

*Rugby Union Football*  
(“Rugby”)  
*As A*  
*Female Varsity Sport*

Proposal to  
Fort Worth ISD

**Submitted by**

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**On Behalf of**

Past, Current and Future  
FWISD High School Female Students

**2016**

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INTEREST STIMULATES OPPROTUNITY.  
OPPORTUNITY STIMULATES PARTICIPATION.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This proposal outlines and overwhelmingly supports the rationale for offering Rugby Union Football (“rugby”) as a varsity sport for females in the Fort Worth Independent School District (“FWISD”).

Highlights of the proposal include:

- ❖ **Interest among female students in FWISD to participate in rugby has been growing and is considerable.**
  - Since 2007, female interest and participation has continuously expanded across FWISD high schools
  - Middle school females students are participating in introductory clinics offered through the Fort Worth Afterschool Program (FWAS).
  - Rugby is now a unit within the physical education curriculum.
- ❖ Rugby is fastest growing team sport in America.
  - Females make up a growing and significant portion of USA Rugby participants. Currently, about one-third.
  - Females at the youth, high school, and collegiate levels want to participate in full-contact (tackle) sports.
  - In Texas, HS female participation in rugby has eclipsed those in football.
- ❖ 7-s-side Rugby is now an Summer Olympic
  - Both the U.S. Men’s team and the U.S. Women’s team qualified to compete in August.
- ❖ **Both the NCAA and NFHS recognize Rugby as a varsity sport for females**
  - Partial to full college scholarships are available for female rugby players
- ❖ Varsity sport status is not confined to only those endorsed by the U.I.L.
  - School districts may support any activity at the varsity level that qualifies as a sport under Title IX.
- ❖ **FWISD Athletics is not in compliance with Title IX.**
  - District does not satisfy any of the prongs in the OCR “Three-Part Test”:
    - “Substantial Proportionality in Participation”
    - “History & Continuing Expansion of Female Sports Opportunities”
    - “Accommodation of Female Athletic Interests and Abilities”
  - FWISD violates “Equitable Treatment” requirement under Title IX.
    - District has been supporting a “quasi-varsity” status for 7on7 football a non-U.I.L. activity.
    - District does not provide such support for any female sport
- ❖ Development of rugby as a female team sport within FWISD is limited by barriers that should be discouraged.
  - FWISD’s prism for athletic opportunities is patriarchal.
    - Significant female participation in outdoor sports is pushed to the winter and spring seasons.
    - Preferential treatment of football precludes the use of turf fields to develop female teams in the fall and spring.
  - Female participation in full-contact sports is dissuaded by institutional and cultural biases.
- ❖ The cost of rugby as a female varsity sport within FWISD is relatively low.
- ❖ **The inclusion of rugby could reduce the 2015-2016 district-wide gap<sup>1</sup> from 9.2%<sup>2</sup> to almost zero percent**

FWISD is urged to:

1. Support rugby as a varsity sport in schools where current interest is significant enough to support a team; and
2. Hold regular information meetings at all high school and middle schools to fully determine female athletic interests within the school district.

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<sup>1</sup> A gap in opportunities is defined as the proportion of female students to the proportion of female athletes.

<sup>2</sup> Fort Worth ISD data table for 2015-2016 on student enrollment (15 high schools) and athletic participation shows a district-wide gap of 11.4%

## INTRODUCTION

Athletics is a reflection of an institution's priorities. Meeting the athletic interests of our female students should be addressed with the same concern as encouraging females to enroll and participate in math and science courses as well as our district's STEM programs. Just as it is no longer acceptable to allow gender bias in academics, it should no longer be acceptable to continue gender bias within an educational institution's athletics program.

There is significant to considerable female interest in participating in Rugby Union Football ("rugby"), particularly if offered as a varsity sport. To date, the Fort Worth Independent School District ("FWISD") Athletics Program has yet to fully meet Title IX compliancy requirements.

The addition of rugby will bring FWISD significantly closer to meeting Title IX regulations by reducing the large district-wide gap that persists between female student enrollment and female athletic opportunities. A sport does not have to be offered through the University Scholastic League ("UIL") for a school/school district to offer it. The sport does however need to meet the "sport test" and be treated as equitably as any other varsity sport in the school district.

This paper intends to provide the superintendent, school board (trustees) and key personnel such as the athletic director and Title IX coordinator with information on:

1. Female interest and participation in the sport of Rugby Union Football ("rugby");
2. The legal basis for the inclusion of rugby as a female varsity sport within FWISD; and,
3. Areas for consideration when implementing rugby as a varsity sport within FWISD.

## Re-Growth of Rugby in America

The spread of Rugby Union Football worldwide can be largely attributed to British imperialism which is how the sport made its way to America (Sherling, 2014). The first intercollegiate rugby game was played in the United States in 1875 when Harvard University played Université de Montreal. Princeton, Yale and other Ivy League schools began to play the sport soon after.

Confusion over the rules of play established at the Rugby School in England and a lack of tradition in the United States spurred the evolution of American Football ("football") almost immediately (Richards, 2006). Rugby<sup>3</sup> gained national recognition in the 1920 and 1924 when the U.S. men's national team won gold medals in those Olympics games (Baumann, 2013). However by that time the NCAA had already emerged to regulate football in response to President Roosevelt's concern over the frighteningly high number of deaths in the early versions of football, due to a lack of formal rules as well as the use of paid "ringers" by a number of colleges (Crowley, 2006). As a result, rugby was left to develop outside the official university structure giving it anti-authoritarian appeal. With the counter-culture movement in the 1960s and 1970s the sport boomed in popularity on college campuses. This led to the eventual establishment of USA Rugby in 1975 as the sport's national governing body (Richards, 2006).

Locally, the Fort Worth Rugby Club (FWRC) was established in 1975 and has fielded an adult men's competitive team every year since. In 2000, the club won the USA Rugby Men's Club Division II National Championship and repeated an appearance to the finals the next year. As a result of FWRC's performance on the field and influential members within the club, the City of Fort Worth is one of the few municipalities in Texas to have a full-sized international rugby pitch complete with the hallmark extended goalposts as part of its athletic facilities at Gateway Park<sup>4</sup>. Over the years, FWRC has spurred the creation of six other clubs in the area including: TCU

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<sup>3</sup> By the early 1900's, 15-a-side rugby was the predominate version of the sport. This was the version played in the 1920 and 1924 Olympic games

<sup>4</sup> The Fort Worth Parks & Recreation plans to replace the artificial turf within the next few years.

Rugby (1994) and Panther City Rugby (2004, incorporated 2013) which now coordinates a competitive seasons for high school-based females and male rugby teams with it the greater Fort Worth area.

With the growing mass media coverage (i.e. NBC, ESPN, and BeIN SPORTS) of international and national rugby events the sport as seen exponential growth in participation at the youth through college levels (Kocher, 2014). Today, rugby is one of the fast growing team sports in America. From 2009 to 2014 the sport grew 100.7% with females making up a third of the new participants. (Sports & Fitness Industry Association, 2015).

With the return of rugby to the Summer Olympics in 2016, the sport is expected to see a considerable bump in subsequent participation among males and females as additional focus is given to the progress of the American rugby teams in the general media (Chadwick, Semens, Schwarz, & Zhang, 2010).

*Table 1 – Change in Youth Participation: Rugby versus Traditional HS Sports*

Participants ages 6-17			
<b>Sport</b>	<b>2009</b> (000s)	<b>2014</b> (000s)	<b>% CHANGE</b>
Baseball	7,012	6,711	-4.3%
Basketball	10,404	9,694	-6.8%
Football, tackle	3,962	3,254	-17.9%
<b>Rugby</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>100.7%</b>
Soccer, outdoor	8,360	7,656	-8.4%
Softball, fast-pitch	988	988	1.6%
Track and field	2,697	2,417	-10.4%
Volleyball, court	3,420	2,680	-21.6%
<b>Wrestling</b>	<b>1,385</b>	<b>805</b>	<b>-41.9%</b>
Source: 2015 SFIA U.S. Trends in Team Sports Report			

Another indicator of rugby's projected growth in America is the establishment of the Professional Rugby Organization (PRO Rugby) in 2015 to bring professional rugby to North America in cooperation with USA Rugby and Rugby Canada. The 2016 inaugural season started with six teams in major cities in the Northeast, Rocky Mountains and California. The league has plans to expand to include teams in Canada and other U.S. metropolitan areas (USA Rugby, 2015). As international business hubs that have continually drawn employees and families from other countries and regions in the United States where rugby is popular, the Austin, Houston and Dallas/Fort Worth areas are already strong regional consumer markets for rugby. These Texas cities are already favored sites for USA Rugby to host international rugby events. Since January, 2016, organizational and facility structures have started to formalize to bring professional rugby to these metropolitan areas as well.

### **Female Opportunities in Rugby and American Sports**

As a full-contact, continuous play sport, rugby demands a high level of strength, speed, endurance, and agility to change both body direction and level, as well as aggression. Unfortunately cultural bias and societal reinforcement that the aforementioned qualities are masculine, not feminine, has perpetuated the dominance of males in rugby and other contact sports (Paloian, 2012). Today females continue to have limited opportunities to participate in full-contact sports – particularly tackle sports.

The contemporary culture of rugby embraces female participation in the sport. Since the early 2000s, both the international and national governing bodies for rugby (World Rugby and USA Rugby) have proactively expanded opportunities for females to participate as players, referees and other official roles within the sport at all levels of competition: youth through adult; amateur through professional. Rugby has now become one of the fastest-growing team sports with females composing over a third of USA Rugby's membership.

