

### Root Cause Analysis – Data and Context Packet

#### WHAT & WHY?

On Saturday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, each committee will brainstorm causes for the unmet needs selected for analysis. This is hard work that needs a deep understanding to be successful. You will receive readings for context around all three unmet needs selected during the December 14<sup>th</sup> Committee Meeting. Reading this packet will help you get the most out of the activities, including:

1. Provide a deeper understanding of the context around unmet needs.
2. Jumpstart your thinking on causes through guided prompts.

#### PART 1 REVIEW

Review the final unmet needs statements developed by your committee to perform a root cause analysis upon. Review the context from the Community Interviews and the “who”, “what”, and “why” identified in the development of that unmet needs statement.

#### PART 2 READ

Learn more about the context around each unmet need by reading the following perspectives:

1. Expert Interviews
2. Committee Insights
3. Research and Data

estimated time: 20 minutes or more

#### PART 3 REFLECT

Using the readings from Part 2, begin your initial brainstorm using the following prompts:

1. What might be causing this unmet need to happen?
2. What causes might be connected to the work of other committees?

recommended time: 10 minutes or more

### Part 1 – Review | Unmet Needs Statement

*This is one of three unmet needs statements prioritized by this committee for the January 22<sup>nd</sup> Root Cause Analysis exercise(s). This statement was selected by the committee during the December 14<sup>th</sup> committee meeting.*

Underserved families need information and support to overcome barriers to athletics participation (including health screenings, academic requirements), which could serve as a catalyst for greater engagement in school.

## Part 1 – Review | Unmet Needs Statement Generation

### Barriers to participation in athletics

#### Low participation/enrollment in Athletics

- Academic performance is a barrier to sports participation
- “Kids need to be encouraged to participate in sports. But if their grades aren't good, they aren't allowed to participate.”

2 Mentions: (1) Parent, (1) Group Parent Interview

#### Athletics supplies and uniforms are too expensive/not provided - barrier to participation

- “Need free after school sports for students, many parents cannot afford sports leagues.”

1 Mention: (1) AISD Staff/Educator

#### Health Screenings/Athletics physicals are no longer free/accessible

- “Physicals used to be offered at the schools for free, but now that is not the case, and some students are still waiting on getting their normal booster shots that are required.”
- “We'll see how that turnout goes; the district offers the free physicals at the end of every year for athletes at the end of every year for the following year and that should continue.”

2 Mentions: (2) AISD Staff/Educator

- **Who:** Students in underserved communities with limited access to health screenings and with academic struggles
- **What:** Prohibits access to participation in organized sports
- Access to traditional communication (CAUSE)
- Lack of awareness about athletics services (physicals) and requirements for participation, and participation costs.
- **Why:** prohibits equitable participation in athletics

#### Unmet Needs Generation Draft:

*Students and families in underserved communities need increased access to / awareness of information about athletics services, requirements for participation, and participation costs to ensure equitable participation in athletics.*

~~“Lack of access to health screenings coupled with prohibited access to athletic programs to students with academic struggles excludes them from participating in athletics, which could serve as a catalyst for greater engagement in school.”~~

#### Finalized Unmet Needs Statement:

**Underserved families need information and support to overcome barriers to athletics participation (including health screenings, academic requirements), which could serve as a catalyst for greater engagement in school.**

### Part 2 – Read | Expert Interviews

*This page contains contextual information related to district practices, operations, and constraints as it relates to the identified root cause. Some of this information may have been relayed verbally during committee meetings. This information was provided by AISD staff selected by the PMs for the knowledge provided by their roles.*

#### Schedule coordination challenges for athletics periods limit participation (esp. for out of season sports)

- Lack of principal support makes it hard to schedule athletic periods that enable participation during the school day - challenging to coordinate athletic periods with academic requirements and availability of coaches (who are also teachers)
- Many HS sports don't have athletic periods, this means that they can only practice while the sport is in season and can't continue developing skills after the season ends. Impacts athletic performance.
- Some existing athletics periods are understaffed and overcrowded (50-100 students with only one instructor), which limits activities possible during the period.
- Middle school does not have an athletic period at all

#### Lack of administrative staff to help families sign up for athletics

- Much of administrative burden, paperwork, etc. falls onto coaches (who are also teachers!)
- In surrounding districts, athletic directors have executive assistants, but in AISD they barely get an office. No district structure to enable help for coordinators.

### Part 2 – Read | Committee Insights

*This page contains any feedback from committee members across all committees from the November 30th committee meeting discussion around unmet needs not yet expressed or identified that the committee members were aware of or wanted to share. These have been organized as they relate to the existing unmet needs or grouped into new ones.*

#### Scheduling challenges for students who are struggling academically conflicts with athletics periods

- Students need access to practice times that better enable participation (not just after school)

#### Financial barriers to participation

- Any additional fees that students are charged? – Dependent on campus and program. E.g. consumables – baseball team's socks, hats, shirts – some would fundraise and others would charge a base fee for all the materials.
- Need better standardization of rules, costs, requirements so it's not cost prohibited. INEQUITABLE distribution of funding.
- Started non-profit and bought equipment for super cheap – you can ask organizations ahead of time to help.

#### Lack of access to youth sports can make participation at upper grade levels challenging.

- Agree!! Same at Travis and Navarro – kids haven't played baseball in youth leagues because they don't have access. Also challenges with fundraising.

#### Transportation as a barrier to competing:

- From student – transportation is another issue. At beginning of year, cheerleading had no transportation to any games. A lot of other sports can't play at games because they don't have transportation.

#### Physicals:

- Physicals are offered at MS and HS and last for the next year. Many campuses offer them as well to offset need at district level.

