

Promoting Multisport & Multi-activity Participation in Rural Schools Today

THE BALANCING ACT
FOR 21ST CENTURY
STUDENTS

Chad Lang

**Activities Director &
Assistant Middle School
Principal**

**Lawson R-XIV School
District**



Why We Do This



Quick poll:

Who is in the room today?

My Background

- 9 years in the classroom in Iowa and Missouri
 - Social Studies
 - Head Coaching
- 5th year as Activities Director & Middle School Assistant Principal
 - Lawson R-XIV School District in Northwest Missouri
- Ed.D. candidate for the University of Missouri
 - Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis

Session Objectives

- Discuss state of activity specialization in U.S.
- Explain literature review on activities and academic achievement
- Why should school districts be concerned?
- Describe policy and practice suggestions

Trends in Participation

According to NFHS (2017), U.S. has experienced 28 straight years of increase in student participation in extracurricular activities; but what we don't know is:

- A. Are more activities available in and out of school than ever before? Likely, yes.
- B. Are more students involved, but in less diverse ways (i.e. playing 1 sport instead of 2,3 etc.)?

Trends in Participation

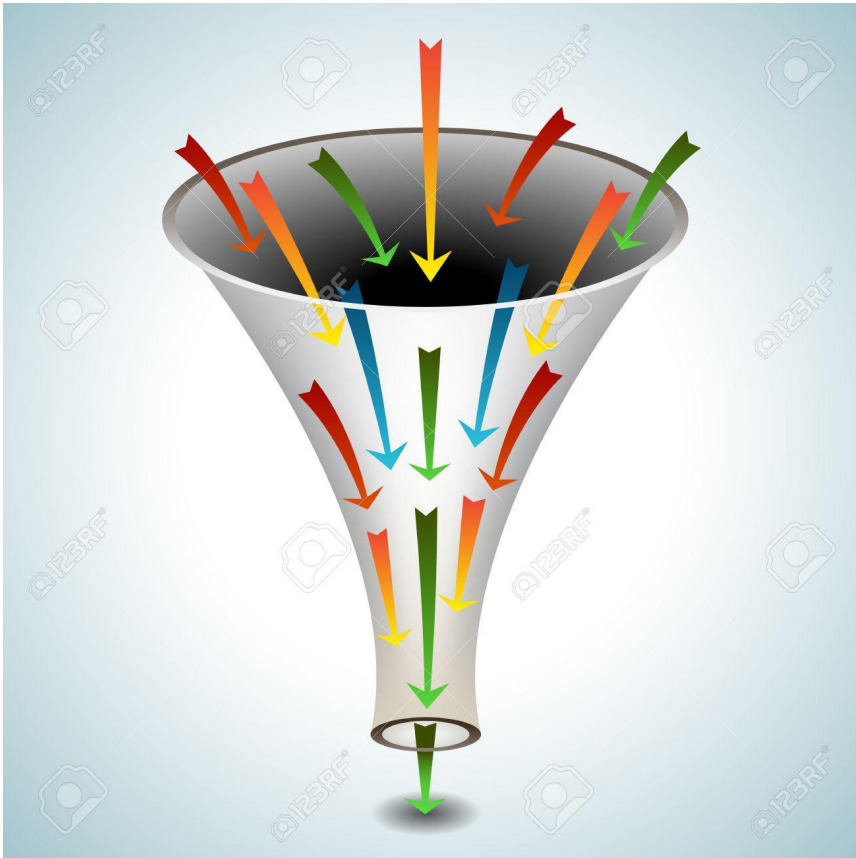
- The only sport to see decrease participation numbers in 2017---FOOTBALL
 - More than a concussion issue
 - 1) youth sports burnout before physically developed
 - 2) other options are becoming more popular such as cross country
 - 3) Financial burdens

The Discussion Around Sport Specialization

- The fallacy of athletic participation and scholarships (7% and 1%)
- Injury overuse concerns
- Impact of the “club” sport culture spilling into education-based athletics
 - Year round training preventing other opportunities
 - Parent input expectations; options



Why Should School Districts Be Concerned?



