

*Taunton Public Schools'*

# ***AFTER SCHOOL BRAZILIAN JIU JITSU PROGRAM***



*Seeking \$23,000 from The Wallace  
Foundation to establish a free Brazilian Jiu  
Jitsu program in the Taunton High School  
Field House*

*By Thomas Correia*

*December 18, 2018*

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December 12, 2018

Robert D. Nagel  
Chief Investment Officer and Assistant Treasurer  
The Wallace Foundation  
5 Penn Plaza  
New York, NY 10001

Dear Mr. Nagel,

I am writing to The Wallace Foundation for the purpose of requesting \$23,000 for the organization and implantation of a five day per week, after-school, two hour Brazilian Jiu Jitsu program for the Taunton Public School system. Attached is a grant proposal which details the need for nondiscriminatory extra-curricular activities, the benefits of physical exercise for youth, and benefits of learning self defense programs. Brazilian Jiu Jitsu can build self confidence, instill humbleness, and a sense of community for all who engage in it.

I have been a practitioner of this martial art for six years and have personally witnessed all of these benefits in not only myself, but in my training partners as well. From my experiences, I firmly believe granting the Taunton Public School System the funds needed for this after school Brazilian Jiu Jitsu program will provide healthy athletic experiences for all participants, create new friendships while bringing students together, foster discipline and respect, provide self defense skills, and share the beautiful art of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu to those who might not have exposure otherwise.

The Taunton Public School System is a growing school district and creating additional extra curricular activities that promote health, discipline, and community will be a great opportunity for all students, especially those who are excluded from school team-sports. If you have any questions, please contact me at (508) 812-5408 or reach me by email at [tacorreia96@gmail.com](mailto:tacorreia96@gmail.com). Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best regards,

Thomas Correia

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## 1. *Statement of Need*

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A serious problem facing America's youth today is a lack of physical activity, so much so that in 2010, President Obama created the Task Force on Childhood Obesity<sup>1</sup>. Taunton Public Schools have long-established middle school and high school team-sport programs, but there is a downfall to employing these types of programs. They require tryouts. As many can remember from primary school sports, the tryout process can be stressful, divisive, and intimidating. These factors may turn students who wish to give an athletic pursuit their best efforts, regardless of skill or ability, away from participating in athletic ventures. I propose a means of solving this issue while providing additional benefits.

A feasible way to produce an athletic outlet for all who wish to try is funding an afterschool program which would not discriminate based on skill level and ability. The majority of Taunton's afterschool athletic programs are cut-programs; students show up for tryouts, have their skills and abilities assessed by coaches, and those who are less desirable are cut from the team. With the exception of the cross country team, no other athletic teams provide an opportunity for students to work hard and watch themselves grow, both mentally and physically, alongside their peers without potentially being cut from a team. As a former captain for my high school football and baseball teams, the one thing that I always regretted was seeing friends and classmates, who wanted a chance to step on the field or just be a part of a larger community, unable to share in my experiences because they did not make the team.

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<sup>1</sup> Eschmeyer, Debra. "Onward." *National Archives and Records Administration*, National Archives and Records Administration. 2017. [letsmove.obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/](https://letsmove.obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/)

As a former student in the Taunton Public School System and a leader in its afterschool sports programs, I am a first-hand witness to the need for an afterschool athletic program that employs inclusivity to the fullest. I believe that a Brazilian Jiu Jitsu program will serve to eliminate discrimination in participation, in addition to a number of benefits that come from being a Brazilian Jiu Jitsu practitioner.

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## *1 a. Understanding Brazilian Jiu Jitsu*

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Brazilian Jiu Jitsu (BJJ) is the art of neutralizing a combative opponent through the use of leverage and grappling techniques with the ultimate goal of submitting your opponent. The training and competition in this sport takes place on standard wrestling mats, but after that, equipment and gear are relatively inexpensive. BJJ has several competition styles including gi, no-gi. A “gi” is the traditional Japanese martial arts attire: a two-piece white garment worn in judo and other martial arts. A gi typically consists of loose-fitting pants and a jacket that is closed with a cloth belt. Due to the high costs of this attire, usually averaging around \$100 per gi, this after-school BJJ program will only offer no-gi style BJJ. This allows for children to participate with relative ease. Proper equipment in no-gi BJJ only includes gym clothes and a mouthguard, which can be supplied to each student with relatively low program costs.



