

Olympic Education

An International Review

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United States of America – The Olympic Games as Promotor of Olympic Education in the United States of America: Issues and Institutions

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Background Information on the USA

The United States of America (commonly referred to as the United States, U.S., USA, or America), is a federal republic composed of 50 states, a federal district of Washington, D.C., five major territories, and various possessions. The 48 contiguous states and Washington, D.C., are in central North America between Canada and Mexico. The state of Alaska is in the northwestern part of North America and the state of Hawaii is an archipelago in the mid-Pacific. The territories are scattered about the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea. At 3.8 million square miles (9.9 million km²) and with over 320 million people, the country is the world's third largest by total area (fourth largest by land area) and the third most populous. It is one of the world's most ethnically diverse and multicultural nations, the product of large-scale immigration from many countries.

Initially a federation of thirteen eastern states who won their independence from Great Britain in 1783, the territory of the USA gradually expanded westward until it incorporated land from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean and from the 48th parallel of longitude to the Mexican border. Alaska and Hawaii were given states' rights as part of this expansion. Education is a one of the many "state rights" in the USA, and thus each state has its own ministry of education.

History of the Olympic Movement in the United States

The history of the Olympic Movement in the USA began in 1889 when Pierre de Coubertin visited the USA for the first time. He came to Boston to participate in a conference which was more concerned with hygiene than with education (Psimopoulos, 2014, p. 208). The American Olympic Association (AOA) was founded in 1894, in Colorado Springs, Colorado, just after Pierre de Coubertin founded his International Olympic Committee. Its purpose was to organise the participation of American athletes in the 1896 Olympic Games. Colorado Springs is still the home of the headquarters of the USOC.

Renamed the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) in 1961, the organisation is the coordinating body for all Olympic-related athletic activity in the United States, (www.usoc.org). It serves as the National Olympic Committee and also as the National Paralympic Committee of the USA, responsible for the training and funding and mobilisation of US athletes for Olympic, Paralympic, Youth Olympic, Pan American and Para-Pan American Games. The United States Olympic Committee's mission is to support U.S. Olympic and Paralympic athletes in achieving sustained competitive excellence and to preserve the Olympic Ideals, thereby inspiring all

Americans. The organisation focuses on athlete development, offering elite athletes a variety of sport development services: performance coaching, psychology, physiology, nutrition, career services, media and marketing opportunities and performance technology. It should be noted that the USA has no government ministry responsible for sport and all funding is solicited through private funding initiatives.

The USA has hosted the Olympic Games a total of eight times: St. Louis (1904), Lake Placid (1932), Los Angeles (1932), Squaw Valley (1960), Lake Placid (1980), Los Angeles (1984), Atlanta (1996) and Salt Lake City (2002) – more than any other nation. Denver, Colorado won the bid to host the 1976 Winter Games, but there was pushback from the residents of Denver who voted this down arguing that it did not meet their priorities; an action that eventually resulted in the bid's withdrawal. Those Games were then held in Innsbruck, Austria. The USA was unsuccessful in a bid by New York city for the 2012 Games and by the city of Chicago for the 2016 Games. Also, Boston had been selected by the USOC to bid for the USA for the 2024 Games, but eventually passed the torch to Los Angeles (Da Matta & Psimopoulos, 2012; olympic.org; teamusa.org).

The U.S. Olympic Committee, with a 15-member volunteer board of directors and a professional staff headed by the chief executive officer, who is an ex-officio member of the board, has a long history of creating various programmes to support U.S. athletes and of participation in Olympic education initiatives. There are multiple programmes that support and promote physical activity in the United States, including Olympic Day (June 23rd). During 2012 Olympic Day in the United States, more than 200,000 Americans participated in 632 events in nearly 530 cities across all 50 states, as part of the Team USA Ambassador Programme, curriculum is developed to educate U.S. Olympians and Paralympians about their roles and responsibilities while competing on the world stage. In turn, they serve as role models for America's youth and many of them share their Olympic and Paralympic stories with children all over the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic athletes also make more than 1,000 school and community appearances each year to share their stories, and to teach children about dedication, perseverance and how to live a healthy lifestyle (Vermillion, 2014).

