so we have stopped trying to engage through the school,” and “Not much. Most of our connection comes through our Athletic Director.” Other comments highlighted staff’s lack of awareness of what constitutes a “feeder” as noted in the following comments: “What is a feeder?” and “Don’t understand what you mean by feeders.”

Q7 What support or resources do you need that are not currently offered?

The most common coded themes among responses to this question were, in order, *Facilities* and *Contact*.

- Comments about *Facilities* focused the need for upgrades or space and included: “Our locker room is an absolute embarrassment,” “A wrestling room would be nice currently we share a field house” and “FACILITIES!! We are in need of serious facility upgrades for safety and functionality.” Another related: “I coach soccer at West High School. We have 100-150 kids out each year, but we train on awful fields that are spread out across the west side of town. Our varsity training field (also JV matches) has never been reseeded, rolled, or generally managed.”
- Comments about *Contact* tended to relate to teachers, students and feeder school programs and included: “More contact with teachers on athletes progress. Maybe having a session for coaches to meet teachers and athletes together,” “The elementary and middle schools do not allow us to give information to students about joining the tri - county basketball teams. Literally no support or resources are given,” “Coaches names and numbers,” and “the ability to send fliers home with kids.”

Q11 How could MMSD athletics improve?

The most common coded themes among responses to this question were, in order, *Facilities* and *Financial Support*.

- Comments related to *Facilities* mirror the comments expressed in Q7 on resources and included: “Our team does not have a consistent gym to practice in or our own mats to learn new skills. This makes learning tumbling nearly impossible,” “Maintain the physical infrastructure - in our case the tennis courts, nets, wind screens,” and “Updating the weight rooms would help all athletes. Allowing all sports to share cross training equipment, and get coaches from all sports to discuss communal cross training equipment needs that would benefit multiple sports.”
- Comments related to *Financial Support* focused primarily on funding, fees and pay. They included: “Prioritizing what is most important in each sport. For instance, the recertification of football helmets should be a number one priority to be financed,” and “Costs could be lowered. It’s not a major factor, but some sports are a little over the top in participation fees.” Other comments on *Financial Support* included: “Allow for more paid coaches. More coaches = safer and better coached athletes=more success.”

Q12 What is MMSD athletics doing well?

The most common coded themes among responses to this question were in order *Organization/Support* and *Opportunities*.



- Comments about *Organization/Support* include: “Putting academics in the proper place of priority, providing excellent organizational structure, adopting an excellent athletic code, scheduling excellent competition, providing excellent leadership and administrative support,” and “AD’s I have worked with have been fantastic, [there are] support systems when we need someone to talk to or help problem solve.”
- Comments related to *Opportunities/Participation* include: “They’re providing a lot of different programs to give all students that are interested in athletics at any level the opportunity to get involved,” “Offering a multitude of sports that kids can participate in each season,” and “Making some no cut sports available. Providing opportunity for freshmen competitions to help develop interest and talent.”