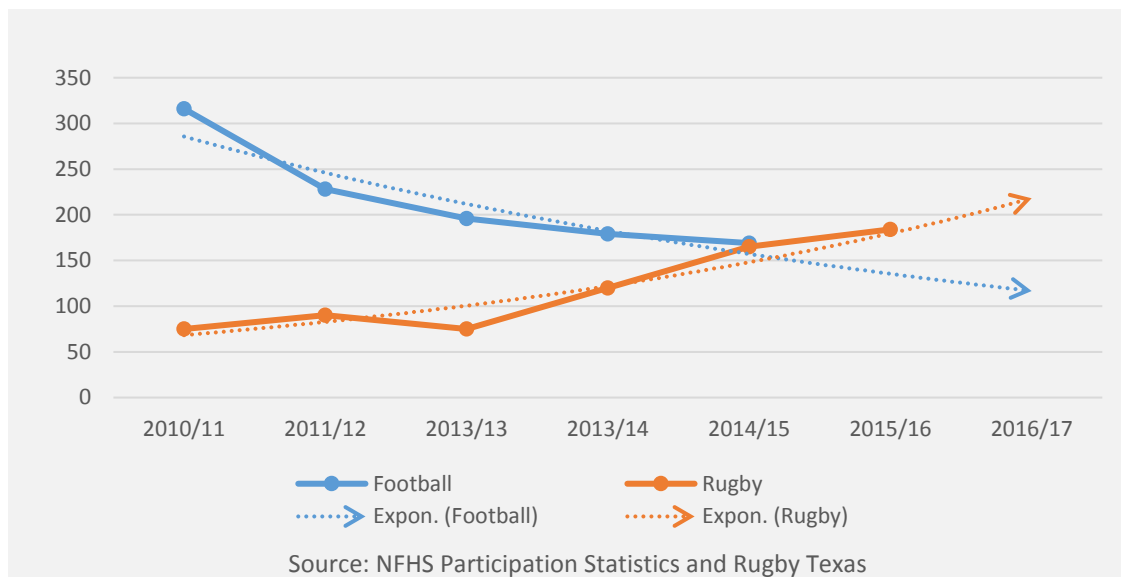
Females, like males, are drawn to the physicality of the game. "As a full contact sport, rugby offers unique participation opportunities for women that have been reshaping the image of the female athlete since the 1970s" (Sherling, 2014, p. 6). The sport brings together athletes of varying body sizes and strength that often oppose traditional notions of feminine physicality (Baumann, 2013). It also provides "... an outlet for behaviors that are not seen as conventionally female ..." (Sherling, 2014, p. 6).

Women began playing rugby competitively in America in the 1970s. Since then, well over 340 women's club teams have developed across the country among NCAA Division I, II and III as well as NAIA schools (Sherling,

2014). Roughly 345 high school-aged female teams are registered with USA Rugby. And a growing number of leagues are separately run through municipal, YMCA, and Boys & Girls Club programs throughout Texas and the nation. It is estimated that the number of pre-teen females playing rugby is estimated to be 40 times higher than those at the high school level (USA Rugby, n.d.). As these pre-teens continue their participation, high schools will have to broaden or alter their varsity offerings to meet changing expectations.

In Texas, 184 HS-aged females were registered during the 2015/2016 academic year to participate in competitions governed by Rugby Texas, the state-based affiliate of USA Rugby (Madonna, 2016)<sup>5</sup>. This is a 530% increase since the 2010/2011 academic year (Marshall, 2016). This has eclipsed the number of females participating in high school football in the fall of 2014. Despite a well-established 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment right to participate, female participation on high school 11-man football teams in Texas dropped 47% between 2010 and 2014 (316 down to 169). And, no females reportedly participated in 6-man football during this time period (National Federation of High School Associations, n.d.). While the cause for the progressive drop in football participation among HS females is unknown, it would be fair to say that *a considerable number of females want to play a full-contact (tackle) sport – just not against males*.

Figure 1 – Female Participation in Football v Rugby (Texas)



In 2002 the NCAA recognized rugby as an emerging women’s sport with the intent, “... to provide additional athletics opportunities to female student-athletes” (NCAA Committee on Women’s Athletics). This recognition, along with Title IX compliance concerns, has incentivized a number of universities to add rugby as a women’s varsity sport (Sherling, 2014). The National Federation of State High School Associations as well as three state high school athletic associations also recognize rugby as female varsity sport (Weaver, 2016).

**“The National Federation of State High School Associations applauds ... efforts to provide ... another opportunity for girls to participate in high school sports by offering the sport of rugby”,** Robert F. Kanaby, Executive Director (Young, 2008).

More recently, a conversation has begun within the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) to recognize rugby as an emerging female varsity sport (USA Rugby, 2016, email correspondence).

<sup>5</sup> The number of high school females participating in organized rugby is actually at least 30% higher when high school females from FWISD and Pharr-San Juan-Alamo ISD are factored in.

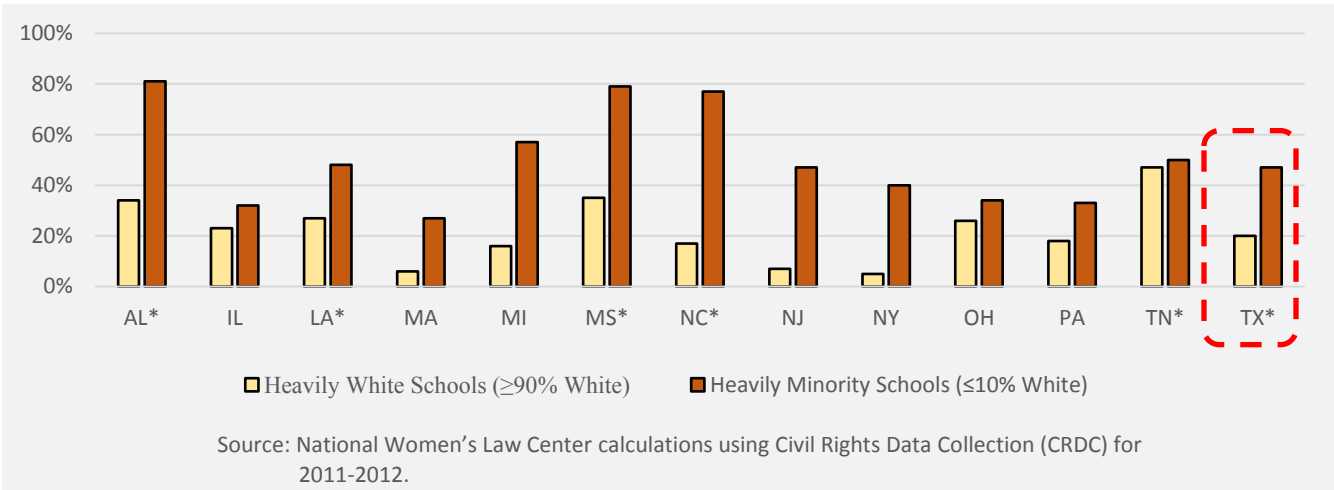
Diminished Athletic Opportunities for Females of Color

Despite the passage of Title IX in 1972, schools have been slow to embrace and achieve the same equality for females in athletics as in the classroom. Female enrollment in previously male dominated academic areas such as math and science steadily increased once the opportunity and encouragement was provided. With less barriers to their education females now graduate from college in higher numbers (Lopez & Gonzales-Barrera, 2014) and are pursuing advance degrees more often than their male counterparts (Associated Press, 2011).

Though females have gained an increased opportunity in athletics there is bias towards non- or low-contact sports. Further, those at the top of the income distribution disproportionately reap more opportunities in sports; particularly in non-traditional sports like lacrosse, field hockey, and rugby among others. Participation in sports is seen more frequent “... among those with a privileged background: white students with married, wealthy, educated parents” (Stevenson, 2007). “Less than two-thirds of African-American and Hispanic girls play sports, while more than three quarters of Caucasian girls do” (National Women's Law Center, 2012, p. 1). Further, three-quarters of boys from immigrant families, while less than half of girls, from immigrant families are involved in athletics (Sabo & Veliz, 2008).

In a 2015 co-report by the National Women’s Law Center and the Poverty & Race Research Action Council, researchers found “40 percent of heavily minority high schools, compared to 16 percent of heavily white schools, have large gaps<sup>6</sup> between the percentage of spots on teams for girls and the percentage of students who are girls” (p. 2). And, based on Department of Education Civil Rights Data Collection for the 2011-2012 school year, **Texas is among the ten worst states for providing equitable interscholastic athletic opportunities for females overall** (Morrison, Chaudry, & Gallagher-Robbins, 2015). Nearly half of all Texas high schools that are predominately minority have gaps of ten percent or more.

Figure 2 – % of High Schools with Large Female Opportunity Gaps in Sports, by Racial Composition of School, in 13 States Examined



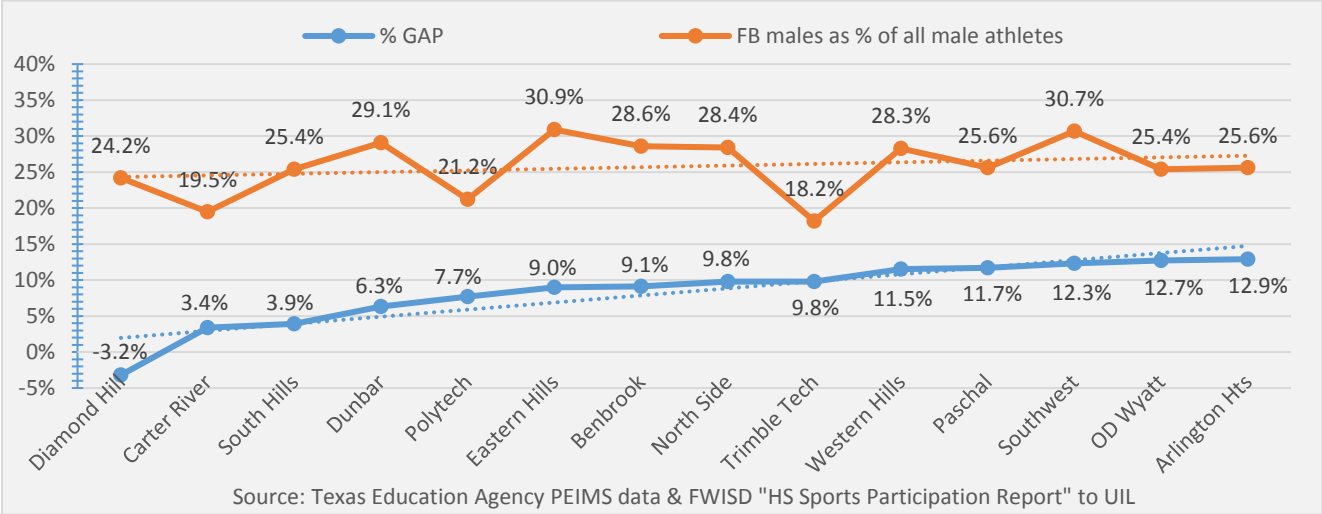
Given the large disparity in opportunities for females to participate in sports, particularly full-contact sports, the slow addition of “non-traditional” sports like rugby as a girls’ varsity athletic offering sends a negative message to females. And, according to a 2012 study by the Sport, Health and Activity Research and Policy Center for Women and Girls (SHARP), “... progress toward gender equity slowed and, perhaps, even reversed direction during the 2000s” (Wadley & Pchola, 2012).

