

Associated Public Schools of Victoria

ABN 61 949 738 691

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The strategic review of the Associated Public Schools of Victoria (APS) Sport program continues to progress (see appendix for review scope). Given the scope of the project and the wide group of engaged stakeholders, it is likely that any final and specific detailed conclusions will take some time to be agreed by our eleven member schools.

Regardless, in this update, the Steering Committee and APS Heads would like to provide our communities further detail regarding some of the emerging themes, the case for change and next steps throughout Term 3.

Emerging Themes

These three emerging themes have been articulated through the work of the Steering Committee over the past three months.

1. Sport is considered part of the 'DNA' of all eleven of our member schools because:
 - Regular physical activity is critical for our students' physical and mental health and fitness, both now and in the future, and
 - Sport is a key feature of an APS 'rounded' / holistic education, providing unequalled learning experiences that build relationships, connection, teamwork, belonging, leadership, and the ability to deal with success and failure.
2. Every APS school is heavily invested financially and operationally in the program, aiming to cultivate a lifelong passion for physical wellbeing in all students, through a sports education environment which develops physical skills, social connection, and individual character.
3. Most students have a positive experience in the current APS and APS/AGSV Sport programs, with school sport offering a unique experience not replicable in community sport.

Case for Change

Our research has also determined that there are elements of the APS Sport program which we should be aiming to improve. There is a clear case for change to ameliorate risks in the current program which could undermine its future sustainability. Specifically:

- i. Ensuring the APS Sport program is structured at competition and individual school level to sustain the volume of students expected in the member schools' catchment over the next decade; and
- ii. Strengthening our decision-making processes and operating model to improve the speed with which we address challenges that arise for students in the APS and APS/AGSV Sport programs.

Next Steps

Several options to address these challenges are being considered, with a robust process in place to consider the relevant pros and cons of any change to the competition's status quo. This process includes ongoing fortnightly Steering Committee meetings and ongoing stakeholder engagement as options develop. The APS Heads have also committed to a full day offsite in August to discuss various strategic options.

As it stands, no decisions have been made. The project will continue in Term 3, as the Steering Committee progresses through the project scope. As this important work continues to unfold, the APS community will be updated via the APS member schools and APS social media.

APS Heads
July 2024

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Appendix

Review Scope

1. To review the Ambition of APS Sport (vision, mission, aims) to ensure it is aligned with:
 - a. the evolving understanding of the role of sport and physical education in student health and wellbeing, development, and educational excellence,
 - b. the needs and wants of all our students, from those picking up a ball for the first time to aspiring professional athletes,
 - c. the strategic objectives and constraints of our participant schools, and
 - d. the unique heritage of APS Sport competitions.
2. To a data-led approach to review the current APS Sport program across five dimensions:
 - a. level of participation,
 - b. breadth of offering,
 - c. depth of competition,
 - d. financial sustainability, and
 - e. operational sustainability.
3. To design a set of options that could further enhance the current APS offering, enabling a 'fit-for-purpose' and sustainable model in the future. These options will consider:
 - a. the revised Ambition of APS Sport,
 - b. the data-led review of current operations, and
 - c. the unique heritage of our competitions.

Steering Subcommittee

The Steering Subcommittee includes; (listed alphabetically according to school) Mr. Ross Featherston (Brighton Grammar), Mr. Ashleigh Martin (Caulfield Grammar), Mrs Rebecca Cody (Geelong Grammar), Mr. Derek Scott (Haileybury), Mr. William Doherty (Xavier College), and Mr Luke Soulos (APS Executive Officer).

Colganbauer, a world leading sports consultant group, has also been engaged to provide an independent perspective and offer advice on sports industry best practice.