

In Support of Junior Varsity Lacrosse
Comments by Amy Knobloch
at Montgomery County Public Schools Community Forum
Rockville, Maryland
October 12, 2006

Hello, my name is Amy Knobloch. I am currently a 10th grade student at Richard Montgomery High School. I am here to talk to you about getting boys and girls junior varsity lacrosse programs in all Montgomery county high schools. Did you know that according to Sports Illustrated lacrosse is the fastest growing sport in the country? There are 5 issues that need to be considered: field space, coaches, interest, funding and competitiveness.

Field space is not a problem. Every high school currently has a boys and girls varsity team and a field to practice on. The added JV teams will simply share the field with the varsity team. Most sports such as field hockey and soccer currently do this. With both varsity and JV, the girls could be at one high school and the boys at the other high school. The fields are open as no other sport uses the field in the spring.

Another issue is coaching staff. The majority of the current varsity teams have at least one assistant coach helping with the program. This assistant could coach the JV team.

The third issue is interest of players. There are numerous youth programs in the county for middle and elementary school players. Over 1,200 girls and 1,800 boys participate in youth leagues each spring in Montgomery County. Most varsity lacrosse squads carry 30 players or more on their varsity team in order to have enough players to practice and to build for the future. It is hard for a player to improve their skills by just participating in practice; games are very crucial to player development. Unfortunately, many youth players do not stay with lacrosse because they don't have the skills and experience for the leap to varsity. They need a JV program.

On a personal note, I never played field hockey before 9th grade and played on JV for a year. I gained valuable playing experience and this year I am happy to say I start on the varsity squad and have scored 10 goals.

Of course there are costs associated with each program. JV coaches salary would be \$141,400 per year based on \$2828 per coach and umpiring fees \$30,600 based on 6 home games at \$51 per umpire. These are yearly costs. Next are uniform costs. Many schools have old uniforms that could initially be used. If not, girls and boys uniforms could be bought at \$60 per athlete. Girls uniforms are approximately \$50 for a shirt and kilt per person and boy's uniforms are approximately \$60 for a shirt and shorts per person. Last, there is equipment including balls, helmets, eyewear, and goalie gear. Most schools would have enough equipment for both a varsity and JV team. Approximate costs: balls, \$20 per dozen; helmets -boys only, \$115; eyewear -girls only, \$40; and goalie equipment \$300. Uniforms and equipment do not have to be purchased annually.

You may not know it, but MCPS does not do well in lacrosse at the state level, a state with a strong tradition in lacrosse. Since 2000, 10 girls and 10 boys teams from Montgomery County have gone to the state tournament. Not one team has won a single game. Most people say this is because of the lack of JV teams.

A JV program would increase the skill level of our players and make our school teams more competitive. We have almost everything we need: players, coaches, field space. Now, all we need is your help to become a part of Maryland's lacrosse tradition. You can help by funding the JV lacrosse programs of our schools.