(Figure 1.1)

BJJ has no minimum requirements or prerequisites for beginners. Employing a belt system, each student begins at the level of white belt and is then promoted sequentially to black belt at the discretion of the instructor. This promotes a welcoming aspect for all students since they would never be turned away from joining.

BJJ is as martial art. It is designed for self defense in combat. But this does not mean that it is more violent or more dangerous than any of the other sports programs found in public school systems across the country. In fact, a Stanford Children's Health Study in association with the Consumer Product Safety Commission did not even list BJJ among the top 15 most injury producing athletic activities; behind football, skiing, and trampolines.<sup>2</sup> The type of training found in BJJ is slow-paced, technical, and deliberate. Known as situational drilling, students are placed into hypothetical situations and are taught the techniques to safely neutralize a threat. In no way do students fight each other during training. Aggressive and dangerous attitudes are discouraged and personal safety, as well as your training partner's safety, take priority over ego and competition.

Large amounts of practice time are dedicated to keeping a healthy and functional body. Stretching, yoga, body weight, and circuit training are common exercises used by BJJ instructors. This is dramatically important considering the sedentary nature of youth in America today. Joint mobility, balance, strength, and flexibility are all emphasized in BJJ. Sharpening these physical aspects not only promotes a healthy adolescent life, but physical activity has been proven to be the most modifiable risk factor in preventing "cardiovascular disease and a widening variety of other chronic diseases, including diabetes mellitus, cancer (colon and breast), obesity, hypertension, bone and joint diseases (osteoporosis and osteoarthritis), and depression."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> "Sports Injury Statistics." *Stanford Children's Health - Lucile Packard Children's Hospital Stanford*, Stanford Children's Health Study and the Consumer Product Safety Commission, [www.stanfordchildrens.org/en/topic/default?id=sports-injury-statistics-90-P02787](http://www.stanfordchildrens.org/en/topic/default?id=sports-injury-statistics-90-P02787).

<sup>3</sup> Warburton, Darren, E.R. "Health benefits of physical activity: the evidence." CMA Media Inc. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1402378/>

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## *2. Statement of Request*

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The formal request of this proposal is this: a grant in the sum of \$23,000 to organize a five day per week, after-school, two hour Brazilian Jiu Jitsu program for the Taunton Public School system, provide an approved instructor through the Carlos Machado black belt lineage, and offer one bus from each of the participating schools as a means of transportation, on behalf of The Wallace Foundation

As the mission statement of The Wallace Foundation lays out, its purpose is to “foster improvements in learning and enrichment for disadvantaged children and the vitality of the arts for everyone.” This program would do just that; it will foster improvements in learning self defense techniques as well as discipline, offer a free opportunity to disadvantaged children, and provide access to the art for everyone. Furthermore, it would offer a new and welcoming community for all students looking to expand their social circle, create new friendships, or just get active. Granting the funds for a BJJ program in the Taunton Public Schools System would help further the mission of the foundation and provide an inclusive healthy opportunity for all Taunton students.

This grant would cover all expense needed to run the program for an entire school year. After initial costs, the program would be able to be funded each year for less than half the cost of this initial grant request; only requiring an instructor salary and safety equipment for each additional year of the program. Its low yearly cost after the initial grant request serves to benefit the programs longevity and improves its chances of becoming a staple in Taunton Public School athletics.



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## 3. *Description of Proposed Work*

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### **Goals of the Program:**

The Brazilian Jiu Jitsu afterschool program aims to complete three main objectives:

1. Provide a nondiscriminatory athletic community for all willing participants.
2. Improve the physical and mental health of students ages 10-18 (grades 5-12).
3. Provide self-defense techniques to all participants.

