

Why does Team Esface participate in Travel Tournaments? Competing in any sport requires lots of skills. One of those skills, perhaps the most elusive to teach, is the skill of how to bring the best of your ability—consistently--anytime, anywhere, against anyone. Just like shooting, ball handling, and finishing, that needs cultivation. Travel tournaments are an important part of that skill development and have the following goals:

1. **Expose teams to a new, high-level competition from outside of the Bay Area.** Particularly by 5th grade, our teams have played the local clubs many times and know which athletes are strong and which offense/defenses they prefer to deploy. We can't get complacent thinking we know the universe of competition. Also, being battle-tested in different environments and gyms is important.
2. **Strengthen the camaraderie of athletes and parents** on the road outside of our regular "comfort zones." Create memories with your teammates that you'll still smile about later in life.
3. **Enrich personal understanding of different cities and states.** The United States of America is big and varied and not like the Bay Area everywhere. Travel tournaments are one way to help develop a mature, direct perspective about life on and off the court through personal observation and experience.
4. **Have FUN and feel excited.** Remember back to being a kid? How incredible did it feel when you went on your first airplane-away competition or event? You felt GREAT. Proud. Excited. "Grown-up." We believe in No Child Left Behind, so we believe that all grade-level Black & TrueLeague Select teams should feel the thrill, fun, and excitement of travel tournaments.