

## STRIDE Initiative

### **“WIAA STRIDE School”**

*STRIDE: Striving Toward Rethinking Inclusivity, Diversity, and Equity*

Schools that **choose** to engage in this work, meeting all criteria listed below, will be able to consider themselves a “WIAA STRIDE School.” This moniker will allow local communities to proudly display that they continue to actively engage in efforts to eliminate structural barriers and provide interventions that increase participation for students from all backgrounds. Schools who chose to engage in the STRIDE Initiative will, in solidarity with other participating schools, make an impact on access for all student-athletes across Washington State.

### ***Rationale***

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee, through the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA), aims to celebrate member schools who actively seek to encourage participation in activities/athletics for diverse populations. While we value and celebrate competition, the goal of the WIAA remains committed towards “increasing awareness of the benefits developed through participation in educationally-based activities.” Thus, we aspire to recognize and encourage member schools that foster cultures of inclusion across the many diverse populations that make up our state. According to the Aspen Institute’s *Project Play* (2022), “The next version of school-based sports needs to build on the lessons of Title IX. Its core values of participation and non-discrimination must drive decision making. So, too, must the principles of health equity, given the mountain of research on the benefits that flow to students whose bodies are in motion – and the gaps in access to sport for under-resourced populations. Then, school leaders must put in place a set of aligned strategies and tactics to bring that more robust model to life, tailored to the interests of its students and assets of its community.” As school communities seek to foster a sense of belonging for all students, the WIAA seeks to facilitate an initiative which will increase the likelihood local stakeholders engage in identifying barriers to participation and planning for possible solutions.

### ***Description***

Each year, schools report data through the Washington State OSPI Report Card. The WIAA DEI committee will seek to compare this data with participation in local schools to ensure an intentional effort towards inclusion in athletics for diverse groups of students. Identification of diverse populations will include various *Social Identities*, described in Jen Fry’s: *The Anti-Racist Manual*, along with data currently tracked in the *OSPI Report Card*. Member schools will be tasked with reflecting on data that compares participation numbers in relation to that of the larger school population.

Fortunately, observable data for many diverse communities within a school population already exists. We will utilize previously collected data for many of the social identities, which are listed below. While

we seek to ensure inclusion and equity for all diverse populations, some social identities are personal in nature (i.e. Sexual orientation, religious or spiritual affiliation, gender). These social identities may be inappropriate to track. The DEI Committee, however, remains committed and focused on the inclusion and representation of all social identities, and will continue to seek ways to systematically increase the likelihood of inclusion for all groups. Schools are encouraged to collaborate with stakeholders in these respective communities to identify barriers and possible solutions. Schools are encouraged to consider all social identities when seeking to improve systems of inclusion. With respect to these efforts, the STRIDE Initiative will focus its observable data initiative with already collected data by the state. Thus, the identities in red will represent traceable data to be collected annually. All social identities, regardless of traceability, still qualify for the “WIAA STRIDE School” inclusion action plan outlined below. Forming plans which identify barriers and foster collaborative opportunities for inclusion are strongly encouraged, regardless of the social identity selected.

<b>Jen Fry’s Social Identities:</b>	<b>OPSI Report Card Diverse Demographics:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Race</li> <li>● Sexual Orientation</li> <li>● Religious or Spiritual Affiliation</li> <li>● Ethnicity</li> <li>● Socio-Economic Status</li> <li>● Physical, Emotional, Developmental (Dis) Ability</li> <li>● Gender</li> <li>● Age</li> <li>● First Language</li> <li>● National Origin</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Female/Male</li> <li>● Race               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ American Indian/Alaskan Native</li> <li>○ Asian</li> <li>○ Black/African American</li> <li>○ Hispanic/Latino of any Race(s)</li> <li>○ Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander</li> <li>○ Two or More Races</li> <li>○ White</li> </ul> </li> <li>● English Language Learners</li> <li>● Low-Income</li> <li>● Mobile</li> <li>● Highly Capable</li> <li>● Homeless</li> <li>● Migrant</li> <li>● Military Parent</li> <li>● Section 504</li> <li>● Students with Disabilities</li> </ul>