Olympic Education in the United States of America

Olympic education initiatives in the USA are closely affiliated with the hosting of an Olympic Games, and, as in most other countries, began in the 1970s and 1980s. The first reference to the term "Olympic Education" is, however, documented in 1948, as part of the official report of a Mr. Wilson, Vice-President of the then United States Olympic Association (currently the USOC). He notes, „In trying to analyse carefully our work, I think the most appalling failure is our lack of Olympic education to the youth of America" (p. 42). He went on to say that ...

“[...] a most valuable work of Olympic education could be promulgated [...] if we could only by close cooperation and working through an executive officer

disseminate Olympic material and information, it would become a great national interest to everyone [...].“

Another official of the USOA also made reference to the term Olympic education when he stated that...

“The time to institute such a plan is at hand, and I earnestly beseech all of you who have devoted so much of your time and energy to this great cause to give some thought to the Olympic education of the youth of America, because in the acceptance of the principles of the Games, we are helping mold strength and ideals of sportsmanship and character in our future citizens“ (USOC, 1948, p. 43).

Until the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles there was little attention paid to these calls for a focus on the educational aspects of the Olympic Movement. The scene changed prior to the LA Games. For the first time in Olympic history educational handbooks, titled *The Olympics: An Educational Opportunity* and produced by educational authorities in the greater Los Angeles area, connected Olympic topics to school curricula, providing suggested classroom activities in a variety of subject areas. In 1983, the official report from the Los Angeles Organising Committee (LAOOC) indicated that the Youth Department provided over 40,000 teachers' guides to instructors in kindergarten through 9th grade.

The LA '84 Games stimulated other initiatives. An Academic Decathlon programme, conducted in 1982 by the Los Angeles Unified School District and the LA county Superintendent of Schools, drew teams from 46 high schools to participate in 10 academic events. The competition then determined the Los Angeles representative to the California State Academic Decathlon. A Children's Olympic Art Project conducted at over 2,000 schools gave students the opportunity to give their impression of the Olympics in drawing or painting in order to leave a lasting remembrance of their participation in the Olympic experience (LA Olympic Organising Committee, 1983, pp. 33-34). Ting Kwauk (2008) suggests that by the 1984 Los Angeles Games, Olympic Education had indeed found the place it deserved by...

“[...] re-focusing on long-lasting educational and cultural impacts that could sustain interest and involvement beyond the Games. Programs began to shift their objectives from simply informing about the Games to educating youth about Olympism through values“ (Ting Kwauk, 2008, p. 527).

The post-LA Games period was a time in the US Olympic Movement for enthusiasm for educational endeavours. US scholars and athletes were valued participants at sessions of the IOA and during Olympic-related conferences. A strong USOC Education Council made a number of long-term plans – for example, for a permanent site for Olympic education in the city of Olympia, Washington. These plans never came to fruition. In 1987, one of the world's most well-known companies, McDonald's Corporation, became the official sponsor of the USOC's Educational Programmes in conjunction with the USOC's Education Council, developing the

Visions of Glory Olympic Education Program. The “Visions of Glory” programme activities explored qualities associated with sacrifice, perseverance and belief in goals and dreams while reinforcing the basic skills covered in regular lesson plans in math, social studies and other general curricula. The goal was that it would be a total education programme promoting team spirit and goal awareness through individual activities. Activities covered all classroom subjects and educators were to use it in expanding student awareness and appreciation for the Olympic Games. The programme was to accompany and enhance regular subjects taught in schools. Although it was focused on the Olympics, the students would be reinforcing their basic skills of reading, art, language arts and physical education. The programme was directed at educators who wanted to teach their students about the Olympics, but did not have the time or resources to do the necessary research or curriculum planning.

Thematic units included Olympic Games history, famous Olympians, exploring countries host countries, physical fitness and nutrition. Students would complete the curriculum with a better understanding of the Olympics and increased interest in past and future Games. *Olympic Lore* was an information supplement that was used in connection with *Visions of Glory* and provided special materials on the operation and organisation of the conduct of the Olympic Games for primary and secondary schools. The Olympic Education Curriculum targeted at grades 4-8 was also developed by McDonald’s in combination with the USOC Education Council with all new curriculum to improve education opportunities for the teaches of American elementary schools. The material was to be so engaging that it could be adopted for all classes in the primary and secondary schools and to assist those schools participating in the U.S. Olympic Day in Schools programme.