**FWISD is one of the Texas secondary educational institutions with a minority-majority population where its high schools are providing considerably inequitable athletic opportunities for its females students.** Only Benbrook HS has a non-white student population under 50%.

<sup>6</sup> Large gender gap was ten percent (10%) or higher for the study.



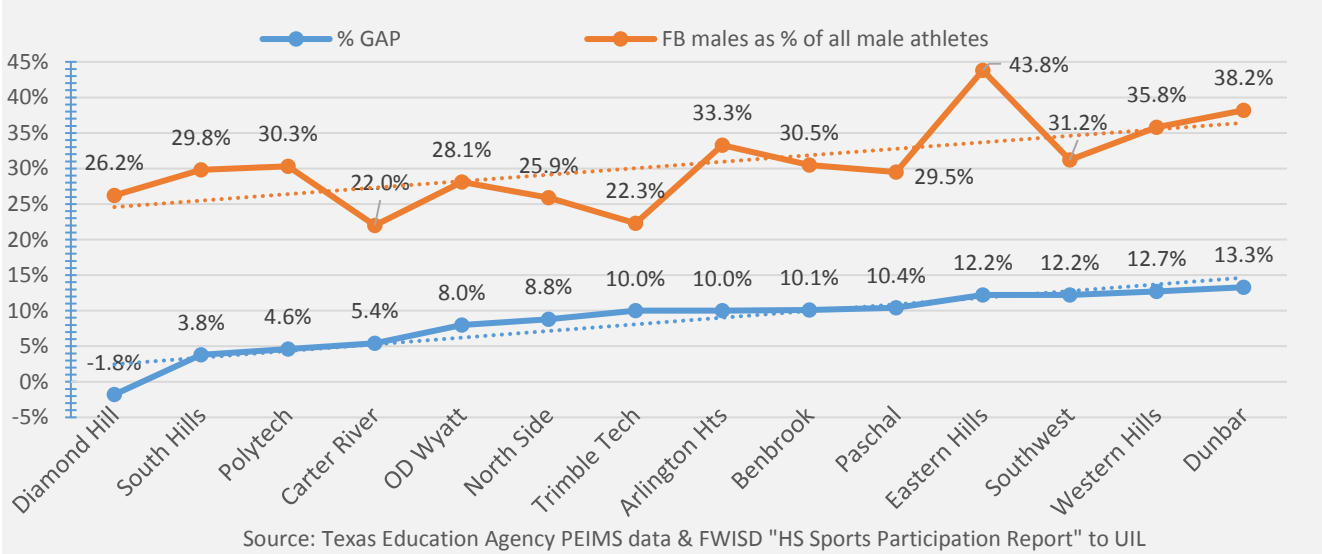
Figure 3 – Gap in Female Athletic Opportunities by FWISD HS, 2014-2015



Based on student enrollment data collected from the Texas Education Agency and FWISD “High School Sports Participation Report” submitted to the U.I.L., **the 2014-2015 academic year, five of FWISD’s 16 high schools that offer athletics had gaps over 10%.** Six other schools were barely under 10%. Only three schools meet either the OCR or a court indicated acceptable range. Two of them were the leadership academies which are single-gender schools.

Besides ethnicity, large gaps (9% or higher) in female athletic opportunities were also associated with schools where male football participation is 25% or more of the overall male athletic participants. This occurred at eight of the 15 or 53.3% of FWISD high schools with athletics in 2014-2015. The association occurs at 61.5% of the schools when the single gender leadership academies are removed.

Figure 4 – Gap in Female Athletic Opportunities by FWISD HS, 2015-2016



**For the past academic year (2015-2016), the number of FWISD’s high schools with gaps over 10% increased to eight out of the 16 that offer athletics.** Two others were barely under 10%. Only one that wasn’t a single-gender school meet either the OCR or a court indicated acceptable range. Further, as a trend, gaps in female athletic opportunities increased along with increased male football participation as a percentage of all male athletes on campus. As male football participation in 2015-2016 rose over the prior year so did the opportunity gap for females.

The offering of large capacity female sports (i.e. rugby, field hockey, lacrosse, etc.) would close the gap in opportunities at most schools. However, with a fall competitive season, these sports seem to be avoided within Texas public schools generally to avoid football having to share facilities.

**Fort Worth ISD has the opportunity to be proactive in creating diverse competitive opportunities for females, by supporting their interest to play full-contact (tackle) sports, like rugby, as a varsity.**

### Rugby in Fort Worth ISD

Female interest and participation in Rugby Union Football (“rugby”) within FWISD high schools is on the rise. Significant female interest was initially demonstrated in the fall of 2007 when Mr. Cole, former Head Coach for the TCU Rugby Club, and Alex McCulloch, administrator for Panther City Rugby, introduced rugby through the Fort Worth Afterschool Program (FWAS) at Trimble Tech HS and Paschal HS. During that initial fall season and again during the next fall more than 40 females from Trimble Technical High School and 30 females from Paschal High School created multiple teams to compete against each other, playing what is now the Olympic version of the sport (7-a-side rugby, also known as 7s rugby).

Unfortunately, during subsequent seasons **female rugby teams have commonly been denied use of athletic fields by coaches and administration at a number of high schools**. This has included use of space during a sports off-season: such as softball and/or baseball outfields during the fall and the football field in the spring.

Explanations given have included not wanting to ruin the grass despite the softball/baseball fields being rented out to community youth sports teams. At one school preference had been continually given to the freshman football team to use the softball outfield because the assistant football/head baseball coach wanted to save the grass on the boys’ baseball outfield.

Despite continued struggles for field accessibility and limited administrative support at some campuses, female interest has continued to spread and teams have developed at a number of FWISD schools. As the FWAS Program went away at the high school level, student-clubs formed on the campuses and the Panther City Scholastic Rugby Conference was formed in 2013. The conference operated by Panther City Rugby, Inc., a 501(c)3 organization, provides general liability insurance and athletic injury insurance to cover the schools and participants. It also coordinates coaches for the school clubs as well as referees and medical personnel for competitions.

Unfortunately, female student participation – not interest – in rugby as an activity remains a challenge. Females have expressed the following as barriers:

1. A spring season causes conflict with the winter/spring varsity sports in which most females participate;
2. difficulty staying late to practice on the fields after varsity football and soccer use;
3. lack of transportation to competitions;
4. financial costs associated with securing uniforms, equipment, insurance and referees; and/or
5. cultural and familial bias that the rugby isn’t for girls.

*Table 2 – Rugby Milestones in FWISD*

2007-08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ FWAS: Rugby introduced to females at Trimble Tech HS &amp; Paschal HS</li> <li>▪ 4 Saturday tournaments played</li> </ul>
2008-09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ FWISD females selected to Rugby Texas All-Star team</li> </ul>
2009-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ FWAS: Rugby at South Hills HS</li> </ul>
2011-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ FWAS: Rugby at Arlington Hts HS</li> </ul>
2012-13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ FWAS: Rugby at YWLA</li> <li>▪ FWAS: Rugby introduced to elementary schools</li> </ul>
2013-14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student rugby clubs created</li> <li>▪ Panther City Scholastic Rugby Conference formed</li> </ul>
2015-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Rugby included as HS PE Unit</li> <li>▪ FWAS: Rugby introduced to middle schools</li> <li>▪ Female interest in rugby expressed at 10 high schools</li> </ul>

Regardless of the hurdles to participate, to date **considerable female interest in rugby has been expressed at 10 out of the 16 FWISD high schools with varsity athletics**. If offered as a fall varsity sport, there is little doubt that girls' rugby would flourish at these schools and expand to offers.

It is important to consider that male high participatory sports are not generally offered in the same season so why should similarly female high participatory sports. Football athletes are not faced with having to decide between participation in football and another high participatory varsity sport such as baseball, basketball, soccer or track & field. Female-athletes shouldn't have to either.

*Table 3 – Female Interest in rugby on FWISD HS Campuses w/ Varsity Sports, as of Spring 2016*

<u>Expressed</u> Female Interest	<u>Probable</u> Female Interest
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Arlington Heights**</b></li> <li>2. <b>Benbrook</b></li> <li>3. <b>Carter-Riverside</b></li> <li>4. <b>Dunbar</b></li> <li>5. <b>Northside</b></li> <li>6. <b>Paschal**</b></li> <li>7. <b>South Hills**</b></li> <li>8. <b>Southwest**</b></li> <li>9. <b>Trimble Tech**</b></li> <li>10. <b>Young Women's Leadership Academy**</b></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. Diamond Hill – Jarvis</li> <li>12. Eastern Hills</li> <li>13. Polytechnic</li> <li>14. Western Hills</li> <li>15. Wyatt</li> </ol>
	<p><u>Male Only School</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16. Young Men's Leadership Academy</li> </ol>
<p>** Campuses were school-teams have developed to compete in FWAS Program and/or Panther City Scholastic Rugby Conference</p>	

### Safer Rules of Play

In the era of high concern over head/brain trauma in sport, Rugby Union Football (Rugby) has lead the way among full-contact (tackle) sports in continuously implementing rules (known as "laws" in rugby) to make the sport safer to play. Despite the lack of protective gear and what may look like mayhem to the novice observer, compared to football, hockey or lacrosse, rugby has become a significantly safer sport at all levels of competition. Particular emphasis has been placed on the rules of contact. When tackling, all contact must be below the shoulder and the tackler is expected to stay in contact with the tackled player all the way to the ground. This requirement significantly reduces the injuries caused by players simply running cross field and "ramming" an opponent as often occurs in the aforementioned full-contact sports. And, unlike football, players are not allowed to "pile drive" (lift and lower head first) a player when tackling nor may a tackler make contact with player whose feet are not on the ground. Similarly, a player may not leave their feet to dive or launch themselves into contact with another player for any contact maneuver (scrum, ruck, maul and tackle). Furthermore, the referee has the option and obligation to penalize any player for performing any contact maneuver that appears to disregard the safety of the opponent or themselves. Respect is a core value of rugby and this includes the safety of your opponent.