- The last 30 years of research has identified that participation in extracurricular activities accounts from some of the variance in academic achievement, attendance, behavior, retention, and even post-high school success (Broh, 2002; Cooper et. al., 1999; Holland & Andre, 1987; Marsh, 1992; Marsh & Kleitman, 2002; Melnick, Sabo, & Vanfossen, 1992, etc.).
- Era of accountability and budget cuts
- The challenge of unwrapping academic achievement

Themes of Outcomes Associated with Extracurricular Participation

| Social | Developmental | Academic |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Associate with diverse groups of students and adults• Acquire social capital from differing peer groups• Improve communication skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Time management• Organization• Leadership/supporting status• Prioritization• Multi-tasking• Selflessness• Grit/determination | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Authentic problem solving• Contextual understanding• Network of support |

Literature Review Highlights

Zero-Sum Theorists

Coleman (1961)- not enough time to excel in academic and activities

Over-scheduling hypothesis (Mahoney & Vest, 2012)

Developmental Theorists

Marsh & Kleitman, 2002 and social/cultural capital

Social Bond Theory (Hirschi, 1969)

What does Research Say About Academic Achievement and Activities?

- what is considered an “extracurricular activity”-some includes outside of school groups?
- In school activities is more strongly related to achievement gains than out of school activities (Gerber, 1996).
- Students in activities have higher grades (GPA) and career aspirations (Eccles & Barber, 1999; Fredericks & Eccles, 2006)
- Students in activities have higher standardized test scores (Everson & Milsap, 2007).
- Students in activities are less likely to drop out (Mahoney & Cairns, 1997; McNeal, 1995).

Continued...

- Students from low SES backgrounds exhibit even greater benefits from activities participation (Marsh & Kleitman, 2002).
- Activity involvement has 2 times the effect size as compared to “study habits” on A.A. (Camp, 1990).
- Females who play sports tend to achieve higher on math and science assessments (Hanson & Krauss, 1999).
- School attendance. Sports is a difference maker.
(Laughlin, 1978; Whitley, 1999; & Silliker & Quirk, 1997).

What Does Research Say About Behavior and Activities?

- Participation in activities leads to lower levels of delinquency; except alcohol usage in sports (Landers & Landers, 1978)
- The more time spent in structured activities leads to less time for risky behaviors (Osgood et. al, 1996; Stevensen, 2010).
- SES: affluent students are more likely to participate (McNeal, 1998)
- Students in activities are less likely to have referrals for discipline (Fejgin, 1994; Whitley, 1999)
- Students in activities benefit from social capital across extrafamilial networks (Broh, 2002).

VISITOR

You are now in
**REDSKIN
TERRITORY**





Application of The Social Bond Theory to Extracurricular Participation & Academic Achievement

Implications for Policy and Practice

Policy

More restrictive than MSHSAA by-laws? For all activities?

Do district policies hinder/help participation?

Practice

Promote and incentivize your offerings

Collaboration for coaches and directors

Human Resource utilization

Budgetary Considerations

Local Policy Talking Points

- “Excused” status?
 - Who approves?
 - How much of the day?
 - What is required?
- Transportational needs
- Grade checks
- Financial considerations for students/families (implicit & explicit)

Suggestions for Practice

- How do you promote the offerings you have? Open house for all activities? When?
- Do you work with community stakeholders to support? Ex.: robotics
- Web presence and who maintains it-implicit issues here
- Create or promote involvement in multiple activities through incentive programs
 - Examples: Tri-sport athlete patch, school plaques, lifetime activity passes

Practice Suggestion #2: Collaboration

Many schools have adopted the Professional Learning Communities (PLC) model with teaching staff; yet their activities personnel does not mirror this structure

Recommendation: Carve out professional development time for these stakeholders to do so

If possible, assign shadowing of another coach/director/sponsor in their “off-season”—“I had no idea phenomenon”

“If you don’t have a seat at the table, you’re on the menu.”-*Dr. Timothy Wall, Dean School of Education, Northwest Missouri State University*