With the approval of this grant request, each of these goals would be met due to the very nature of becoming a martial arts practitioner. Accepting all willing participants into the program fosters a sense of community among students, not because they each were selected for their athletic abilities, but because of a mutually-recognized act of courage for actively working to improve themselves. The exercise and training that comes with practicing BJJ not only improves physical health, but it also improves mental health. Aside from exercise's proven benefits on the symptoms of depression, BJJ consists of innumerable amounts of techniques and moves which require muscle memory, repetition, and discipline. BJJ is just as much of a mental art as it is a martial art. UFC commentator, comedian, and pop-culture icon, Joe Rogan, once said that Brazilian Jiu Jitsu is a "moving chess match, where all the rules are changing every second."<sup>4</sup> The nature of the art alone is enough to ensure that effective self-defense techniques will be provided to each and every student. Not only does it equip students with an education on how to stay safe in a dangerous situation, but BJJ can also promote self-confidence, educating the

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<sup>4</sup> Rogan, Joe. "The Joe Rogan Experience." 2015.

students themselves about their own physical capabilities and their potential for improvement in all undertakings.

**Methods and Schedule Overview:**

Upon the approval of this grant proposal, I will immediately begin preparations with program coordinators to organize and prepare its implementation for the start of the 2019 – 2020 school year. The Taunton Public Schools athletic department will provide students and parents with announcements of the program beginning of the 2019 spring semester. By the end of the 2019 school year, students and parents will be provided with permission slips and liability forms. The program will employ a rolling-participation method. This means that after the start of the program in the fall of 2019, students will continuously be allowed to join and will not have to worry about meeting an enrollment deadline.

The program will be taught by a Carlos Machado-certified brown belt, from 2:30 PM – 4:30 PM, five days per week. For participating students at Friedman Middle and Martin Middle Schools, one school bus per school will be provided at the end of the school day (2:00 PM). Those students will be bussed to the field house at the high school at no additional cost to provide equal opportunity for all who wish to join.

The weekly schedule is subject to organized events put on by the schools that require the use of the gym and for those situations, practice will be canceled. Because practice takes place inside, weather will only impact practice if public school cancelations are issued.

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## *4. Description of Available Facilities*

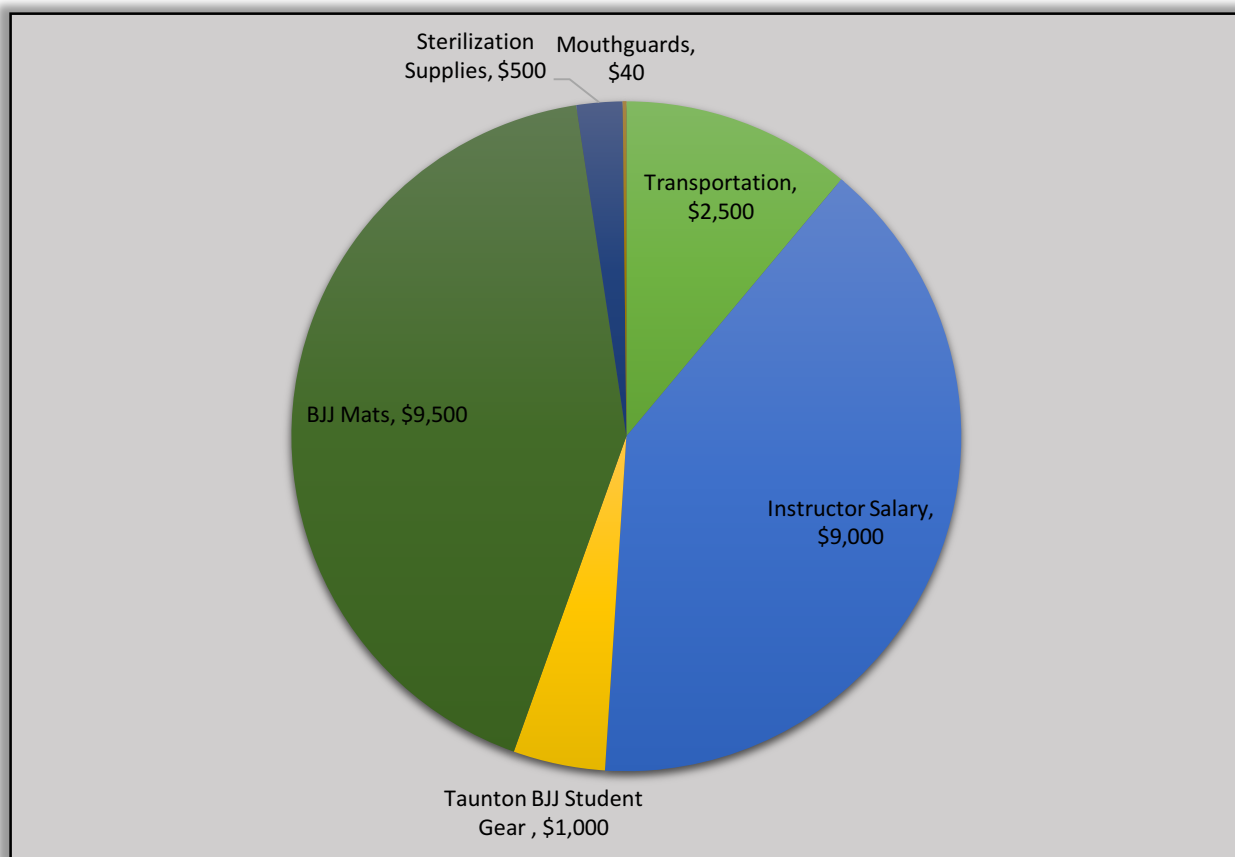
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Not only is this idea unique to the types of athletic programs normally offered by public school systems, but it is also very feasible in terms of facilities. Parker Middle School shares a second floor gymnasium in the field house of Taunton High School. This area is not used for formal afterschool programs; remaining empty after school operating hours. It is complete with two full-sized basketball courts and would provide the perfect space to hold BJJ practices. The gymnasium also has male and female locker rooms to accommodate all participants and provides an opportunity to shower after practice.