Over the last five years, an increasing number of football coaches from the NFL, top tier NCAA Division I and II football programs and even high schools are implementing rugby style tackling which emphasizes a "heads out" as well as a "heads up" technique. This is important to note because within the last few years the NFL has distanced itself from USA Football's "heads up" tackle technique it initially backed for implementation at the youth and levels because it has not significantly reduced the incidence of concussion (ESPN, 2014). Further, new research published in the Journal of Athletic Training suggests even two-weeks of helmetless tackling drills during preseason football, based on rugby style tacking, is effective in reducing concussive head impacts by nearly one-third (Swartz, et al., 2015).

While the risk of injury, including concussion, is always possible, the incidence of major injuries has been significantly reduced in rugby. And, when it comes to injury protocols, the International Rugby Board was one of the first sports organizations to embrace the international guidelines on concussion – along with Fédération Internationale de Football Association (soccer), International Ice Hockey Federation, International Olympic Committee and Fédération Equestre Internationale (equestrian).

**Given the nine year history and expansion of female interest within FWISD to play rugby, the time has come for females to have the opportunity to play in a full-contact (tackle) sport fully supported by the school district.**

## **TITLE IX REGULATIONS & COMPLIANCE**

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 was signed into law on June 23, 1972. It is a comprehensive federal law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any federally funded education program or activity (United States Department of Justice, 2015).

“No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance” (34 CFR § 106).

As applied to athletics, Title IX regulations state,

“No person shall on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, be treated differently from another person, or otherwise be discriminated against in any interscholastic, intercollegiate, club or intramural athletics offered by a recipient, and no recipient shall provide such athletics separately on such basis” (45 CFR § 2555.450(a)).

In 1979, the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights (OCR) issued its *Final Policy Interpretation of Title IX* which set forth specific guiding factors for determining *actual* rather than *presumed* compliance with Title IX” (Texas Civil Rights Project, 2007). “Although intended specifically for intercollegiate athletics, the Policy Interpretation explicitly asserts that ‘its general principles will often apply to . . . interscholastic athletic programs which are also covered by regulation,’ and may be used for guidance by the leadership of these programs” (Powell, 2004, p. 5). Since issuing its “Final Policy Interpretation” the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) has subsequently published a number documents – known as a “Dear Colleague Letter” – to further clarify how it determines if an educational institution is in compliance with the law.

“Title IX measures equity in athletics in three distinct areas: (1) participation; (2) scholarships; and (3) other benefits ...” (Judge & O'Brien, 2011, p. 13). The first and third areas are the focus of this paper, as scholarships are not generally provided in the interscholastic setting.

## **The Sport Test – Rugby is a sport under Title IX**

To ascertain compliance, “... it is necessary to first determine whether a program or activity meets the Title IX definition of a sport, and, if so, how to count team members as participants for purposes of Title IX” (Judge & O'Brien, 2011, p. 13). “The **sport test** is designed to determine whether programs or activities outside those sponsored by the [athletic association in which the institution belongs (i.e. UIL)] also qualify for inclusion when determining equity” (Judge & O'Brien, 2011, p. 13).

In its *2008 Dear Colleague Letter: Athletic Activities Counted for Title IX Compliance* issued by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) of the United States Department of Education, the OCR will consider the following factors when determining whether it will consider a program a “sport” for Title IX purposes:

- Whether selection for the team is based upon objective factors related primarily to athletic ability;
- Whether the activity is limited to a defined season;

- Whether the team prepares for and engages in competition in the same way as other teams in the athletics program with respect to coaching, recruitment, budget, tryouts and eligibility, length and number of practice sessions and competitive opportunities;
- Whether the activity is administered by the athletics department; and
- Whether the primary purpose of the activity is athletic competition or the support or promotion of other athletes or athletic teams.

The OCR has stated that it also may consider whether organizations knowledgeable about the activity agree that it should be recognized as a sport. “The NCAA has sought to make the analysis easier in certain women’s sports, including equestrian, Rugby, squash and sand volleyball, by designating them as emerging sports for women, recognized by the NCAA and also by the OCR” (Judge & O'Brien, 2011, p. 13). Similarly, the National Federation of State High School Associations recognizes Rugby as a varsity sport.

Simply designating a sport as a competitive team is not enough for schools seeking to include it under their Title IX participation numbers. Schools must also support the team in an equitable fashion (Judge & O'Brien, 2011).

### **Determination of a Participant under Title IX**

After determining which activities and teams may be included under Title IX, a school must determine the number of male and female athletic participants. The 1979 *Final Policy Interpretation of Title IX* and the 1996 *Clarification of Intercollegiate Athletics Policy Guidance: The Three-Part Test* issued by the OCR defines a participant as one:

1. Who receives the institutionally sponsored support normally provided to athletes competing at the institution (i.e. coaching, equipment, medical and training room services) on a regular basis during a sport’s season; and
2. Who participates in organized practice sessions and other team meetings and activities on a regular basis during a sport’s season; and
3. Who is listed on the eligibility or squad lists maintained for each sport; or
4. Who, because of injury, cannot meet 1, 2 or 3 above but continues to receive financial aid on the basis of athletics ability. (Judge & O'Brien, 2011, p. 15).

It is important to remember that **every time a student-athlete occupies a spot on a scholastic team, he or she is to be counted as a participant**. Accordingly, **multisport athletes count more than once**. A student-athlete who runs on the cross country and track & field teams, for example, would count as a participant two separate times (Judge & O'Brien, 2011, p. 16). This caveat can be a blessing for schools that offer significant athletic opportunities across all three sports seasons (fall, winter, and spring) that appeal to large core constituent of female athletes.

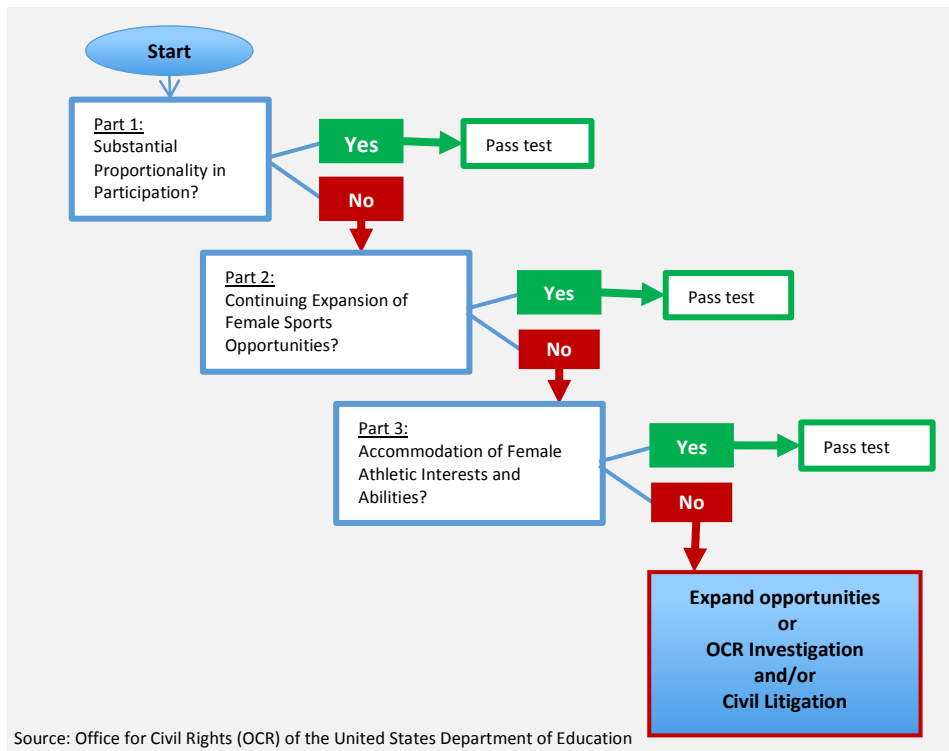
### **Full and Effective Accommodation of Athletic Interests and Abilities**

An institution’s athletics program will be determined to offer nondiscriminatory participation opportunities if it can demonstrate it effectively satisfies one of the prongs in the Three Part Test established by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) of the United States Department of Education.

“If a school does not satisfy the ‘substantial proportionality’ prong, it would still satisfy the three-prong test if it maintains a history and continuing practice of program expansion for the under-represented sex, or if the interests and abilities of the members of (the underrepresented) sex have been fully and effectively accommodated by the present program. Each of the three prongs is thus a valid, alternative way for schools to comply with Title IX.”

Gerald Reynolds, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (2003)

Figure 5 – OCR Three Part Test



### The Three Part Test

Since 1979, the OCR has published a sequence of “Dear Colleague Letters” to clarify the agency’s use of the Three Part Test (Sherling, 2014).

#### Part One: Substantial Proportionality in Participation

To meet the first prong of the Three Part Test, the ratio of female athletic participation must be “substantially proportional to the ratio of female enrollment in the institution. While there is no set gap that constitutes a violation of Title IX, case law suggests **gaps of 10 percentage points or more will be considered indicative that schools are likely not complying with the law**” (Morrison, Chaudry, & Gallagher-Robbins, 2015). In the 1993 Title IX case “Roberts v Colorado State University” the district court suggested that **1.7% is acceptable as substantially proportional** (Gray, 1996, p. 180). In settlement agreements, ranging back to the 1990’s, federal courts have approved participation variances **up to 5 percent** (Judge & O'Brien, 2011).

