

# Middle School at Springside Sports Program Update

Although they did not see all 70+ people last night, it was the largest attendance for a middle school meeting ever! It was a great group of people consisting of men, women, parents, coaches, rec commissioners, MSFA members, teachers, and school staff. Some great questions were raised from those that support, and those that oppose a middle school sports program. Mary Ann Bell, Assistant Superintendent for Business and Operations, spoke in length about the 15-16 budget, and discussed how sports could impact future budgets.

Some of the things I took away from the meeting:

- Even if we had the money to fully fund the sports, logistically speaking, the town would not be ready for the 15-16 school year (developing programs, coaches, scheduling games, busses, etc.)
- A committee is being formed to look at the feasibility of sports programs in the Middle School. It will be headed by Mary Ann Bell, and be comprised of teachers, school staff, MSFA members, recreational coaches, recreational commissioners, Sports Club members, and parents/residents
- “Pay to Participate”, where parents would pay a fee if their child made the team has been rejected by our BOE In the past, but will be revisited for middle school sports by the committee
- The vast majority of high school districts in our area have middle school programs
- For insurance reasons, football is not being considered for middle school (nor is it in other districts)
- A way to maintain the freshman program is imperative to establishing and maintaining a middle school program. The option to combine both programs in one budget will be reviewed by the committee.
- Facility usage (gyms and fields) have to be reviewed, since there are already programs that use the gym, and the baseball/softball fields at the middle school did not have irrigation installed (no thought of school sports at that time)

We are a long way away from cheering at our first Springside Falcons game. However, I believe the committee that is being formed will be able to determine if we will, when we will, and what will it cost us.

To be a part of the Committee, please email [mbell@burltwpsch.org](mailto:mbell@burltwpsch.org) and/or [Odonne22@tcnj.edu](mailto:Odonne22@tcnj.edu)

Thank you again to all that attended, and want the best educational, athletic, and social experience for the children of Burlington Township!