Schools Sports vs. Club Sports

([Adapted from the Louisiana High School Athletic Association--LHSAA](http://lhsaa.org/uploads/documents/Club_Sports_vs._High_School_Athletics.pdf))

West Valley Junior High athletes have the opportunity to participate in a variety of competitive athletic programs, including MVL/WIAA (Mid Valley League and Washington Interscholastic Activities Association) sanctioned athletics and club sports. While club sports are legitimate competitive vehicles, they lack many of the incredible developmental qualities provided through participation in school sports.

Critical and inherent to the interscholastic athletic system is educational quality. Scholastic  
requirements are at the foundation of WVJH sports—student-athletes must perform in the classroom to earn the privilege of representing WVJH. Such standards are meant not strictly as regulatory devices but as vehicles of development of student-athletes for future success.

The West Valley School District has established mandatory codes of conduct for student-athletes to participate in interscholastic athletics. This is coupled with the roles of coaches and administrators as role models and mentors for student-athletes. They have received the proper training to work with children and teach the athletic skills of the game, in addition to fostering a special bond for positive development. These benefits demonstrate the importance of appropriate behavior and success in a fashion that club sports do not necessarily provide.

Some parents feel that club sports provide an increased focus on specialization in sport at a  
young age, and that this specialization paves the way for their child to receive a college scholarship. In actuality, a very small percentage of students earn athletic scholarships, and the overwhelming majority will spend more money for club sports than they wish to count—sometimes equaling the cost of college expenses. A proper education enhanced by participating in school athletics offers the ideal preparation for a collegiate athletic career.

The mission of school athletics is for the student-athletes to be successful, to gain information, knowledge and skills they can apply in problem solving and to become better citizens in the classroom and in their daily lives. If there is no educational value inherent within our programs, then we have no business providing sports in a school setting.

WVJH is here to educate the entire student, not just the athlete, and there are many lessons one can learn through participating in school athletics. School sports are more than wins and losses—they teach lifelong skills like teamwork, self-motivation and being a part of something bigger than one’s self.