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## 5. Budget

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(Figure 5.1) Pie Chart displaying distribution of grant funds.

The asking price for the proposed grant is \$23,000.00. This amount is subject to change as more research is done regarding the cost of transportation, instructor salary, Taunton Public Schools BJJ student gear, mats, sterilization supplies, and mouthguards. The projected cost is exactly \$22,547.00, but the extra \$463.00 with allow for likely-needed wiggle room.

**Transportation:**

I plan to arrange for two of the busses in the Taunton Public Schools System's fleet to provide transportation to the Parker Middle School upstairs gymnasium. Each bus would be used for transportation from one of the two additional schools included in this program, Martin Middle School and Friedman Middle School. Only two are needed as the rest of the public schools are below grade 5 and Parker Middle School shares a campus with Taunton High School. The sum of \$2,500.00 will be needed for these two busses to be available every school day.

**Instructor Salary:**

Unlike mainstream sports coaching, BJJ requires an official BJJ certified instructor to teach the art. This means that unlike most short cuts school systems take, like hiring the history teacher as the head football coach because he enjoys Sunday football, will be absolutely unacceptable. Taught and learned incorrectly, BJJ instructions can result in personal injury or the injury of others. Due to the school year being 10 months long, there being an average of 18 school days per month, and the fact our program will run every school day from 2:15-4:15, I am proposing the instructor's salary to compose \$9,000.00 of the requested \$23,000.00. This equate to \$25.00 per hour for 360 hours of instruction time. This may seem high, but let me put to rest any doubts, this type of expertise possessed by certified BJJ instructors would normally demand a six-figure salary. My previous BJJ instructor Peter Ronin of Ronin Jiu Jitsu in Rehoboth, MA, will be the proposed instructor. He is a Carlos Machado-certified brown belt and his knowledge and kindness will be a privilege to have as part of the program.

**TPS BJJ Student Gear:**

In order to help the students involved in the program feel like they are a part of a distinct community, gear like t-shirts and sweatshirts will be made available by to the students after they have completed their tenth class. The sum of \$1,000.00 will be reserved for student gear.

**BJJ Mats:**

To not interfere with the schedule or equipment of the Taunton High wrestling team, I am also requesting an order of three 42' x 42' Dollamur FLEXI-Roll wrestling mats quoted at \$9,507.00 including shipping and handling. These mats are required for the safety of those training and are proper equipment for BJJ.

