

Transforming Middle School Athletics: A Journey of Growth

*Informational Hearing – Middle School Sports
Council Bill 25-0031R*

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Tiffany Byrd, Director of Athletics





City Schools Middle School Athletics: Our Story

The State of Middle School Athletics Before COVID-19

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, City Schools' middle school athletics were severely limited, with programming mainly available in basketball and track & field at only a small number of schools. Resource constraints, including insufficient funding, inadequate facilities, and transportation barriers, resulted in inequitable access to sports opportunities, leaving many students without the benefits of structured athletic experiences that promote physical health and teamwork.





Overview

In partnership with Under Armour, City Schools completed a comprehensive landscape analysis that helped develop and inform the Middle School Athletics Exposure and Expansion Initiative.

Analysis Insights

- Compared to other MD counties, there were fewer middle school athletics opportunities available in Baltimore City.
- Surrounding districts largely relied on recreation departments.
- City Schools is leading with a district-based model.

Why It Matters

- Students participating in organized athletics report higher levels of school engagement and improved attendance.
- Principals strongly support centralized athletic programming to create consistency and opportunity.

The District's Commitment: A Strategic Response



City Schools
Committed to
Increase
Opportunities



Framework of
Additional Staffing
& Resources



Expansion to 7
Competitive Sports
Offerings



RFP Developed to
Engage Vendors &
Partners



City Schools Adjust
to Facilitate Vendor
Programming



16 Vendors &
Partners Provide
MS Athletics &
Leadership
Programs

City Schools Middle School Athletics Opportunities

Cross Country

Unified Flag Football

Volleyball

Unified Indoor Bocce

Basketball

district coordinated
vendor coordinated

Unified Track & Field

Unified Outdoor Bocce

Badminton

Boxing

Crew/Rowing

Golf

Kickball

Lacrosse

Tennis

Pickleball

Soccer

Squash

Swimming

Running

Flag Rugby

Ultimate Frisbee

Baseball

Softball

Rowing

Mentorship Through Sport





Coppin State University



BUBA



First Tee Golf



Girls On The Run



The Little Leagues



National Coalition of Womens Athletics



Soccer Without Borders



Squashwise



Y in Central Maryland



Whole Person Whole Life



Girls in the Game



GameOn Fitness



Harlem Lacrosse

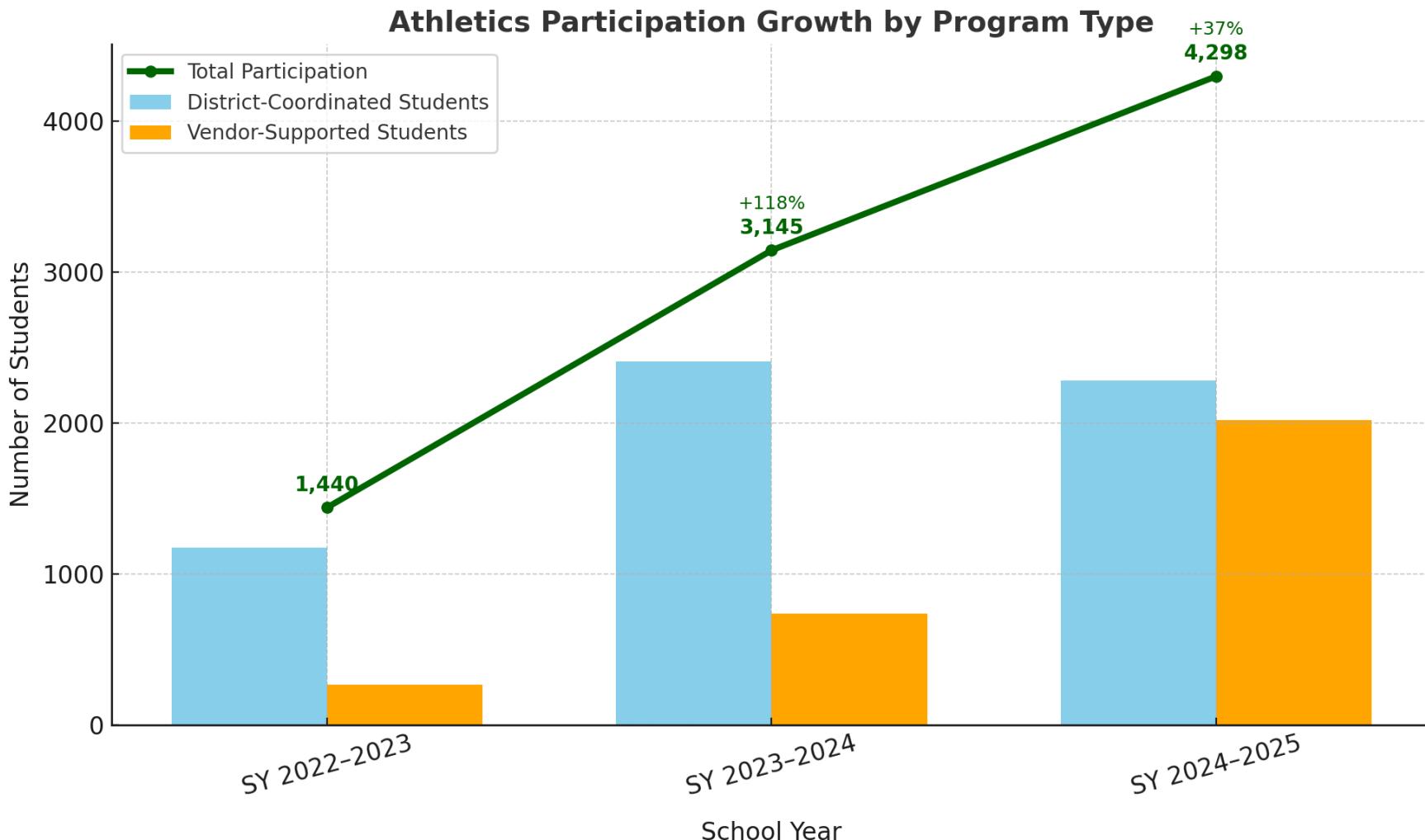
Vendor Partnerships & Support

While program growth has been extraordinary, it's important to note that this success reflects **significant financial and operational investments**. Expansion has relied on **collaboration, strategic use of resources, and the shared commitment** of educators and community partners who believe in the power of athletics to enrich students' experiences and outcomes.



Milestones in Motion

Over the past three school years, City Schools' Middle School Athletics programming has experienced remarkable expansion and revitalization.



From SY22-23 to SY24-25



+92%

teams



+198%

student athletes

Our Shared Path Forward

City Schools' middle school athletics program has evolved into a **thriving, districtwide initiative** supported by schools, coaches, and community partners.

Substantial expansion of opportunities is giving more middle schoolers access to sports and team experiences than ever before.

By providing early **exposure to sports**, we're building a **strong pipeline into high school athletics**.

Our new **partnership with the Baltimore Children and Youth Fund** (BCYF)—including a **\$300,000 investment**—will further expand reach, with BCYF managing the spring vendor-provided programming.

Continued investment and collaboration will **secure the long-term future** of middle school athletics, ensuring every student can experience the benefits of sport, teamwork, and belonging.



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