At the same time in 1987 the Education Council of the USOC also created a learning curriculum called *Project Torch*. It was an enrichment programme that used the Olympic Games as a teaching resource to capture students’ interest in the drama and excitement of the Games. Subjects addressed by examples in the curriculum supplement were language arts, math, science, health and physical education. It motivated students, teachers and community leaders to incorporate the principles of Olympism in all aspects of their sports’ programmes as well as other aspects of social and civic life. The programme was available for kindergarten through 6th grade, 7th through 9th grade and senior high school students. Unfortunately there is minimal review on the actual impact and outcome of the above-mentioned programmes.

In July of 1992 at the 99th Session of the IOC, the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games (ACOG) presented its youth and education plans for the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games. The plan focused on expanding participation in ACOG’s highly successful Olympic Day in the Schools programme where over 250,000 students in 1992 from 563 schools participated in programme. The Committee also developed a resource guide on the 1992 Barcelone Olympic Games that was distributed to middle schools throughout Georgia in hopes to enhance the relevancy of materials and build greater interest in the curriculum materials scheduled for development between 1993 -1996. Plans also included focusing on assisting in the development of curriculum for the Governor’s Honors Program in Georgia, developing Olympic materials curriculum for use state

wide by all grades K-12, categorising youth sports programmes and resources state wide, developing plans for introducing sports in the state of Georgia and selecting 100 youth state wide to participate in ACOG's Dream Team II programme (Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games, 1992).

In 1993 the USOC created the F.L.A.M.E. (Finding Leaders among Minorities Everywhere) programme and has hosted young men and women every year since, to inspire minority students with their dynamic, educational programme packed with leadership enhancement opportunities. F.L.A.M.E. is designed to empower college students to cultivate their desire to succeed and rise above the ordinary. The participants that are selected in the programme are chosen based on already demonstrating a pursuit of excellence within their own communities and having the desire to further their personal and professional growth. Participants are supported through unique seminars and workshops led by Olympic and Paralympic athletes; USOC and National Governing Body (NGB) leaders; and others who have achieved personal, professional or athletic success in life.

For the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games the USOC created the Official Curriculum Guide Volume VI entitled *Olympism-Lighting the Way to a Legacy of Peace*, published by Griffin Publishing in 1996. The guide was developed cooperatively by a group of Utah teachers and the Utah State Office of Education with support also provided by TeleScene, KUED TV and the Salt Lake City Olympic Bid committee in coordination with USOC. This was Utah's Olympic Organising Committees educational effort to support the bid for the 2002 Winter Olympic Games in Salt Lake City. The reason behind the guide being created was that it would be an idea book, to be used with the segment videos, *Olympism: Lighting the way – To a Legacy of Peace*. The materials were designed to aide parents and teachers in assisting students to understand and develop the Spirit of Olympism in their lives. It was intended to appeal to all grades and subject areas. The Friendship Network was created as an avenue that allowed schools to be electronically connected to schools in other states or countries. It empowered students to build lasting friendships, share goals and ambitions and communicate about sports, sportsmanship and discuss sport heroes.

Griffin Publishing continued to be the USOC supplier of Olympic education materials in the USA prior to the 2002 Salt Lake City Games. In 2001 *Share the Olympic Dream* was produced. The guide included information on the Olympic Games and competitions as well as ideas, materials and activities to be used with students in intermediate and middle-school grades and thematic unit ideas. The contents of the guide incorporated information and practice activities to familiarise students with the Olympic Games, creative worksheets, teacher resource packages including bulletin board and research centre ideas, art patterns, answer keys and a bibliography for future resource references. The curriculum guide was created to be adaptable for in-classroom and group lessons, independent research and cooperative learning activities. Another educational initiative of the 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Games, titled *REACH: A Teacher's Guide to the Olympic Winter Games and the Paralympic Winter Games of 2002* was produced by the Education Department of the Salt Lake Organising Committee for the Olympic Winter

Games and the Paralympic Winter Games of 2002, and is still being distributed online by the Utah Education Network (<http://www.uen.org/k12educator/reach/>).

Perhaps the most enduring educational legacy of an Olympic Games in the USA is the LA84 Foundation, endowed with surplus funds from the LA84 Olympic Games and committed to supporting a variety of youth sport programmes in southern California. Led by IOC Member Anita deFranz, and with outstanding educational leadership from Olympic historian Wayne Wilson, the Foundation also houses the largest sports research library in North America, including an impressive Olympic collection.

