

Integrity of the Game vs. Economic Impact (Oklahoma Case Studies)

Doctoral Lecture: The Commodification of State School Land and the Role of Public Education Officials

Presented to: Oklahoma State Superintendent Ryan Walters

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Study Title: *Integrity of the Game vs. Economic Impact (Politics): The Oklahoma Business Plan*

Executive Overview:

This lecture presents critical findings from an extensive doctoral research project investigating youth sports governance and public resource exploitation in Oklahoma. Specifically, it analyzes how USSSA-sanctioned youth sports tournaments have utilized Oklahoma public school facilities—especially those located on *State School Land*—with little to no fiscal transparency or oversight.

Key Findings:

Dataset Source: AIUSSSA (2001–2025)

Scope: Oklahoma High Schools & Junior High Schools

- **Total USSSA Events Held on State School Land:** 15
- **Total Minimum Games Played:** 4,177
- **Total Team Entry Fees Collected:** \$1,264,340.53
- **Total Umpire Pay:** \$332,040.00
- **Estimated Economic Impact:** \$1,596,380.53

These events represent a substantial financial enterprise operating on school grounds—grounds that are taxpayer-funded and governed under CLO (Commissioners of the Land Office) and other education-based public land trusts.

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Pottawatomie County School Tax Reference:

This research also brings to light the *Pottawatomie County school sales tax*, which was recently extended indefinitely. Among its stated purposes is the provision of **utility payments** for county school facilities.

Concern: Events hosted by USSSA and similar private youth sports groups are actively **commodifying school facilities**, with utility costs likely subsidized by county tax revenues. This constitutes a **public-to-private pipeline** of economic benefit, with **no transparency, oversight, or rental income disclosures**.

Federal Facility Abuse – Lions Club Ballfields:

In addition to state land concerns, my research documents the **Lions Club Ballfields**, a federally governed property conveyed to the City of Shawnee under the **Instrument of Transfer Executive Order of 1947**. This land was designated for public use, yet it has been exploited for private youth sports business interests with:

- No federal compliance reporting
- No documented lease agreements or revenue disclosures
- Evidence of municipality misrepresentation and possible fraud

Federal Investigation Recommended: This case now requires federal oversight, as city officials have leveraged public and federally held lands for personal or political gain without proper authorization or financial accountability.

Broader Implications & Ethics Review:

The recent **Florida USSSA RICO settlement** exposed a nationwide failure in financial reporting, transparency, and fair practice within USSSA. Oklahoma, rather than correcting course, appears to be enabling similar behavior through:

- No state-mandated facility rental disclosure system
- No county-level oversight for tournaments on school grounds
- No public accounting of team entry fee collections
- Utility subsidies provided indirectly by county taxes

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Calls for Oversight & Reform:

This is a direct appeal to **Superintendent Ryan Walters** as a constitutional officer with responsibility over Oklahoma public schools. As such, the following questions and recommendations are proposed:

1. **Does the State Department of Education maintain a register of tournaments or events held on school facilities?**
2. **Are any revenue-sharing or lease/rental agreements required?**
3. **Can you confirm whether county tax dollars are used to subsidize utilities during private events?**
4. **Will your office audit or investigate these findings?**

Official Complaints Filed:

- **Oklahoma Attorney General Citizen Complaint:** Filed by Kenneth R. Crawford, calling for review of fiscal mismanagement on public land.
- **IRS Form 211 Whistleblower Submission:** Filed with full documentation of unreported revenues from USSSA events hosted on public land.

Closing Reflection:

As I have tried to sound the alarms privately with a transparent document trail, this is an opportunity for you to review. I have yet to determine your **ripple effect**, but it will soon be revealed.

Will you take this issue seriously? Or will your ripple effect get in the way? It's a shame that families are suffering due to the lack of taxpayer protections.

Youth Sports has become **political suicide** unless decisive leaders are willing to fix the **deep-rooted culture of exploitation**. With **25 years of data analysis**, this research paves the way for a compliant, efficient, and transparent system—one that brings grassroots programs back to our communities.

Kenneth R. Crawford

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