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### The Benefits of High School Esports

Because of their assumptions about video games, many people view this activity negatively. The vast majority of people believe that video games are nothing more than a time killer, and they should not be included as a sport in high schools. No consideration is given to the possibility that it may assist students in interacting socially. Also, they fail to consider how it may help them enjoy school and prepare them for the future. High school esports benefit students and teachers. This is because it allows teachers to interact with more students, it lets students participate in activities they enjoy, and opens up more opportunities for students in the future.

One large benefit of Esports in high schools is that it allows students to connect with more students. This activity may allow them to engage with students they otherwise wouldn't, for example, introverted students or less talkative students. It may also have students who would normally not interact with each other bonding over an activity as stated by professor Contance Steinkuehler when he says, "you see valedictorians gaming cheek to jowl with kids who are doing poorly in basic coursework." This quote talks about how kids from different backgrounds, who wouldn't commonly interact with each other interact with others. Essentially, the quote

shows how they will interact willingly, and in many cases, become friends. While the benefits seem small they could have a large impact on someone's life.

Also high school Esports gives students the opportunity to participate in activities they enjoy. Giving students an activity they enjoy and teachers encouraging it will help students enjoy returning to school. Professor Steinkuehler describes an example of students becoming more invested in school. "For students who haven't previously shown interest in extracurricular activities, having one of their passions validated by teachers and school administrators can change their outlook on school altogether, said Steinkuehler. 'They feel for the first time that school is a place where they might belong and fit in.' " This describes how students who don't display interest in extracurricular activities will gain interest in them. More importantly, students recognized that their passions were validated by administrators and staff. This changed their outlook on school and made them feel like they belonged. Making students feel like they fit in will improve morale in the classroom, and more students may show more interest in school.

As well, high school esports are extremely beneficial for developing career skills. Esports may seem like nothing more than online gaming, but they can actually prepare students with

skills that can serve them well in the future. Lindsay Cesari, a junior high librarian, and esports coach states that “These programs also provide a chance to develop career-ready skills and social-emotional learning. Video-game playing, especially in a team setting, can develop and enhance collaboration, communication, empathy, decision-making, and problem-solving.” The following is a list of skills that many employers look for in their applicants. These skills can be developed through the amount of teamwork and cooperation required to participate in such an activity. Such skills could help a student get a job after high school. While esports may not seem useful to a student, that couldn’t be further from the truth.

One of the biggest concerns in high school Esports is Teams' toxicity, such as foul language. People are concerned about the potential harm of angry words exchanged between teams. This can, however, be avoided as Professor Steinkuehler indicates when she states, "teachers and administrators have the power to change the discourse by modeling appropriate behavior and monitoring the space." Additionally, she mentions that "unsportsmanlike conduct isn't exclusive to video games." In addition to the problem of unsportsmanlike conduct in e-sports, it also occurs in other sports, such as football. Also discussed is how teachers and staff can positively influence sportsmanship. Teachers and staff can help avoid Esports toxicity.

Esports in high schools are significant because they can benefit students. There is a possibility that esports could benefit a student's future or even to their school. There is a possibility that students will be offered a scholarship to a college looking to form an Esports team. They could also gain skills to help them find a job. Esports should be accepted and built upon in schools across the country. If more schools took in Esports as an actual sport it could help them support their students with more options to benefit them.

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