Olympic Education and the Physical Education Curriculum

In the USA education is a state responsibility, and in none of the state curricula is Olympism or the Olympic Games a topic of study.

„To understand physical education as a component of the education system, it is important to know that the education system in the United States does not operate with a centralised curriculum. Learning standards are developed by national professional organizations such as the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) and/or state education agencies rather than by the federal Department of Education; all curricular decisions are made locally by school districts or individual schools in compliance with state standards. Physical education is influenced by this system, which leads to great diversity in policies and curricula“ (Kohl and Cook, 2013).

In most states, however, the physical education curriculum includes a strand or standards that highlight personal and social development outcomes. For example, the California Department of Education Standard 5 for Physical Education includes standards under the headings of: self-responsibility, social interaction and group dynamics. New York follows the curriculum standards of SHAPE (Society of Health Physical Educators). Standard 4 under SHAPE for physical education reads as follows: “The physically literate individual exhibits responsible personal and social behaviour that respects self and others” (SHAPE, 2016). The Texas PE curriculum refers to outcomes under the heading of “social development.” These references to values education outcomes developed through physical movement represent at least the basic ideal of a Coubertin educational philosophy.

The USA is a marketing culture, and entrepreneurs in the field of sport and PE offer a number “packaged” programmes for use by schools and sport clubs. Psimopoulos suggests that Siedentop’s “Sport Education Model” (1994) offers some elements of an Olympic experience focussed on sport performance and the culminating festivities of the ceremonies. Naul notes that Siedentop’s “Sport Educational Model” includes the following aspects: “culminating event”, “festivity”, “keeping records” and “formal competition” (2008, pp. 99). Siedentop himself defined five goals of his Olympic curriculum and identified his understanding of Olympism:

„[...] to know and respect the values and beauty of the human body in motion; the aesthetic value of working together in competition, and the manner in which art, music, and literature are related to and supportive of Olympism“ (Siedentop, 1994, p.122).

An anonymous user review on the Google Books web site for the Sport Education Book states the following:

„Sports Ed offers huge benefits to the PE lessons: the students get to solve authentic problems in groups, build relationships with their team mates, have a say in how they structure their learning experiences, learn about different roles in sports and enjoy their participation in a real sporting competition. Many of the less-able kids do not get the chance to represent school/class/club in any form of league or tournament. Sports Ed gives every student a chance to be part of an athletic team and engage them in a developmentally-appropriate sports tournament“ (Online available under (<https://books.google.ca/books?id=hexyQgAACAAJ&sitesec=reviews>)).

Another comprehensive and popular US physical education and health programme with multiple resources and support services available for purchase is SPARK.

“SPARK is a research-based organization of San Diego State University Research Foundation (disseminated by School Specialty, Inc.) dedicated to creating, implementing, and evaluating programs that promote lifelong wellness” (Online available under <http://www.sparkpe.org/about-us/#sthash.dyQiasBK.dpuf>).

Even though not directly linked to Olympic education, the campaign “Right to Play” is a big non-school based youth sport programme that promotes the values of Olympism and educates youth in the USA on what Olympians do and how important their contribution as role models can be. Founded in 2000 by four-time Olympic gold medallist and social entrepreneur Johann Olav Koss, “Right To Play’s” programmes use the transformative power of play to educate and empower children and youth in disadvantaged areas. “Through playing sports and games, we teach children essential life skills that will help them overcome the effects of poverty, conflict and disease so that they can create better futures and drive lasting social change in their communities and beyond (Right To Play, 2016). Most of the “Right To Play” programmes are in Africa and the Middle East. However, in New York City, “Right To Play” leaders are helping children learn through play by partnering with the New York City Department of Education’s Office of Early Childhood Education to implement play based learning methodology in some local classrooms.

Olympic Education as a Part of PE Teacher and Sport Coach Training

Currently the only institution in which Olympic education is part of the training / professional preparation of sport coaches is at the United States Sports Academy (USSA), in which Olympism is being taught at all three levels (B.S in Sport Studies, M.S. in Sport Studies and Ed.D with a concentration in Olympism). Its president, Dr. Thomas Rosandich currently sits on the IOC Commission on Culture and Olympic Education, and wants the USSA to become a Centre for Olympic education (Rosandich, 2011).

