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# Gloucester County Times

## Let the games begin — with more participation

To the Editor:

"Intermural" refers to those games that are played between different schools. Intramural refers to those games played between different teams in the same school or the same class.

Unfortunately, today intramurals are a dinosaur and do not exist in most schools. Schools should not only consider picking the best basketball players from the entire school and forming one team to play against the best players of another school, but form programs that include several teams within the same school to compete against each other. Through such programs, everybody who goes out for basketball gets a place on a team and gets as much chance to play as anybody else.

Athletics can teach a lot about teamwork and cooperation that one doesn't learn in the classroom. Theory is fine, but athletics put it into practice. With the emphasis on school-vs.-school competition, many students are not recipients of these

meaningful experiences.

Athletics should be more inclusive. In many cases, a school's (reputation) revolves around success on the athletic field and court....

There are advantages in both intermural and intramural sports, but there has to be a logical balance so the majority of the student population will benefit from what athletics have to offer. These benefits are enjoyment, making friends, learning new skills, learning teamwork and sportsmanship, and physical development.

An analogy can be made between intermural and programs for the academically gifted. How would the community and parents of children in high school feel if a school devoted its efforts primarily to the academically gifted, and disregarded the academically average and the students in need? All students should reap the benefits of tax money spent. Let us not forget the athletically gifted, but let us also focus upon the entire student population.

This message should not only refer to athletics but to be applied to other extracurricular activities, such as drama, music, art, etc. Participation is the goal.

**MORTON TENER**  
Professor Emeritus  
Secondary Education  
Rowan University