We all benefit when our community’s children have access to opportunities supported through the WIAA. Inclusive communities build everyone’s collective capacity to problem solve, build relationships, empathize, appreciate unique gifts, and understand others’ challenges. A focus of ‘DEI’ work is to improve systems so that historically disenfranchised groups are included and valued for the diversity they bring to local communities. Thus, an objective of the STRIDE Initiative is to provide a data driven opportunity for local coaches, athletic directors, and appropriate stakeholders to assess how different social identities participate in their respective activities/athletics. Likely, all schools will have demographics that are underrepresented in their current activities/athletics, compared to that of the larger school population. This information will provide the local communities an opportunity to reflect and target demographics with clear discrepancies to actively encourage participation. Likewise, to ensure no systematic barriers exist which would prevent or decrease the likelihood of participation.

**Steps**

To qualify as a “WIAA STRIDE School”, a member school must:

- Assemble all rosters from WIAA athletics/activities offered through the school
- Designate a qualified person to cross reference OSPI Report Card data with students on respective rosters
- Athletic Director assembles a team of appropriate personnel to evaluate the data. Members could include, but are not limited to:
  - School administrators
  - Coaches
  - Student-athletes
  - Student-centered equity teams
  - Parents
  - Community Members
  - Advocates
- The team will evaluate data, considering any discrepancies between participation in comparison to the larger student body.
- The team will select an area for growth, identifying a possible barrier and a solution to that barrier. Examples include, but are not limited to:

<b>Possible Barrier</b>	<b>Possible Solution</b>
Low participation amongst Homeless population	Add transportation routes for when after school activities conclude.

Low participation amongst English Language Learners	Ensure directions for signing up exist in multiple languages.
Low participation amongst students with disabilities	An IEP case manager will meet with coaches to explain the individualized programming of the shared student. Coach will be invited to participate in IEP meetings.
Low participation amongst students who participate in the Gay Straight Alliance (GSA)	Ensure an advisor or student from GSA is on the team that evaluates the data.
Low participation amongst low income students	Establish a non-profit foundation of community volunteers that fundraises for sporting equipment. Students who may not have the means to afford team equipment can apply for support with this organization.

**Other Ideas for Inclusion:**

- Establish a Student Council for DEI
- Create surveys that foster student voice
- Develop mechanisms for students who transfer
- Organize coaching leadership teams who actively reflect on data provided
- Ensure traditional “cut” sports are no longer “cut” sports, or provide intramural/club opportunities
- Establish connections with local community agencies (e.g. Boys and Girls Club, YMCA) to facilitate club teams for students who are “cut” from a sport
- Eliminate participation fees
- Inquire for interest in activities/athletics that do not currently exist, and create opportunities for those interests

*\*An evolving list of possible solutions will exist on the WIAA website for schools to consider\**

- **Plans for inclusion should be observable and traceable. Plans for inclusion will include:**
  - Identification of target demographic
  - Hypothesis as to why a discrepancy between participation and the larger population exists
  - Plan for inclusion, which must include:
    - Hopeful completion date
    - Target behavior for inclusion
    - Conditions for measurement of whether goal was achieved
    - Criterion for acceptable performance

## Example Scenarios:

### **Example 1:** Inclusion for English Language Learners

#### **Scenario:**

An inclusion team has identified a clear discrepancy in participation amongst English Language Learners in the school community. 8% of the entire student body identifies as an English Language Learner, yet only 2% of students who participate in WIAA athletics identify under the same category. The inclusion team has noticed that all sign up paperwork for sports exists only in English. The team believes that if these documents, which are required to access the sport, are translated into other languages, participation would increase. The goal submitted to WIAA could be:

#### **Goal:**

By 5/14/22, the Athletic Director will have collaborated with the school's English Language Learner (ELL) Coordinator to identify all primary languages spoken in the school. All forms related to signing up for athletics will be translated into these respective languages (including any new languages for students who transfer to our school). Copies of these translated documents will be provided to the ELL Coordinator for dispersing. We, as a school community, will go from having 0% translated copies with respect to spoken primary languages to 100% of translated copies by the targeted timeframe. Participation amongst our ELL population will increase from 2% of participants to 8% of participants, reflecting the larger student body.