Psimopoulos & Wolff conducted an exhaustive review of all programmes that train physical education teachers and sport coaches in the US (Psimopoulos, 2014). Upon reviewing the literature on the teaching of Olympism in the US, the authors reached three conclusions. The first one was that since there was no active National Olympic Academy (NOA) in the US, the education of teachers or professors in academia would have to be conducted at the International Olympic Academy (IOA) or another NOA, with the exception of the USSA. The second was that since there was no Olympic Education curriculum being taught in school districts (with the exception of ‘The Olympic Curriculum’ in Siedentop’s 1994 *Sport Education* curriculum), there are hence no programmes that prepare physical education or classroom teachers to be qualified to teach Olympism or Olympic education in K-12 schools. The third is that since the USOC does not provide educational sessions on Olympism for educators the only opportunity for individuals

who would like to study the Olympic Movement and hence be qualified to teach Olympic education would be through random programmes that are offered in American colleges and universities (overview in: Psimopoulos, 2014, pp. 214).

The USOA Olympic Academy

Historically, since its founding by the members of the USOC Education Council in 1976, the United State's National Olympic Academy has been one of the most active and impactful NOAs in the Olympic Movement. The Academy was extremely active and played a large role in offering Olympic education in the United States in the 1980s and 1990s. Its delegates contributed many times with lectures at the IOA, particularly John Lucas, John MacAloon, and David Young (Psimopoulos, 2014, p. 209). The Academy was extremely active and played a large role in offering Olympic education in the United States until 1991. After 1991 the Academy combined with the U.S. Olympic Congress and after that was unfortunately no longer held and basically went non-existent ...The original USNOA conference in 1977 contained a strong focus on academics with an emphasis on historical context and philosophy, thanks to the diligent efforts of two of the original promoters, Bob Paul (USOC spokesman) and Harold 'Frier' Friermood (Chair, USOC Education Council). From the beginning, one of the positive aspects of the USNOA was bringing together Olympians: coaches and athletes of different levels and sports; Olympic historians and teachers with local students and business leaders.

Upon the recommendations and sustained efforts of many scholars in the US (Psimopoulos, 2014; Da Matta & Psimopoulos, 2012) and on April 15th 2014 the United States Olympic Committee re-established its Olympic Academy with a one-day session held in partnership with the LA84 Foundation. Below is an excerpt from the Foreword to the Proceedings of the Academy by Anita DeFrantz, President of the LA84 Foundation and member of the International Olympic Academy.

“The 2014 U.S. Olympic Academy took place on April 15, in Los Angeles, at the LA84 Foundation. It was the first Olympic Academy in the U.S. in 23 years. The revival of the U.S. Olympic Academy resulted from a partnership between the United States Olympic Committee and the LA84 Foundation, supported by generous funding from Gordon Crawford. The United States, by bringing the Olympic Academy back to life, now joins 146 other nations that operate an Olympic Academy. The objective of such Academies is to create a national forum for the exchange of ideas and the advancement of the principles of Olympism. The 2014 Academy in Los Angeles brought together more than 100 Olympians, Paralympians, sport leaders, coaches, journalists, scholars and students. Hundreds more watched the event as it was streamed on the USOC's website....The theme of this year's academy was athlete development. Our goal was to examine the topic through the lens of Olympism, which is based on the Olympic ideals. We selected athlete development as the focus of the conference because few topics are more intertwined with Olympism and its underlying values [...]" (DeFrantz, 2014).

Athlete development continues to be the focus of educational initiatives by the USOC. With respect to funding for these initiatives, the United States of America is well known for its ability to raise funds for charities, projects and entrepreneurial endeavours. This also applies to sport and the USOC. In comparison with most other countries in the Olympic Movement, the USOC receives relatively little in terms of government funding. Therefore it relies on corporate sponsorship and fundraising initiatives to provide the resources to support its athletes. At the 2014 US Olympic Academy, the CEO of the USOC, Scott Blackman, described a new fundraising initiative:

“[...] early this year we launched what we decided to call the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Foundation. It has over 60 members on its board of directors each of whom has agreed to give us at least \$300,000 – just an amazing amount of philanthropy. Just for comparisons sake, four years ago we raised less than \$1 million a year in major gifts for the USOC. We are now raising in excess of \$12 million dollars a year on the major gift side... if you think about it, empowering that group of volunteers to go out and engage Americans with Olympians ... Again, our purpose is to support our American athletes. We couldn't do that if what we were selling is just sport. We're selling something much, much more than sport. We're selling a philosophy of life. And, we're selling the opportunity for those donors to connect their kids with something more than just fun, something more than just recreation. Frankly, something more than just competition. We're talking about a value system and that's a value system that gets driven down all the way through our system, through our NGBs” (Blackman, 2014).