#### Academic requirements are state law, but some families may not know about them

- No pass no play is mandated under UIL regulations. But families may not know what that means or that kids need to keep GPA up to be able to participate (even if students know, parents may not). Campaign around that.
- The only thing we can do is help kids get better grades.

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### Part 2 – Read | Committee Insights CONT.

*This page contains any feedback from committee members across all committees from the November 30th committee meeting discussion around unmet needs not yet expressed or identified that the committee members were aware of or wanted to share. These have been organized as they relate to the existing unmet needs or grouped into new ones.*

#### Lack of information/communication may be key cause:

- Lots of challenges with awareness about what's required to participate in sports in new immigrant communities (no pass no play, physicals, transfer rules etc. in UIL handbook)
- Information overload to families – need marketing and PR around what we do offer that's not just coming from the campus level to make sure families get the info in multiple ways.
- Sometimes it's HOW we communicate – not everyone connected via email, for example coach themselves didn't even know we had free physicals to be able to communicate that to kids.
- NEED JUSTIFICATION: historical data to show the importance of athletics and how it impacts academics – what improvements does athletics offer to the students? We need to supply it (\*WILL BE INCLUDED IN RESEARCH PHASE!). Studies and proof that this works. Not only underserved but benefits ALL students in all sports. Similar to arts.
- \*\*looking for more data to justify what we're trying to do. People don't recognize importance of athletics.



## Part 2 – Read | Research and Data

*This page contains key findings from the additional data sources identified by committees during the October 26th committee meeting, as well as key findings from validated external resources and research from the AISD Department of Research and Evaluation.*

Students that participated in Athletics experienced more positive academic outcomes than those that did not.

- They attended school at higher rates, had higher graduation rates, were promoted to higher grade levels, and had a lower percentage of disciplinary rates than their non-athlete counterparts.<sup>1</sup>
- In high school, athletes (96%) were promoted to the next grade level at higher rates than were non-athletes (89%).<sup>1</sup>
- They were more college ready in English language arts, math, or both than non-athletes, and had significantly higher college enrollment.<sup>2</sup>
- Based on findings, as well as other research in this area showing the benefits of athletics participation, increased opportunity to participate in athletics should be created at all schools, per DRE research. Student participation in athletics should be encouraged, especially for those who are economically disadvantaged.<sup>3</sup>

### Sources:

#### 1. [Benefits of Athletic Participation](#)

Austin ISD student course enrollment, attendance, discipline, state assessment files prepared by the Department of Research and Evaluation. Middle school results summarize outcomes for the 2014-2015 school year, and high school results summarize outcomes for the 2010-2011 school year.

#### 2. [Academic Benefits of Athletics](#)

A summary of outcomes for the Graduating Class of 2017

#### 3. [Middle School Athletics: A Summary of Academic Outcomes in 2014–2015](#)

The vision of Austin Independent School District's (AISD's) Athletics Department is to instill a passion for lifelong learning in all student-athletes through the development of athletic programs at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. To monitor progress toward this goal, academic outcomes for middle school student athletes and non-athletes in the 2014–2015 school year were analyzed

Academic requirements could disproportionately affect disadvantaged students and students of color.

- Students of color tend to be less college ready than their white counterparts. In 2020-2021, only 28% of African American students were college ready (in both Math and English), Latin students were at 38%, while white students were at 75%.<sup>4</sup>
- Student participation in athletics should be encouraged, especially for those who are economically disadvantaged.<sup>3</sup>
- Additionally, Bowen and Green (2014) found sports participation included cognitively and organizationally demanding activities that developed students' self-discipline and leadership skills and was especially helpful for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. However, they are more likely to be barred from participation.<sup>3</sup>

### Sources:

#### 3. [Middle School Athletics: A Summary of Academic Outcomes in 2014–2015](#)

#### 4. [College Readiness Summary \(2020–2021\)](#)

Report of college readiness among high school seniors in AISD, based on standard assessment measures, including the ACT, SAT, and Texas Success Initiative (TSI) exams. If students meet college readiness benchmarks on these assessments, they are likely to succeed in the credit-bearing courses needed for a college degree or program certificate, without the need for remedial coursework.

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### Part 2 – Read | Research and Data, CONT.

*This page contains key findings from the additional data sources identified by committees during the October 26th committee meeting, as well as key findings from validated external resources and research from the AISD Department of Research and Evaluation.*

Community sports can provide healthy or safe coping strategies among traumatized migrant and refugee communities.

- Engagement in sports among migrant teens functioned as a diversion from drug and alcohol misuse and other criminal activity for a community lacking the resources or access to culturally-appropriate mental health interventions for managing trauma associated with forced migration.<sup>5</sup>
- Some practices common to competitive sports (yelling/shouting, whistles, specific terms, unexpected physical contact) can exacerbate or trigger trauma responses if not planned or implemented sensitively.<sup>5</sup>
- Benefits of community sports and participation include connectedness to other youth, social inclusion, and the breakdown of cultural barriers.<sup>5</sup>

**Sources:**

5. [The role of sport in coping and resilience amongst resettled South Sudanese youth in Australia](#)  
(Pittaway, Dantas 2021)

A study involving interviews and thematic analyses of youth, parents, and community elders among a traumatized immigrant population living in Melbourne to understand the impacts of sports on the mental wellness of migrant youth.



### Part 3 – Reflect | Guiding Questions

*This page contains guiding questions to brainstorm causes and reflect on connections between the work of different committees. The cross-committee connections highlighted on this page were identified by the PMs and/or committees prior to and during the December 14<sup>th</sup> committee meeting.*

#### Unmet Needs Statement

Underserved families need information and support to overcome barriers to athletics participation (including health screenings, academic requirements), which could serve as a catalyst for greater engagement in school.

#### Reflection Questions

What might be causing this unmet need to happen?

What causes might be connected to the work of other committees?

#### Cross-Committee Connections