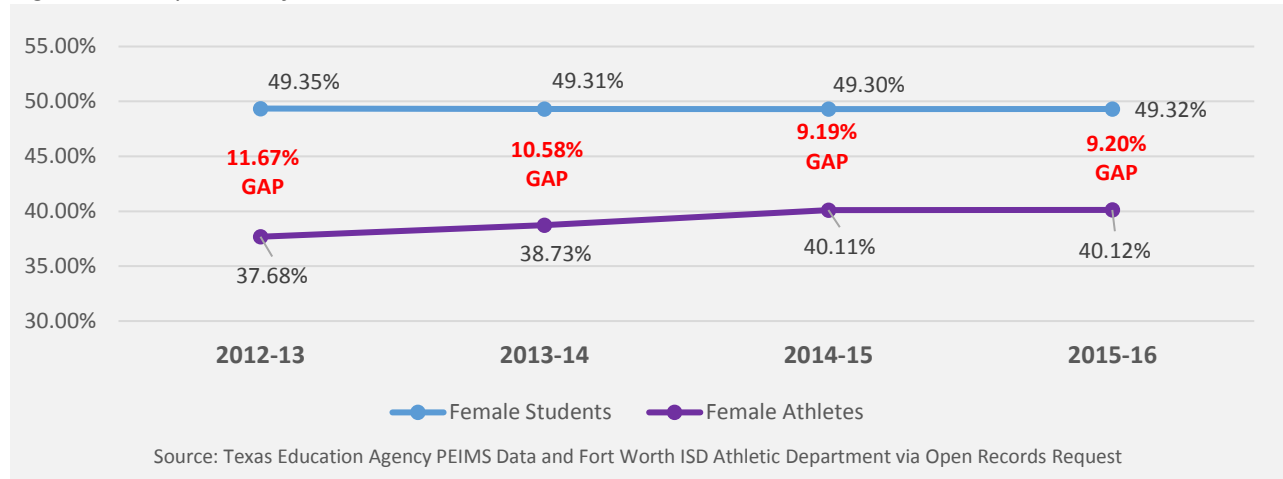
**“The OCR, through its 1996 Clarification, has taken a more conservative approach.** It cites the following examples of substantial proportionality: (1) **exact proportionality**; (2) a disparity of 1 percent caused by an increase in the current year’s enrollment after a year of exact proportionality; and (3) an institution’s pursuit of proportionality over a five-year period and in the final year – when proportionality would otherwise have been reached – enrollment of the underrepresented sex increased so that there was a two percent disparity. While these examples are illustrative only, they suggest a more exacting standard than that set forth by the courts. At least one regional office stated informally that **anything greater than one percent would raise red flags**” (Judge & O'Brien, 2011, p. 17).

It is worth noting that for a relatively small athletic program “... where there exists a disparity that translates into a number less than that required to field a viable team (in other words not enough who have both the interest and the ability), the law provides that the program is in compliance and that an additional team need not to be added” (Judge & O'Brien, 2011, p. 17). However, this is not an issue for the vast majority of educational institutions.

### **Fort Worth ISD does not meet the “substantial proportionality” prong of the Three Part Test.**

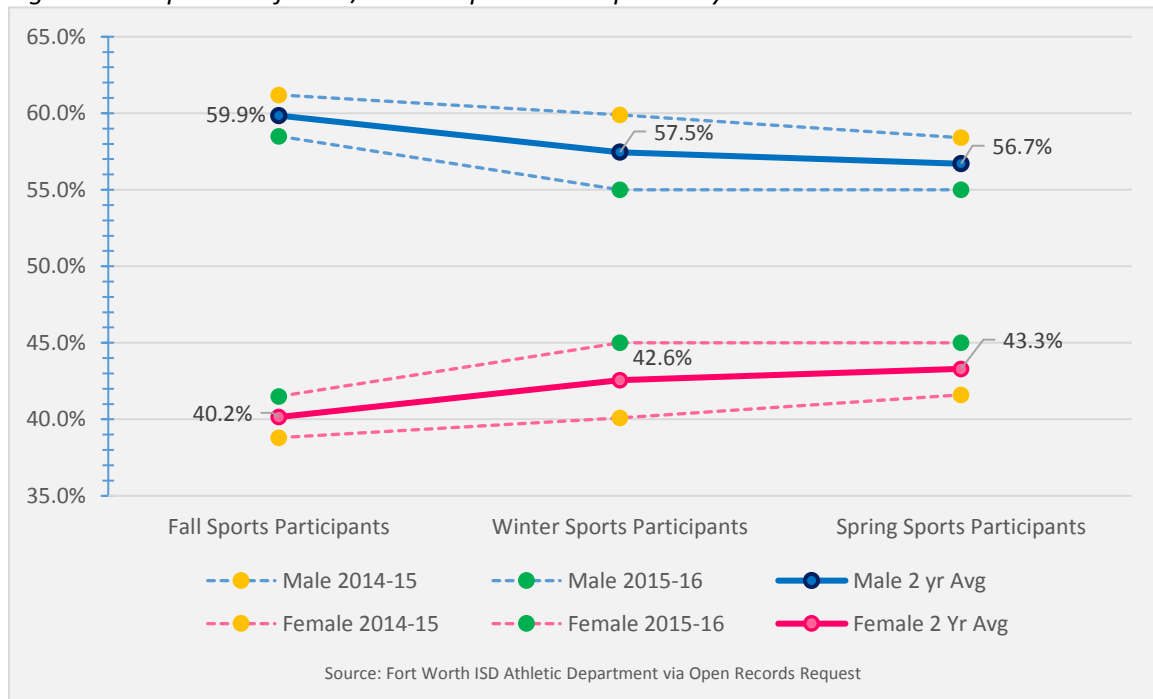
The gap between high school female students enrolled in Fort Worth ISD and those participating in scholastic (UIL) athletics continues to be considerable. While the past two years have slightly dropped below 10%, they are still well above the one-percent threshold indicated by the OCR as a “red flag”.

*Figure 6 – Proportion of FWISD Female HS Students & Athletes District-wide, Past 4 Years*



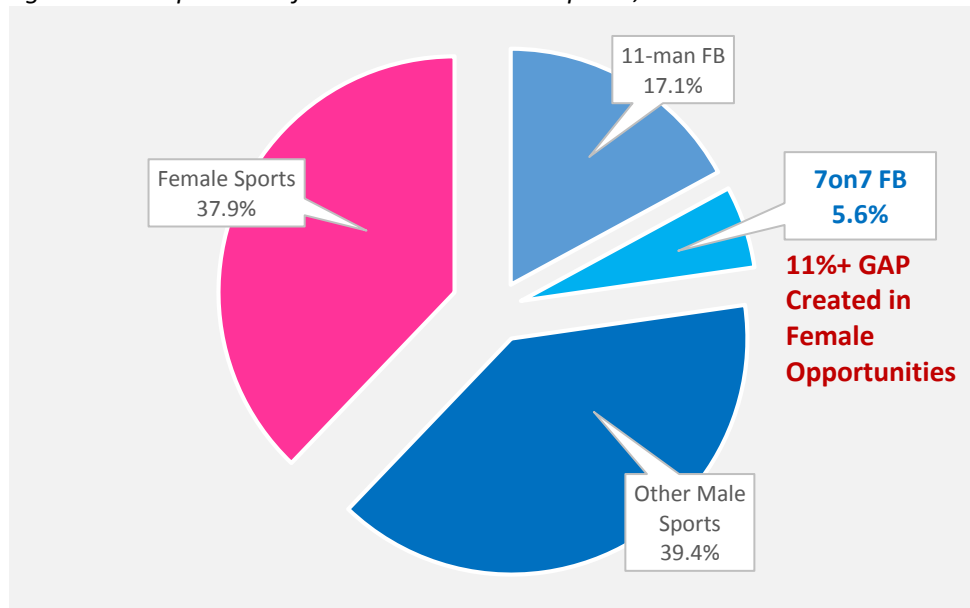
When the proportion of male and female athletes is examined by sports season for the past two years, female athletic opportunities are stacked towards the winter/spring season.

*Figure 7 - Proportion of Male/Female Sports Participation by Season*



Though not reflected in the numbers reported to the UIL, in reality the gap in female athletic opportunities continues to be greater than 10% through Fort Worth ISD’s unique support and preferential treatment of 7-on-7 football (a non-UIL activity) as a quasi-varsity male sport. See “Equitable Treatment” discussed later in this document. Since the FWISD Athletic Department does not monitor participation numbers (Talley, 2016), it is estimated that at least one-third of the total male football athletes participate in 7on7 football during the late-spring and summer months.

Figure 8 - Composition of FWISD Athletic Participants, 2015-2016



### Part Two: History and Continuing Expansion of Female Sports Opportunities

If the first prong of the “Three Part Test” is not met, schools can demonstrate compliance by meeting the “Second Prong” of the test.

“This prong asks whether an institution has a history and continuing practice of **program expansion that is “demonstrably responsive” to the developing interests and abilities of the under-represented sex**. Institutions seeking to comply with this test must document net program expansion for the under-represented sex. The department’s athletics history should detail when teams were added or discontinued, the institutional reasons for doing so and the effect the respective additions and/or deletions had on the overall athletics participation numbers for men and women. Many institutions do not have this information readily available and therefore cannot know whether they comply with this test” (Judge & O'Brien, 2011, p. 17).

