



# **Elementary School Sports Program**

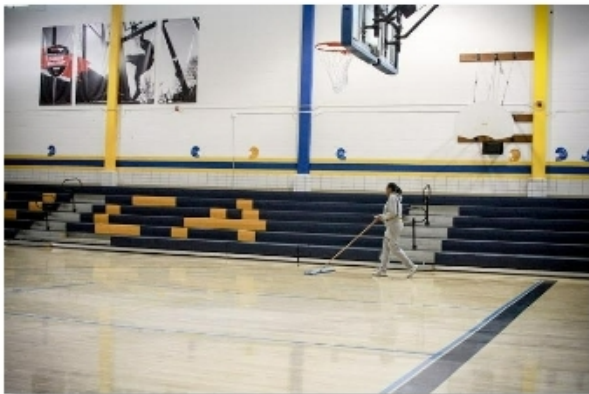
*Office of Sports Administration*

October 26, 2016

# Reimagining Youth Sport in the City of Chicago

## Background

- **Only 10%** of elementary students participate in school sports.
- Students are **cut** as young as age 11.
- Elementary athletics programming was heavily impacted by **budget** challenges.
- **Community challenges** necessitate that we maximize after-school programs.



## Vision

- We need a **culture shift** in how we think about athletics programming.
- We should focus on increased participation with an **inclusive** policy.
- Expanded sports programming will foster individual and academic **achievement**.
- We have the opportunity to **strengthen communities** through league play.



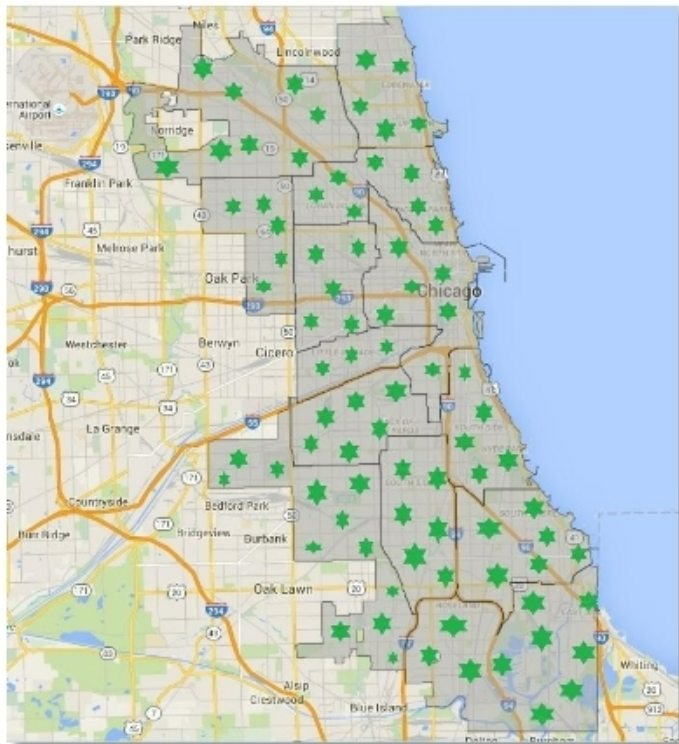
# *Elementary School Sports Program Goals*

We aim to increase student participation and improve academics, while strengthening communities.

- 1. Improving academics.** Support academic achievement by capitalizing on the benefits that participation in athletics programs provides to student-athletes, such as improved attendance, increased parental involvement, and expanded social experiences to learn critical life skills.
- 2. Increasing participation.** Provide a safe, structured sports experience for all 5-8<sup>th</sup> grade elementary school students who want to participate on a team, and introduce youth to caring coaches to instill lifelong skills and positive values.
- 3. Strengthening communities.** Create conferences of neighboring elementary schools and use the local high school for weekend games to create a safe community social center that attracts the entire family and promotes stronger linkages between elementary and high schools.
- 4. Expanding partners.** Develop a public-private partnership that promotes collaboration between CPS and alumni, sister agencies, sports organizations, professional sports teams, and the corporate community to create a lasting, life-changing impact for students and to allow CPS to keep tax dollars in the classrooms.



## Key Tenets of the New Program



- ❖ Ensure the program is ***inclusive*** and provides all interested 5-8<sup>th</sup> grade students the opportunity to play and practice (e.g., minimum playing time requirements).
- ❖ Build a ***conference structure*** to foster a sense of community between schools that are geographically near each other.
- ❖ Host contests at neighborhood ***high schools on Saturdays*** to drive engagement and involvement.
- ❖ Solicit ***student, family and community volunteers*** to serve as game day staff (e.g., scorekeepers, timekeepers).
- ❖ Promote the long-term success of the program by making it the ***only framework for interscholastic league play*** between elementary schools at CPS.
- ❖ Leverage ***public-private partnerships*** to facilitate the implementation, administration and funding of the program.



## A Successful Pilot in the 2015-16 School Year

"I was admittedly skeptical about the new basketball format. I have received outstanding feedback from schools about how it has *transformed some student behaviors and engagement.*"

~ Network Administrator

"I can't say enough about this program. My *students were more focused and did better on assessments* and in their classes"  
~ Sandee McDonald, principal of Thomas A. Hendricks Elementary Community Academy

### Taft Junior Eagles



**Sport:** Basketball

**Location:** Taft High School

**Schools:** Canty, Hitch, Palmer, Smyser, Solomon, and Taft

**Community:** High school student coaches, scoreboard operators, and scorekeepers

### Dunbar Junior Athletes



**Sport:** Basketball

**Location:** Dunbar High School

**Schools:** Beasley, Carnegie, Hendricks, Ray, Reavis, and Till

**Community:** Local music, cheerleading, Dunbar career programs fair

### La Villita Athletes



**Sport:** Soccer

**Location:** La Villita Park & Gary Elementary Schools

**Schools:** Castellanos, Corkery, Gary, Kanoon, Spry, Saucedo, and Telpochcalli

**Community:** Chicago Park District