As is evident from the above quote, the USOC seems more comfortable with the language of marketing and commerce in support of athlete development and Olympic education initiatives than many other countries and/or educational jurisdictions. With respect to academic approaches to Olympic education and Olympic studies Blackman had the following to say:

“So, what is what we do have to do with the Olympic values? What does the USOC have to with Olympic values? The truth is it goes back to what I said in the very beginning. We believe that the best way to inspire people, the best way to fulfill that part of our mission is to empower our athletes to be the best that they can be. It's not people standing up at the podium describing the values of Olympism. Quite frankly, our athletes embody those values in the way that they speak and walk and compete and everything that they do. So, our mission at the USOC is to raise as much as we can in the way of resources to support our athletes” (ibid).

Elizabeth Hanley, who was an Associate Professor at Penn State University, has attended every U.S. National Olympic Academy between 1977 and 1991, when they ended. She was also in attendance at reestablishment of the National Academy in 2014. Hanley suggests that there has been and still is too much emphasis on medals and winning in the US, and that the values of the Olympic Movement get lost in the drive for the medal count. “There is a strong need for

Olympic education in school and community programmes to teach values, morals, life-skills and emphasise the academic benefits of participation in sport,” she is quoted as saying (Vermillion 2014, p. 44). She has long lobbied for a return of the US Olympic Academy as a setting for discussing these issues and concerns.

Direction and Future Development of Olympic Education in the United States

The direction and future development of Olympic education in the United States with support of a new USNOA has great potential as interviews with officers of the USOC in a study reported by Vermillion suggest (2014). The USOC supported the 2013 Ethnic and Minority Women in Coaching Leadership Conference to provide professional and leadership development to ethnic and minority women. USOC also strives to incorporate a variety of community outreach and educational programmes to ensure that U.S. athletes stay active and engaged in sport from the beginner stages to the elite National Governing Body level. These programmes range from athlete outreach opportunities to partnerships with community sport organisations and the annual Olympic Day celebration and encourage athletes to make a difference in their communities and around the world. As Blackman (2014) notes: “It’s not the words that we put into books or on websites or in newspapers. It’s really the actions and the lives of our athletes that make the difference”.

In her study Vermillion (2014) asks a final question: “How can Olympic education programs be effectively developed and distributed in our country and what are the opportunities and challenges facing the development of a national Olympic education program?” One of her interviewees offers part of an answer as follows:

“A key to keeping children active is to collaborate with the National Governing Bodies in emphasizing increased membership, and grass roots education and development. We also partner with 34 Multi-Sport Organization members such as Boys and Girls Clubs of America to ensure that youth stay active and engaged in sport. Among our leading challenges from an education and development standpoint are resources and funding. As a non-profit organization that receives no federal funding, we rely on sponsorship revenue, U.S. broadcast rights and philanthropy to support athlete development at both the elite and grass roots levels” (Vermillion, 2014, p. 32).

More difficult and a challenge that faces all sport organisation is how to get a clear message about the future notion of the role of Olympic education into national coaches’ training. Creating a more broad-based approach to offering Olympic values-based education in school and community programmes would be a beginning. Another glaring issue in the USA that a focus on Olympic education might help to address is the lack of and elimination of proper physical education programs in U.S. schools, a trend that leaves many young children without daily physical activity. This is one key reason for a nationwide Olympic education programme that is all-inclusive and age appropriate. In the United States, the facts and realities of inadequate

provision for physical inactivity for children and youth are scary enough to promote our leaders to make a change. If physical activity combined with better overall education can lead to improved social, cognitive and physical development in children then we must act now (Vermilion, 2014). The United States is seeking to host another Olympic Games in Los Angeles. Reinvigorating the US Olympic Academy, implementing broad-based programming to stimulate participation in sport and physical activity, and delivering Olympic values education opportunities to schools, community groups and potential Olympic athletes in such a way that these initiatives can act as a build-up and a legacy for a future Games will be a necessary component of a future Olympic bid process.

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