When assessing an institution’s “history” and “continuing practice” of expansion, the OCR will focus upon the following factors:

#### History

- Record of adding interscholastic teams by sex
- Record of upgrading teams to interscholastic status by sex
- Record of increasing the number of participants of the under-represented sex
- Affirmative responses to requests by students or others to add or elevate sports

#### Continuing Practice

- Current implementation of a policy or procedure for requesting the addition of sports that includes the elevation of club or intramural teams
- Effective communication of that policy or procedure to students
- Current implementation of a plan or program expansion that is responsive to developing interests and abilities of the under-represented sex
- Demonstrated efforts to monitor developing interests and abilities as well as a timely reaction to the results of those efforts (Judge & O'Brien, 2011, p. 18)

### **Fort Worth ISD does not meet the second prong of the Three Part Test.**

Since the Fort Worth ISD Athletics Department only includes UIL sports, a new female sport has not been added to the District since at 2000. However, one or more schools may have added a particular sport in a later year. **In**



**2015-2016 there was an overall decrease of 1.7% female sports teams from the prior year.** A girls' cross-country team was added but two girls' tennis (singles/doubles) and a golf team were lost district-wide.

As illustrated in the following table, the FWISD supports female sports where interest is not universal across all schools. This strengthens the position that not all FWISD have to support rugby for its inclusion as a varsity sport. In 2015-2016, barely more than a third of possible schools to support a team in swimming, tennis, and wrestling. And, golf is only supported at half the schools. Principals at Paschal High School, Polytechnic High School, South Hills High School, and Trimble Technical High School have been supportive of having rugby become a girls' varsity sport. Unfortunately, this support is not shared within FWISD Athletics' central offices.

Table 4 – UIL Sports Implementation Timeline with # of FWISD High Schools with the Sport

UIL Sports			FWISD Sports			
First Year in UIL	Sport – Gender	Season Played	# of HS w/ Sport *			Minimum # Required on Roster
			2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	
1914	Tennis, Singles/Doubles – Boys	Spring	0	12	10	1 (7+ desired)
1920	Tennis, Singles/Doubles – Girls	Spring	0	12	10	1 (7+ desired)
1920-21	Basketball – Boys	Winter	13	15	15	5
1950-51	Basketball – Girls	Winter	14	15	15	5
1983-84	Baseball (Boys, may include girls)	Spring	13	14	14	9
1983-84	Football (Boys, may include girls)	Fall	13	15 ^	15 ^	11 (25+ desired)
1983-84	Golf – Boys	Spring	11	12	12	1 (5+ desired)
1983-84	<b>Golf – Girls</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1 (5+ desired)</b>
1983-84	Soccer – Boys	Winter	13	15	15	11 (25 desired)
1983-84	Soccer – Girls	Winter	13	14	14	11 (25 desired)
1983-84	Swimming & Diving – Boys	Winter	6	5	5	1 (5+ desired)
1983-84	<b>Swimming &amp; Diving – Girls</b>	<b>Winter</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1 (5+ desired)</b>
1983-84	Volleyball (Girls)	Fall	14	15	15	6 (9+ desired)
1983-84	Tennis, Team – Boys	Fall	5	6	6	7 (UIL)
1983-84	<b>Tennis, Team – Girls</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7 (UIL)</b>
1984-85	Track & Field – Boys	Spring	13	15	15	1 (15+ desired)
1984-85	Track & Field – Girls	Spring	13	15	15	1 (15+ desired)
1991-92	Softball (Girls)	Spring	13	14	14	9 (12+ desired)
1998-99	Wrestling – Boys	Winter	6	7	7	1 (5+ desired)
1998-99	<b>Wrestling – Girls</b>	<b>Winter</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1 (5+ desired)</b>
2000-01	Cross Country – Boys	Fall	13	13	14	1 (5+ desired)
2000-01	Cross Country – Girls	Fall	13	13	14	1 (5+ desired)

Note \* There were only 14 high schools in 2013-14. There are 16 schools in 2014-15 & 2015-16. Two are single gender so 15 is the maximum number of schools with a particular sport

^ For 2014-15, two schools each had a female on their respective JV FB teams. For 2015-16, one school had a female on its V FB team

Source: (1) University Interscholastic League (UIL) Athletic Archives  
Retrieved February 16, 2016, <http://www2.uil texas.org/athletics/archives/>  
(2) FWISD HS Var & Sub V Participation Report to UIL for 2013-2014, 2014-2015 & 2015-2016  
(3) Survey of varsity coaches

### Part Three: Accommodation of Female Athletic Interests and Abilities

“Under this prong, schools that cannot show substantial proportionality or a history and continuing practice of expansion may still be in compliance with the law if they can demonstrate that they are fully and effectively accommodating the athletics interests and abilities of the under-represented sex” (Judge & O'Brien, 2011, p. 20). This has become difficult to demonstrate as courts have not been persuaded by arguments that aspiring teams failed to knock on the proper doors to request interscholastic athletic opportunities (Judge & O'Brien, 2011) and in 2010 the OCR rescinded its allowance of surveys as the primary determinant of interest. As Betsy Stevenson states in her article *Title IX and The Evolution of High School Sports*, “**Asking girls their interest in**

sports in a world in which few play is unlikely to capture what their level of interest will be once sports are offered and other girls in their school have begun participating” (2007, p. 9).

Three questions are asked and answered when exploring whether a school is meeting the interests and abilities of the underrepresented sex in sports participation:

1. Is there unmet interest?
2. Is there sufficient ability to sustain a team in the sport?
3. Is there a reasonable expectation of competition for the team?

A school would not be in compliance related to participation opportunities under the third-prong test if the answer to all of these questions is “Yes” (Judge & O'Brien, 2011, p. 20).

### **Fort Worth ISD cannot demonstrate it meets the requirements of the third prong of the Three Part Test.**

Within Fort Worth ISD the answer to all three questions is YES, particularly in the case of Rugby.

#### *Unmet Interest*

**There is sufficient female interest at a majority of FWISD high schools with female athletics (10 of 15) to support traditional 15-a-side version Rugby as a fall sports as well as its Olympic (7s) version as a spring sport.** FWISD already supports tennis as a dual season sport and intentionally or not football, through the district’s and each school’s unique treatment of 7on7 football.

Nine years of “After School Program” activities and student club interest meetings at various schools within the District supports the premise that females want to play Rugby. If official meetings were held and publicized that rugby was being considered for inclusion as a varsity sport many more females would show interest in participating.

**Female students want the opportunity compete in a physically-aggressive, full-contact sport with and against their female peers where they can tackle each other as well as demonstrate their prowess to run, pass and kick the ball.** The sport of Rugby provides a competitive structure were the women can develop and demonstrate athleticism equal to their male counterparts.

#### *Ability to Sustain a Team*

In 2015-2016, 13 of 15 high schools with female athletics had enough female students to support both varsity and junior-varsity teams based on each school’s gap in opportunities. When the fall sports season is considered, **all 15 schools have 50 or more female students to sustain two teams** (see figure 7). In fall of 2007 and 2008, females at Paschal HS, Trimble Technical HS, and South Hills HS illustrated the potential to sustain fall Rugby teams when the opportunity is provided.

#### *Reasonable Expectation of Competition*

**The UIL need not sponsor the sport provided if there is feasible interscholastic competition in the area** (Judge J. P., 2011). In her report on Title IX compliance for the National Association of College and University Attorneys, Janet Judge provides a very topical example,

“...if there is sufficient interest and ability in Rugby, it would not matter that Rugby is not a sport supported by the conference if other institutions in the normal competitive region sponsor the sport at the varsity or club level, thereby providing competitive opportunities” (2011, p. 8).

Further, “If competition is scarce and that fact can be traced to historical limitations, institutions may be required to initiate discussions in their regional and national conferences about adding the sport in question” (Judge & O'Brien, 2011, p. 22).

**Fort Worth ISD has a number of middle and high schools with female athletic programs to foster competition within itself**, 20 and 15 respectively, until Rugby is accepted as a female varsity sport by the UIL. Other school districts in the region with a demonstrated female interest and participation in Rugby include: Eagle Mountain ISD (Boswell HS and Saginaw HS), HEB ISD (Trinity Euless HS and LD Bell HS), and Plano ISD (all three high schools) as well as emerging interest in surrounding school districts such as Aledo ISD, Arlington ISD, Keller ISD, Lake Worth ISD and White Settlement ISD. Statewide, school-based and community-based female high school Rugby clubs are found in the Austin, El Paso, Houston, and San Antonio areas.

Both Rugby Texas, a state-based affiliate of USA Rugby, and the *Panther City Scholastic Rugby Conference*, created by Panther City Rugby, offer established competitive structures for FWISD female varsity teams to compete in until school districts take the initiative to add rugby as a UIL sport to better meet the diverse interests of female students.

### **Equitable Treatment**

A list of items has been established under Title IX regulations (commonly referred to as the “Laundry List”) to determine whether equivalent athletic benefits are being provided to both genders. **As an organized student club activity, rugby, along with the female varsity sports within FWISD, are discriminated against when it comes to the District’s favorable treatment of 7on7 football for its male athletes.** 7on7 football is not under UIL governance nor is it organized as a student-club activity yet significant funding comes from FWISD Athletics, schools and athletic booster clubs.

7on7 football has been offered on Fort Worth ISD high school campuses for at least the past ten years. When it comes to treatment and support of 7on7 football, these athletes (all male) are preferentially being provided the following by the school district, athletic booster clubs, and individual schools without cost during and well beyond the academic year. The season runs May through July.

- Use of school facilities: football field, weight room, locker room and athletic training room
- Use of school equipment: balls, cones, pylons, goal-post pads, etc.
- Use of school attire for uniforms: at minimum, generally football dri-fit shirts or the like
- Access to athletic training services and supporting medical staff
- 7on7 injuries are covered under the FWISD “supplemental/gap athletic Injury insurance” policy which extends into the summer (Security Life Insurance Company of America, 2015)
- FWISD “catastrophic injury policy” for disabling injuries when the District’s the high deductible is met (typically \$25,000) which is covered to a large degree by the supplemental athletic injury policy.
- “Volunteer coaches and referees” are covered under the FWISD general liability insurance, as these individuals are not required to secure policies for themselves.
- Coverage for property, spectator, and other damages under the District’s general liability insurance
- Since the high school football coaches organize the 7on7 league for their schools, these coaches void the need to purchase Directors’ & Officers’ insurance, as the league is not treated as a separate entity from FWISD.

