

From: James Lopez <James@playequityfund.org>
Sent: Thursday, December 2, 2021 3:31 PM
To: LA County ATI <ati@lacounty.gov>
Subject: Public Comment - December 2, 2021 - Agenda Item V.

CAUTION: External Email. Proceed Responsibly.

Dear Care First Community Investment Advisory Committee,

We hope this email finds you all safe and healthy. My name is James Lopez and on behalf of the LA84 Foundation and Play Equity Fund, we would like to submit the attached letter of testimony for Public Comment for tonight's meeting.

The letter comes from our President and CEO, Renata Simril and shares about the importance and urgency of access to sport and play as a social justice issue in LA County. We thank you for your time and consideration as you read our letter.

We welcome any further conversations and exploration to elevate sport for youth development and as a prevention tool for youth involved or at risk for entering the juvenile justice system.

Sincerely,
James Lopez

Renata Simril
President & CEO
LA84 Foundation & Play Equity Fund
2141 W. Adams Blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90018

December 2, 2021
Care First Community Investment (CFCI) Advisory Committee
Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple St. Ste. 383
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Virtual Meeting – December 2, 2021 at 4:00PM – Agenda Item V.- Public Comment

Dear Care First Community Investment (CFCI) Advisory Committee,

Greetings to each of you. My name is Renata Simril, President and CEO of the LA84 Foundation and Play Equity Fund. We are sending this letter on behalf of the thousands of sports-based youth development organizations in Los Angeles County. Over the past 36 years, the LA84 Foundation has supported the sports-based youth development ecosystem of organizations that have continually delivered programming that have used sports and play to increase positive outcomes for youth, connect them to education opportunities, divert them from gangs and the juvenile justice system, and provide pathways to wellness and overall well-being.

As the commission leads shaping budgets and priorities for Youth Development in LA County, we would like to elevate the critical need for and importance of sport and play for all youth. Sport and play have proved to be a viable diversion and prevention tool as well as a strong intervention tool that creates opportunities for youth to develop physical health, mental wellness, and strong social and emotional skills.

Equal access to sports and play is a social justice issue. Year after year we've seen public school districts defund enrichment and after programs, including sports. Youth of color are twice as likely to live in areas with sub-par park space and Black and Latinx youth have the highest rates of stress, anxiety, and depression. The reality of the youth sports landscape right now is households who can afford to play sports do, while those who can't, don't. In fact, kids from households that earn below \$25k annually are five times less likely to participate in sports even though many of them experiencing higher rates of obesity and high school dropout rates.

As the committee begins to set goals, priorities, and recommendations for CFCI's funding allocation to support youth at risk of involvement with the justice system or already involved in the justice system; we urge you to please consider resources and funding for the numerous communities and school-based organizations that are leveraging sport and play for the improved protective factors for our youth. As an example, we have attached a summary of a study of the Beyond the Bell after school program. In this example, middle school youth that participated in the sports program had higher social and emotional wellness, attended school at a higher rate, and felt stronger social connections than their peers that did not participate. This is just one example of how sports and play can be leveraged for overall youth development. Surely, as a community, we should consider funding and using sports and play as a key preventative tool for the improvement of child welfare and youth development systems.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact us for further discussion. I can be reached via email at RSimril@la84.org or via phone at (323) 730-4613.

Sincerely,



Renata Simril
President & CEO
LA84 Foundation & Play Equity Fund

After School Sports: A “Touch Down” Investment for Principals

Afterschool sports are an under-utilized opportunity to promote whole-child development among students and make progress towards District goals and benchmarks for Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) schools. As the most popular after school activity, sports can serve as an impactful complement to the school day activities. Through a rigorous, longitudinal evaluation of the impact of after school sports at over 100 LAUSD middle schools operated by Beyond the Bell (BTB), our study found that after school sports are uniquely positioned to make a sizeable impact on the development of students, particularly in ways aligned with the LAUSD District Scorecard.

About the Program

Program Description:

- The BTB after school sports program serves middle school youth (6-8 grades) in LAUSD middle schools across the district.
- The BTB sports program offers sports activities (basketball, volleyball, soccer, flag football, and more) to youth in addition to comprehensive afterschool programming, free of charge to youth.
- Youth participate in skill development practices, league tournaments, and competitions with nearby schools.

Program Goals:

- Improve youth’s mastery of sports skills, as well as improve their physical health/nutrition, social-emotional skills, and academic success.