### **Example 2:** Inclusion for LGBTQ+ learners

#### **Scenario:**

In discussing DEI work as a coaching collective, a coach refutes a need, citing an inclusive team culture. According to the coach, everyone is welcome on their team. The coach is challenged by a colleague who reports members of the Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) have decided to not participate with this team, citing frequently used homophobic rhetoric used by student-athletes in the locker room, away from the coaches. Upon hearing this perception, the coach expressed sadness and a willingness to meet with students involved in GSA to identify possible solutions.

**Goal:** By 5/14/22, \_\_\_\_\_ High School will have established a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee, met monthly, established norms for collaborative work, and reported monthly notes to the school board. The DEI Committee will be comprised of a minimum of (3) student-athletes, (3) club presidents (one of which must be the GSA president), (1) ASB officer, (2) teachers, (2) administrators (including the athletic-director), (1) parent, (1) counselor.

In both scenarios, schools would be awarded the designation of a "2022 WIAA STRIDE School" while they were engaged in this work. Following submission, the school would submit whether they achieved or did not achieve the goal and why, to maintain this status. The following year, the school must submit a different plan for inclusion. It is important to note that a school still achieves the status of "WIAA STRIDE

School” even if the participation numbers amongst their targeted population do not increase to the level desired. What is recognized and lauded is the attempt at inclusivity.

### ***Incentive***

Schools that engage in this work, achieving status as a “WIAA STRIDE School”, will receive their choice of a:

1. Banner for public display
2. Plaque to be displayed amongst other awards in the school gymnasium

### ***Conclusion***

A litany of research exists on the benefits of participation in extra-curricular activities. This research also purports the power high school programs have on providing access to historically excluded groups (Lumpkin & Favor, 2012). From academics (Everson & Millsap, 2005) to a sense of belonging (Schaefer et al, 2011), participation in athletics presents an opportunity for inclusion of diverse populations into the larger community. With respect to competition, we seek to “recognize that the primary responsibility of secondary schools is to educate youth” (WIAA 2021). Furthermore, in the interest of providing access to extra-curricular education, the WIAA seeks to “design all activities to provide for fair and equal opportunities for all participants.”

The STRIDE Initiative seeks to incentivize schools to actively seek out students from diverse backgrounds. The aim of the recognition is to increase the likelihood students who have been historically excluded are actively sought out and encouraged to participate in the various programs offered. By encouraging an opportunity approach to ensuring participation in WIAA sanctioned activities, schools across the state stand to engage in the vibrancy a diverse campus can offer.

## **Citations**

Aspen Institute. (2022). *School sports playbook*. The Aspen Institute Project Play. Retrieved April 27, 2022, from [https://www.aspenprojectplay.org/school-sports/playbook?utm\\_source=iContact&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=school-sports-playbook&utm\\_content=Reimagining%2BSchool%2BSports%2Brelease](https://www.aspenprojectplay.org/school-sports/playbook?utm_source=iContact&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=school-sports-playbook&utm_content=Reimagining%2BSchool%2BSports%2Brelease)

Everson, Howard T. and Roger E. Millsap. *Everyone Gains: Extracurricular Activities in High School and Higher SAT Scores*. New York, NY: College Entrance Examination Board, 2005.

Fry, Jen. "The Anti-Racist Manual." JenFryTalks, 2020, pp. 12-13.

*Home-Washington State Report Card*. (n.d.). Retrieved December 30, 2021, from <https://washingtonstatereportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us/>

Knifsend, Casey and Sandra Graham. "Too Much of a Good Thing? How Breadth of Extracurricular Participation Relates to School-Related Affect and Academic Outcomes During Adolescence." *Journal of Youth & Adolescence* 41.3 (2012): 379-389.

Lumpkin, Angela, and Judy Favor. "Comparing the academic performance of high school athletes and non-athletes in Kansas in 2008-2009." *Journal of Sport Administration & Supervision* 4.1 (2012): 41-62

Shaefer, David R. et al. "The Contribution of Extracurricular Activities to Adolescent Friendships: New Insights Through Social Network Analysis." *Developmental Psychology* 47.4 (2011): 1141-1152

Washington Interscholastic Activities Association. WIAA. (n.d.). Retrieved December 30, 2021, from <https://wiaa.com/subcontent.aspx?SecID=299>