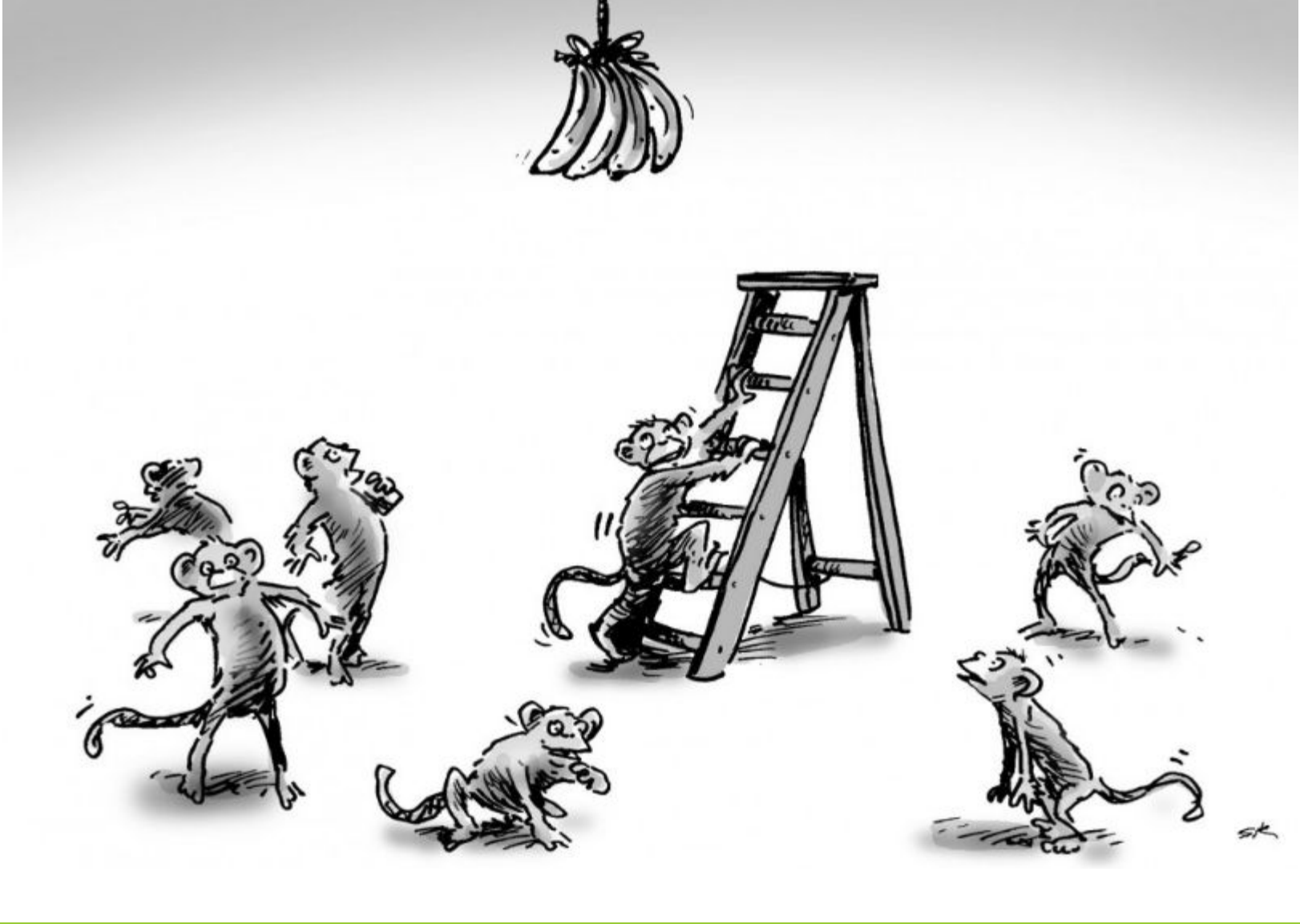
Practice Suggestion #3

Is the district best utilizing current and prospective resources?



Human Resources Cannot Miss

- Utilize and encourage your on-staff employees to coach/supervise as much as possible
- What is your district's expectation for event supervision?-what message does it send?
- Hiring-- Recruit, recruit, recruit, and network. Every student deserves the best. What could they bring to the table—ask! Who should learn more?
- Embrace change. “We have always done it this way.”—only goes so far.



Budgetary Considerations

- If you trust and believe the research—why would not INCREASE spending on extracurricular activities as compared to curricular or human resources?
- Adding an activity or sport –Math --Jr. High Cross Country example
- *new coach, \$2,500 per year, uniforms \$500, transportation-varies
- 10 more students participate in a fall activity vs. prior years, what social, academic, and development benefits does that investment have?
(approx.\$4,000)
- **What else can \$4,000 buy you in K-12 or K-8 schools today with that proclivity for a return?**

New Revenue Streams For All Schools

- Internet streaming of games/activities that include sponsorships
- In game entertainment that includes paid advertisement
- Sharing in hosting costs for cross country meets, jamborees, etc.
- Liquidating surplus equipment through Govdeals.com or other avenues

Next Steps...

- Meet with your A.D. and/or administrative team to discuss the role the district envisions for activities

- Conduct a program evaluation
 - Adults model participation in multiple activities-SUCCESS MODELED
 - How?-attendance and participation

My Mission Going Forward...

Conducting a quantitative analysis for a 3 year cohort of Missouri rural/bedroom community high school students involved in MSHSAA registered sports on the following:

- Is there a relationship between intensity (time) of sports participation and **ACT achievement** when holding constant for gender, race/ethnicity, prior GPA, and SES?

CONTACT INFORMATION

CHAD LANG

LANGC@LAWSONCARDINALS.ORG

816-580-7279



Follow on Twitter:
@Chad_mLang

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