About the Evaluation

BTB, in collaboration with the LA84 Foundation, invested in a comprehensive three-year mixed methods evaluation conducted by the Claremont Evaluation Center (CEC) Youth Development Evaluation (YDEval) team at Claremont Graduate University.

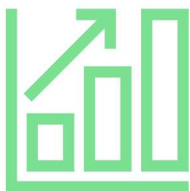



Evaluation Priorities: (1) Examine how youth benefit from afterschool sports, and (2) Identify the key program elements required to promote youth development

Evaluation Design: The study included over 10,000 youth who participated in the BTB sports program from 2016-2019. Tracking over three years, youth who participated in sports were compared to youth who did not participate in sports in three outcomes areas: physical health, social-emotional development, and academic success.



After School Sports: A “Touch Down” Investment for Principals

The results of the evaluation can support principals in their efforts to meet the LAUSD [District score card metrics](#). Key evaluation findings from our study of the LA84 Foundation and BTB sports program, organized by the District score card metrics, are highlighted below.

LAUSD Scorecard Metric	Evidence of Impact from the Evaluation		The Big Picture
High School Graduation	60%	of youth participated more in class activities, became more interested in school, and tried harder in school because of the sports program.	<i>Promoting positive attitudes towards school through sports can bolster youth motivation for school and retention in school – important predictors of high school graduation.</i>
Proficiency For All		Youth in the sports program had higher self-efficacy, growth mindset, and physical fitness , compared to non-participants.	<i>Given the importance of whole-child development, after school sports can influence proficiency in physical fitness and social-emotional domains.</i>
School Attendance		Youth in the sports program consistently attended more days of school (3.1 to 13.5 more days), compared to non-participants.	<i>Participation in after school sports motivates youth to attend the regular school day.</i>
Parent, Community, & Student Engagement	 	The BTB program engages 10,000 middle school students each year, free of charge to local families. Youth in sports felt more strongly connected to their schools than non-participants.	<i>Sports are the most popular after school activity. After school school sports is an important way to engage students, parents, and communities in opportunities they might not have elsewhere.</i>
School Safety	70%	of youth said their coach was a good listener . Athletes told us their coaches were relatable and supportive .	<i>After school sports coaches contribute to a safe school environment by providing youth with emotional and physical safety.</i>

After School Sports: A “Touch Down” Investment for Principals

What does this mean for middle school principals?

Our findings suggest there are clear and profound benefits of after school sports participation for middle school youth in their physical health, school attendance, and social-emotional development.

Consider the following questions about after school sports at your school:

- 🏀 **Access to Sports:** *Do all students have equitable access to sports opportunities? Are these opportunities free and available for all students at your school?*
- 🏀 **Role of Sports:** *How might after school sports supplement your school-day, academic offerings? How might after school sports programs offer opportunities for youth that they may not be able to access elsewhere at their school or in their community?*
- 🏀 **Promoting Youth Engagement:** *If your students do have access to sports programming, how might you support and encourage youth participation and engagement in these offerings?*

What does a high-quality sports program look like?

Providing access to sports programming is not enough. In our study, sports participants who benefitted the most from the sports program:

- 🏀 regularly attended sports practices and games
- 🏀 attended program sites with well-trained coaches who could facilitate high-quality activities
- 🏀 had supportive, engaging, and rewarding experiences in the program

For after school sports programs to facilitate these critical features of high-quality programs, they will need support from principals and other school leaders.

How can I learn more?

If you are interested in reviewing the full report or learning more about the sports program or the evaluation, check out:

LA84.org (LA84 Foundation)

BTB.lausd.net (LAUSD’s Beyond the Bell)

YDEval.com (YDEval at Claremont Evaluation Center)

Get in Touch!

Claremont Evaluation Center: tiffany.berry@cgu.edu

Beyond the Bell: carlos.x.martinez@lausd.net

LA84 Foundation: anne-marie@la84.org



From: James Lopez <James@playequityfund.org>

Sent: Tuesday, December 14, 2021 1:17 PM

To: LA County ATI <ati@lacounty.gov>

Subject: 12.16.21 CFCI Public Comment

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We welcome any further conversations and exploration to elevate sport for youth development and as a prevention tool for youth involved or at risk for entering the juvenile justice system.

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Leveling the Playing Field

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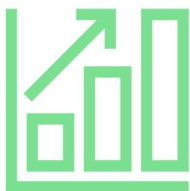



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Get in Touch!

Claremont Evaluation Center: tiffany.berry@cgu.edu

Beyond the Bell: carlos.x.martinez@lausd.net

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