



Promoting Youth Sportsmanship and Civility

Community Partner: Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Describe the specific need within the K–12 system

A 2023 survey by the National Association of Sports Officials (NASO) reported that nearly 70% of American referees believe sportsmanship is declining.¹ The survey gathered information from a variety of respondents across multiple sports, of which 92% reported refereeing at the high school level. The decline of sportsmanship and civility in youth sports has worsened and is highlighted and spread through social media. Poor sportsmanship modeled by adult participants and learned by youth participants threatens to both drive many young people out of sports and weaken the social-emotional benefits of sports participation in those who remain.

How a state investment in community partnership meets this need

Research has consistently affirmed the benefits of youth participation in sports, with one unique and important benefit being the development of good sportsmanship. In addition to physical health gains, students participating in youth sports experience lower rates of anxiety and depression, higher self-esteem and confidence, and reduced rates of substance abuse and other forms of self-harm. These gains, however, can be undermined by an unsportsmanlike environment.

To deter unsportsmanlike behavior and promote youth sports, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) requests funding to partner with the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA) to develop a sportsmanship and social-emotional training program, and provide leadership training for Washington's student-athletes, coaches, and athletic administrators. Funding will also develop new protocols, procedures, communications, and recruitment materials to encourage civility and sportsmanship in youth sports and youth sports broadcasting. Lastly, funding will support sports safety grants to school districts for student physical health screenings and the procurement of lifesaving equipment used to protect student-athletes such as external defibrillators, air quality sensors, and heat stress meters.

Describe existing or previous state investment in this work

Youth sports rely heavily on local funds, with state investments in youth sports being limited and not guaranteed. Currently, no state funds are dedicated to sports-based youth leadership development, social-emotional training, student health screenings, and grant-funded lifesaving equipment.

¹ National Association of Sports Officials (NASO). (2023). *2023 NASO Sports Officiating Survey*. Sporting Behavior. <https://www.naso.org/survey/portfolio/sporting-behavior-2023/>

SUPPORTING DATA AND EVIDENCE OF POSITIVE IMPACT

This request funds a new program so there is no data to share at this time.

FISCAL DETAIL

Operating Expenditures	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
Fund 001-1 (Program 05X)	\$1,726,000	\$1,726,000	\$1,726,000	\$1,726,000
Total Expenditures	\$1,726,000	\$1,726,000	\$1,726,000	\$1,726,000
Biennial Totals	\$3,452,000		\$3,452,000	
Staffing	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
FTEs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Average Annual	0.0		0.0	
Object of Expenditure	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
Obj. C	\$1,726,000	\$1,726,000	\$1,726,000	\$1,726,000
Revenue	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Revenue	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Biennial Totals	\$0.00		\$0.00	

ASSUMPTIONS AND CALCULATIONS

Expansion, reduction, elimination or alteration of a current program or service:

This is not an expansion, reduction, elimination, or alteration of a current program or service.

Detailed assumptions and calculations:

OSPI requests \$1,726,000 in fiscal year 202, and annually thereafter, to contract with the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association to support the following:

- Development of a sportsmanship and social-emotional training program for Washington’s student athletes, coaches, and athletic administrators; and
- Development and administration of sports safety grants that may be used to conduct physical health screenings and/or the procurement of lifesaving equipment used to protect sports athletes;

OSPI assumes that 10% of the funding will be used on the development of new protocols, procedures, communications, and recruitment materials to encourage civility and sportsmanship in youth sports and youth sports broadcasts.

Workforce assumptions

None.

Historical funding

There is no carry-forward level funding in the budget to continue this project into the 2025–27 biennium.

Fiscal Year 2026

- FTE = 0.00
- Total Funds = \$0.00
- Near General Fund = \$0.00
- Other Funds = \$0.00

Fiscal Year 2027

- FTE = 0.00
- Total Funds = \$0.00
- Near General Fund = \$0.00
- Other Funds = \$0.00