**Sterilization Supplies:**

BJJ involves human to human contact on rubber-coated foam mats. As a result, human body fluids such as saliva, sweat, and blood are constantly being released on the mats. In order to combat bad hygiene, odor, and potential health risks like ringworm, athlete's foot, and bacteria growth, the mats must be cleaned with athletic surface disinfectant after each use. The sum of \$500.00 will be reserved for disinfectant.

**Student Mouthguards:**

As with all contact sports, the use of a mouthguard in practice and competition can help to protect the teeth and mouth tissue of those involved. Safety will be a huge requirement of the program and a mouthguard policy will be enforced. The cost of providing free mouthguards for the students is \$39.99 per 100 mouthguards and only one order per year will likely have to be made.

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## 6. Summary

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### **Benefits to The Wallace Foundation:**

If The Wallace Foundation accepts this grant proposal, they would be funding a program that serves two of the foundations initiatives: improving students' experiences after school and expanding arts education. The Wallace Foundation will be proud of the learning experiences, friendships, personal achievements, and community that will result from this after school Brazilian Jiu Jitsu program.

### **Lack of Local Competition:**

Emphasis is put on the fact that there is only one other school district in Massachusetts, Monomoy High School in Harwich, that offers Brazilian Jiu Jitsu. This is a fantastic opportunity to expose children to a new physical activity. Likewise, it is just as good an example to local school districts to employ after school programs, like this one, which focus on inclusivity, health, and community.

### **Concern for Sedentary and Excluded Children:**

Obesity initiatives taken by the White House since 2010 casts light on a major issue our nation today. Few things are better for childhood development than physical activity. Not only would it encourage students to get active, but a BJJ program would provide a welcoming community for student who otherwise could not participate in high school athletics. The lack of nondiscriminatory athletics in Taunton Public Schools calls for action to be taken.

**Urge to Action**

In conclusion, the students of the Taunton Public School System would greatly benefit from the creation of an after school Brazilian Jiu Jitsu program through a \$23,000 grant from The Wallace Foundation. This program will provide students with a cost-free, certified martial arts program where they can be active for two hours a day, become a part of a nondiscriminatory community, learn real world self-defense skills, become humbled by experienced practitioners, and increase their confidence and self image. This program also promises to become a stable part of Taunton school's athletics; requiring only half of the original start up grant for each additional year it is funded. I am well versed in the needs of implementing BJJ programs due to my life long experience in combat sports, including BJJ, and my time spent in the Taunton Public School System. I firmly believe that this grant from The Wallace Foundation would improve opportunities for the students of Taunton, Massachusetts and achieve the goals of the foundations initiatives.

I sincerely thank you for your time and consideration,

Thomas Correia  
Taunton Public Schools Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Program Coordinator



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## Source Page

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Eschmeyer, Debra. "Onward." *National Archives and Records Administration*, National Archives and Records Administration, 2017, [letsmove.obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/](https://letsmove.obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/).  
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<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1402378/>

### Image Credits:

Cover page - <https://www.maakenwood.com/brazilian-jiu-jitsu/>

Figure 1.1 - <http://wayofjiujitsu.com/programs/jiu-jitsu-for-kids>

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## *The Wallace Foundation Proposal Requirements*

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Submit an inquiry describing your project, your organization, the estimated total cost of the project and the portion requiring funding to [grantrequest@wallacefoundation.org](mailto:grantrequest@wallacefoundation.org).

Proposals must work to improve at least one of the companies five initiatives.

### School Leadership:

Strengthening the leadership of principals and other key figures to improve student achievement.

### After School:

Helping cities improve access to high-quality after-school programs through coordinating the work of government agencies, private funders, nonprofits and others groups.

### Summer and Expanded Learning:

Supporting school district and other efforts to expand learning time during summer and the school day or year.

### Arts Education:

Expanding arts learning opportunities for children and teens in school and beyond.

### Audience Development for the Arts:

Supporting arts organizations to develop and test ideas for reaching new audiences so that many more people might enjoy the benefits of the arts.