The separation of 7on7 football from a fully sponsored varsity activity by FWISD is marginal. Essentially, participants have no financial obligations except transportation. Since practices and competitions are held on school campuses, typically concurrent with or just after off-season football conditioning, the varsity football coaches typically act as the campus administrator during 7on7 activities. This provides them with ample opportunities to monitor who is participating and how they are progressing, as well as whether that coach’s play schemes are being utilized to set players up for the fall season (Jennings, 2013).

***For no other non-UIL extracurricular activity nor for any female UIL varsity sport does Fort Worth ISD provide such special benefits.***

## IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS FOR RUGBY AS A FEMALE VARSITY SPORT WITHIN FORT WORTH ISD

Implementation of rugby as a female varsity sport within FWISD is not difficult. The District has a large base of potential participants and teachers at a number of schools with rugby playing experience or have an interest in rugby that could become coaches. New facilities are not required and the budgetary costs are relatively low (on-par with those of soccer). While a detailed implementation plan that includes financials is outside the scope of this document, this section does cover key areas for the successful implementation of rugby as a female varsity sport.

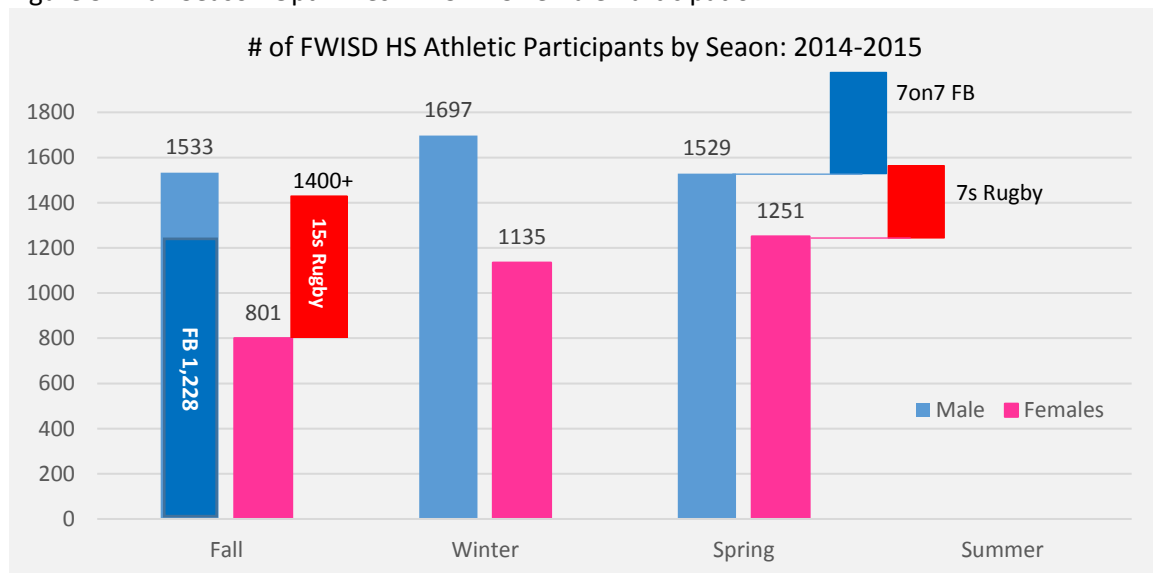
### Competition Considerations

#### Season

A fall season will allow the majority of female athletes, who participate in winter and spring sports, the opportunity to compete in rugby (see figure 9). While not all rugby participants will be dual or triple sport athletes, those involved in soccer, softball, track & field and wrestling have consistently expressed significant interest in participation. Athletes in cross-country and volleyball (fall sports) are typically less interested. Further, a fall 15-a-side season, coupled with a spring 7-a-side season, resembles that of women's varsity rugby programs that exist and are developing on college campuses.

The American Civil Liberties Union of Washington Foundation also asserts that, "... scheduling games in a nontraditional season disadvantages student athletes by making it more difficult and sometimes impossible to practice in club activities and to compete with neighboring teams. Participation in club activities helps improve the quality of play" (2007, p. 16). Currently, no varsity sport overlays with a club season. Nor does varsity football overlap with 7on7 football. For rugby in Texas, the club season is winter/spring (January through April) and summer.

Figure 9 – Fall Season Optimizes FWISD HS Female Participation



#### Number of Participants & Type of Competition

For the 2016-2017 academic year, starting with a roster of 12 to 15 athletes to play the 7-a-side version would make sense to capitalize on the media boost rugby will receive from inclusion in the 2016 Summer Olympics. If initial interest is substantial, competition can be stratified to allow junior varsity and varsity teams. Once a sufficient number of athletes (23+ upperclassmen) are experienced in playing rugby, 15-a-side competition should be encouraged for the subsequent 2017-2018 fall season and fully supported as a varsity sport with 7-a-side rugby played as a late-spring sport.

Like soccer, rugby is played on based on a running clock with no timeouts. And, like basketball, the duration of either version of the sport is relative short. In 15-a-side rugby high school matches are 35 minutes with a 10 minute halftime. This would allow for both a varsity and a junior-varsity match to be played on same day (weekday evening or Saturday afternoon). In line with USA Rugby regulations, matches may be shortened to allow two or three matches to be played in a day: 20 minute halves or 15 minute halves respectively, not to exceed 90 minutes per day. This tournament format would the District to maximize athletic training and referee resources until schools can provided with a second athletic trainer and/or additional referees become available.

7-a-side rugby is a modified version of rugby union initially adopted for one-day tournaments. It has since become a sport in itself and adopted as a Summer Olympic Sport. Matches consist of two 7-minute halves with a two minute halftime. High school teams can typically play 2, 3 to 4 matches per event; 5 or 6 if event has a second day.

While 7-a-side rugby competition is a good starting point to introduce the sport safely, *15-a-side rugby is the preferred option and goal for a varsity level team*. Within a few years or less, **the inclusion of rugby can close the “gap” satisfying Prong-1 of the OCR Three Part Test** (the current District-wide gap of 9.2% gap is reduced to approximately 0.0%). In the meantime, Prong-3 of the “Test” is being met by satisfying female interest.

### Conference & Competition Area

FWISD is large enough to provide sufficient competition within itself should teams form at 5 or more schools. Except for Paschal High School and Young Women’s Leadership Academy, all high schools with athletics are considered 5A by the UIL. As stated previously, there is interest in girls’ varsity rugby in the Eagle Mountain-Saginaw, Hurst-Euless-Bedford, Lake Worth, and Plano ISDs. If regional completion is sought, teams could participate in the *Panther City Scholastic Rugby Conference* or Rugby Texas. Both entities can coordinate competition with female teams at other schools in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Parent and community advocacy in the Austin, Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio are also on the rise. And, as school-based teams are more fully established in those areas, a *Texas High School Rugby Championship* can be coordinated through the UIL or Rugby Texas.

### **Facilities & Equipment Considerations**

Soccer has illustrated that male and female teams (or sports) are able to co-exist in the same season and share outdoor facilities. At four FWISD high schools in 2014-2015, the boys soccer programs were nearly the same size as their football programs, yet they also share facilities with the female soccer teams. At two schools the female soccer programs are larger than the football program.

### Competition Facilities

Current competitions can be held on the artificial turf fields utilized by football and soccer for their competitions with minimal modification.

1. A third color of field lines would need to be established to mark the 5-meter (yard) and 15-meter (yard) lines from the soccer sideline. And, a line marking the 22-meter line.
2. No change to football goalposts are needed as an adjustment in game procedures is permissible to account for their placement at the back of the goal area, instead of at the front of it.

Competitions could also be held at Gateway Park where the City maintains an international Rugby field. This field is expected to be re-surfaced with updated artificial turf within the next few years.

Since rugby is also being advocated for at Texas Wesleyan University, **a full regulation rugby field can be included in the developed plans of the proposed multisport athletic stadium that is being considered as a cooperative between FWISD, Texas Wesleyan University and the City of Fort Worth**

## Practice Facilities

Practices space can be equitably arranged with the football team(s) in the same manner that male/female basketball and soccer teams must work together. Besides the artificial turf field, many schools have adjacent natural grass that can be rotated. At schools with limited field space (i.e. Trimble Tech HS and Paschal HS), the outfield of the baseball and softball fields can provide additional space to be rotated with the football squads. At Trimble Technical HS it is already common for the Freshman Football teams to practice on the softball outfields.

It is recognized that football has more participants due to larger roster sizes and more sub-varsity teams than soccer and basketball. However, it is a district/school decision to permit football to have larger rosters and multiple sub-varsity squads while not universally supporting the same for all sports which would more fully meet the interests of all students.

*Table 5 – Facility Considerations*

Item	Have	Need	Desire	
Athletic Field	✓			Additional line markings to football/soccer field needed
Goal Posts & Pads	✓			Football goal post can be used
Field Flags	✓*	✓		Use of existing soccer corner flags, plus 3 to 5 additional pair
Weight Room	✓			
Locker Room	✓			
Athletic Training Room	✓			

## Equipment

Equipment in rugby is minimal compared to other contact sports that require personal body protection (football, hockey, and lacrosse) as well as sports that require individual use of equipment (softball/baseball, tennis, golf, lacrosse, etc.). Except for a rugby balls and additional field flags for competitions, most the equipment needs are practice related.

*Table 6 – Equipment Considerations, Team*

Item	Have	Need	Desire		Estimated Cost
Rugby Balls		✓		5 per team	\$25 to \$35 each
Agility Cones/Disks		✓		Set of 20 per school	\$15 per set of 20
Tackle Dummies		✓		2 per school	\$175 each
Rucking Shields		✓		2 per school	\$100 each
Scrummage Sled *		✓		1 per school	\$2,500+ each
* Football Blocking Sleds have removable padding. This allows them to be modified for cross use as a Rugby Scrum and/or Ruck Sleds by creating a padded rugby attachment.					

*Table 7 – Equipment Considerations, Athlete*

Item	Have	Need	Desire		Estimated Cost
Pinnies / Scrimmage Vest		✓		Team set (15 to 20)	\$2 to \$6 each
Practice Jersey		✓		Team set (15 to 30), May be sturdy dri-fit	\$25 - \$55 each
Practice Rugby Shorts		✓		Team set (15 to 30)	\$16 - \$35 each
Mouth-guard		✓		Per player, generic football is fine	\$35 box of 100
Rugby Whistle		✓		Per Coach	\$15 - \$20 each
Game Jersey – Home		✓		Team set (15 to 30)	\$35 - \$65 each
Game Jersey – Away		✓		Team set (15 to 30)	\$35 - \$65 each
Game Shorts		✓		Team set (15 to 30)	\$16 - \$35 each
Game Socks		✓		Team set (15 to 30), knee-high or crew	\$3 - \$20 each
Scrum Cap			✓	“Front-row” players & “Locks”, 5 per team	\$75 each

## Personnel Considerations

### Coaching

At least one coach per 10 to 15 players is needed to adequately teach and monitor athletes in the proper techniques for contact maneuvers (tackle, ruck, and scrum) and lifting during lineouts. When a team progresses to 15-a-side play (20-30 players per team), a head coach and two assistant coaches should be employed for that team so that specialized instruction and monitoring can occur based on positional separation: “the forwards” (somewhat comparable to the lineman in football) and “the backs” (analogous to specialty positions in football), particularly for the ruck and scrum contact maneuvers in which the potential for injury is high. The assistant coach responsible for “the backs” may also serve as the junior-varsity team coach, as 7-a-side rugby is recommended for this level of competition and highly resembles back-line play.

Unless a conditioning coach is provided to other sports, the coaching staff will be responsible for the planning and supervision of athletic preseason, in-season, and off-season conditioning.

### Referees

Referees may be secured through the Texas Rugby Referee Association (TRRA) which trains and supplies referees for all competitions at the adult, college, and high school-aged club levels. This association is governed by USA Rugby and its international governing body, World Rugby. The TRRA coordinates referees for club and collegiate competitions in Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Louisiana. Current fees (as of May 2016) are \$100 for a center referee and \$60 per assistant referee plus mileage.

If the District elects to compete within the Rugby Texas structure, Center Referee fees are included in the per player membership fee. Alternately, Center Referees may be developed within the District as the part of the responsibilities of an assistant coach (i.e. the “Specialty Coach”). Student-athletes (similar to volleyball) or each team’s assistant coach may also service as a “Sideline Referee”, aka “Touch Judge” in rugby.

### Medical Support

Athletic training services will be required during competitions. If practices are held concurrently with football additional athletic training personnel may not be needed. This would depend on the athletic trainer’s ability to be proximal to both activities and responded to an emergency within a reasonable amount of time (generally 3 minutes or less, using the standard applied for AED retrieval and implementation).

FWISD is fortunate to have two physician training schools within the downtown area: Texas A&M Medical School’s Sports Medicine Fellowship Program associated with the JPS Health System and Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine at UNT Health Science Center which has an orthopedics training program and affiliated sports medicine physician group. These entities could be tapped to provide on-field physician support during competitions utilizing sports medicine fellows and third-year medical residents, as is the current case for FWISD football games.

FWISD will also have access to additional physicians seeking to broaden their sports medicine educational experience through on-field services by 2024 as a result of the new medical (MD) school, a collaboration between TCU and UNT Health Science Center, expected to open in the fall of 2018.



Table 8 – Personnel Considerations

Item	Have	Need	Desire	
Coach, Head		✓		
Coach, Assistant 1		✓		May also become JV Coach; like soccer
Coach, Assistant 2			✓	Specialty Coach: like FB for contact, kicking, lifting skills
Athletic Trainer	✓			For Competitions & Contact Practices (minimal)
Physician			✓	For Competition (highly suggested)
Team Manager(s)			✓	Student
Ambulance / EMS			✓	
Referee, Center (Head)*		✓		
Referee, Assistant^		✓		2 needed
* Head/Center Referees may be contracted through Texas Rugby Referee Association or developed within the District as the part of the responsibilities of an assistant coach (i.e. the “Specialty Coach”).				
^ Student-athletes or an assistant coach may also service as a “Sideline Referee”, aka “Touch Judge” in rugby.				

### Additional Considerations

#### Travel / Transportation

Travel expense would be similar to any other team travel for preseason, district, and post-season play. If the schools compete within the rugby Texas structure, out-of-area travel costs could apply for playoff and state championship competitions.

Since competitions are once per week, bus transportation costs for a season would be similar to football.

#### Insurance

Rugby will need to be include under FWISD’s existing supplemental athletic injury insurance policy. However, this insurance is include with the participation fee for the Panther City Scholastic Conference as well as Rugby Texas/USA Rugby. The Panther City policy has a \$250 deductible, if used as primary insurance, with a \$25,000 maximum coverage per incident. The policy available through USA Rugby has a \$1,500 deductible, or a \$3,500 deductible if used as primary insurance, with a \$25,000 maximum coverage per incident. Neither entity offers catastrophic insurance for permanent disability which would need to be covered by FWISD under its policy.

#### Rugby Conference / Association

If competition is to remain local or regional, membership in the Panther City Scholastic Rugby Conference is a good option. Per player participation fees are \$35. Membership in USA Rugby / Rugby Texas would provide a state-wide competition structure as well as seamless attainment of referees. Per player membership is currently \$75.

Table 9 – Additional Considerations

Item	Have	Need	Desire	
Travel / Transportation		✓		Required for competition
Supplemental Injury Insurance	✓			aka “Gap Insurance” – Rugby needs to be included
Catastrophic Injury Insurance	✓			Long-term disability – Rugby may need to be included
Rugby Association Fees			✓	Required for out-of-district competition



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## APPENDICES

## Contacts

### Fort Worth ISD – Student Rugby Clubs

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*No Student Club Formed*

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Email: 214.505.2722

Alex McCulloch, President, Panther City Rugby  
Phone: 817.896.2063  
Email: president@panthercityRugby.com

# Signatures of Females Interested in Rugby

A Quick Survey – May 2016

Not all schools were surveyed, nor was a formal survey provided at the following schools.

## Benbrook Middle / High School



### FEMALE INTEREST IN RUGBY

Varsity Sport / Fall Club

School Benbrook Middle High #071  
Collected Spring 2016

Student Name	Grade	ID
1. Mya Rico	9 <sup>th</sup>	5123799
2. Bailey Kimmel	9 <sup>th</sup>	5124313
3. T'jaiah Thompson	8	301235
4. Dominique Lopez	8	215715
5. Virginia Sims	9 <sup>th</sup>	80913
6. Mercedes Blanchard	9 <sup>th</sup>	4887110
7. Yessenia Rodriguez	9 <sup>th</sup>	214770
8. Josephine Peralta	9 <sup>th</sup>	301077
9. Elena Cauce	9 <sup>th</sup>	5107633
10. Charlene Hernandez	9 <sup>th</sup>	211676
11.		
12.		
13.		
14.		
15.		
16.		
17.		

10-11-14

Genica Campos  
Juchth Guerrero  
Andrea Antunez  
Mellie Matos  
Leslie Loman  
Stephanne Carreras  
Jackie Martinez  
Bryana Vallin  
Alyssa Gonzales  
Monica Escamz  
Nayeli Vidales  
Gabriela Mata  
Arianna Gomez  
Valerie Elizondo  
Melissa Arejumeado  
Alyssa Stewart  
Alejandra Molina  
Kevin Hernandez  
Felicia Torres  
Cassandra Rodriguez

# South Hills High School

**RENEWAL INTEREST IN RUGBY**  
 Varsity Sport // Fall Club  
 School South Hills HS  
 Collection Spring 2016

Student Name	Grade	ID
1. <u>Norberto Torres</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>52592</u>
2. <u>Benjamin Torres</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>28876</u>
3. <u>Alfonso Torres</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>90552</u>
4. <u>Walter Torres</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>34359</u>
5. <u>Zohara Fajardo</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>62869</u>
6. <u>Jaime Yu</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>94034</u>
7. <u>Rebecca Torres</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>62084</u>
8. <u>Daisy Torres</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>408630</u>
9. <u>Walter Torres</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>20452</u>
10. <u>Yara Pios</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>56010</u>
11. _____	_____	_____
12. _____	_____	_____
13. _____	_____	_____
14. _____	_____	_____
15. _____	_____	_____
16. _____	_____	_____
17. _____	_____	_____

# FEMALE INTEREST IN RUGBY

Varsity Sport / Fall Club

School

Trimble Tech H.S. 011

Collected Spring 2016

Student Name	Grade	ID
1. Ana Miranda	11 <sup>th</sup>	49395
2. Izbel Santos	11 <sup>th</sup>	48573
3. Brandy Hernandez	11 <sup>th</sup>	51303
4. Heidi Rico	11 <sup>th</sup>	5721820
5. Ariyanna Ingram	10 <sup>th</sup>	66402
6. Deandra Donald	11 <sup>th</sup>	56049
7. Kelsey Sanchez	11 <sup>th</sup>	24460
8. Destiny Rivera	11 <sup>th</sup>	406270
9. Nonna Guy	11 <sup>th</sup>	5112802
10. Irene Rodriguez	11 <sup>th</sup>	68570
11. Keyarra Sanders	11 <sup>th</sup>	74175
12. <del>Yeremi Fraire</del> Yeremi Fraire	<del>9<sup>th</sup></del>	<del>211671</del>
13. Crystal Avelar	9 <sup>th</sup>	209119
14. Maricruz Castellon	9 <sup>th</sup>	211942
15. Stephanie Rodriguez	9 <sup>th</sup>	78190
16. Tanelle Perez	9 <sup>th</sup>	79978
17. Ariyanna Ingram	11	66402
18. Lorely Santamaria	10	64311
19. Alexis Bravo	9	17274
20. Cindy Bredes	11 <sup>th</sup>	49990
21. Jada Washington, Tionne	10 <sup>th</sup>	201963
22.		
23.		
24.		
25.		