National Federation of State High School Associations

National High School Activities Month

OCTOBER 2018

The National Federation of State High School Associations created National High School Activities Week in 1980 to increase the public's awareness of the values and needs of interscholastic activity programs. However, there was a need to celebrate the contributions and benefits young people experience by participation in sports and performing arts for an entire month. Hence, Activities Week has transformed into Activities Month. During this special time, the nation's high schools are encouraged to promote the values inherent in high school athletics and other activities such as speech, music, theatre and band.



National High School Activities Month is an opportunity to remind the public that already in place in every community is a comprehensive program addressing society's most current concerns, by:

- Finding and nurturing the best effort of each young participant;
- Encouraging students to stay in school, perform better academically and become better citizens;
- Demanding respect for fair play and appreciation for the equitable application of procedures, rules and regulations;
- Providing healthy lifestyle instruction;
- Challenging racism, sexism and classism through the active pursuit of teamwork and school spirit.

"High school sports and activity programs provide one of the best bargains in our community and nation and will continue to do so as long as our nation supports them as an integral part of the education of our young people. Not only do these programs teach the more than 11 million young people who participate in them valuable life skills lessons, such as ethics, integrity and healthy lifestyles, they also provide the best entertainment value in our nation.

"We have fundamental, empirical evidence that inter-scholastic activities provide a successful way in which to create healthy and successful citizens.

"Through National High School Activities Month, we have an opportunity to reflect on our participation as well as the participation of our children. Our nation must continue to support these programs and the life skills they provide America's youth."

– **Robert B. Gardner**
Executive Director
National Federation of State High School Associations

National Federation of State High School Associations

National High School Activities Month

OCTOBER 2018

National Sportsmanship, Fan Appreciation and Public-Address Announcers Week	October 1-6
National Performing Arts Activities Week	October 7-13
National Coaches/Sponsors/Advisors/Officials Week	October 14-20
National Community Service/Youth Awareness Week	October 21-27



National Federation of State
High School Associations

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National Federation of State High School Associations

National Sportsmanship, Fan Appreciation and Public-Address Announcers Week

OCTOBER 1-6, 2018
NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES MONTH

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National Federation of State High School Associations

National Performing Arts Activities Week

OCTOBER 7-13, 2018
NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES MONTH

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National Coaches/Sponsors/ Advisors/Officials Week

OCTOBER 14-20, 2018
NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES MONTH

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National Community Service/Youth Awareness Week

OCTOBER 21-27, 2018
NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES MONTH

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OCTOBER 1-6, 2018
NATIONAL SPORTSMANSHIP, FAN APPRECIATION AND PUBLIC-ADDRESS ANNOUNCERS WEEK

Purpose: A week to encourage awareness and discussion about the importance of sportsmanship, ethics and integrity to the conduct of interscholastic programs, and a time to thank the spectators who support activity programs throughout the year. In addition, acknowledge the dedication and service that public-address announcers perform every contest. Use social media as a strategy to promote your activities and garner community and school support.

What you can do:

- Make up positive cheers, chants or songs
- Print bookmarks with sportsmanship ideas; ask the school library to slip them into all books
- Hand out incentives to faculty, staff and students "caught" being a good sport
- Use table tents in cafeteria, reading lounges or library for sportsmanship messages
- Welcome visiting teams with an announcement over public-address system
- Make posters for contest
- Cheer good plays by opposing team
- Incorporate the NFHS Sportsmanship. It's Up to You.™ campaign implementation and resource kit into your school's sportsmanship program
- Offer tailgate party with hot chocolate and refreshments
- Offer free program to "selected fans" (based on school colors or some other criteria)
- Give Booster Club members coupon for free pop and popcorn
- Introduce parents of players and cheerleaders during pregame ceremony
- Give school shirt to most avid fans (student and adult)
- Present chair cushion to a dedicated adult fan
- Dress up in your school spirit outfit
- During the course of the season, acknowledge season ticket-holders by name
- Interview your school's public-address announcer on the local school television or radio station
- Host Public-Address Announcer contests, where the winner gets to publicly announce a live junior high/middle school contest
- Invite your school's public-address announcer to explain his/her role and why he/she enjoys being a part of the action

OCTOBER 7-13, 2018
NATIONAL PERFORMING ARTS ACTIVITIES WEEK

Purpose: A time to focus on the students, coaches and sponsors involved in performing arts programs.

What you can do:

- Recognize performing arts participants at pep rally
- Have reception for students interested in joining performing arts programs; invite current participants
- Have alumni program with former performing arts students
- Establish "Awards" program (Oscars, Emmys, Tonys, etc.) to recognize contributors to performing arts programs
- Create magnetic posters for display on lockers of students involved in performing arts
- Present program to elementary school or judge "You Got Talent" style program at local nursing home
- Invite local actors or musicians for performance with students
- Do feature story in school newspaper
- Present drama skit during lunch
- Have a performing arts participant read the morning or afternoon announcements in character
- Have former band members return to play with current band
- Have former band members who are parents return to play with current band
- Sponsor a "Mystery Dinner" where diners have a role in the mystery-themed play during dinner

OCTOBER 14-20, 2018
NATIONAL COACHES, ADVISORS, SPONSORS, OFFICIALS WEEK

Purpose: A time to recognize the contributions of high school coaches, advisors, sponsors and contest officials.

What you can do:

- Ask non-coaching faculty to serve as "coach of the day" to give them different perspective
- Honor different coaches and advisors each hour of the day
- Recognize coaches and sponsors and their families on public-address system during events
- Invite retired coaches to attend practice or event
- Play "Name that Coach" clue game
- Send letters or emails of thanks to a coach, sponsor or advisor
- Host breakfast for officials who help in sports and fine arts
- Class competition of "You Make the Call" and feature questions regarding sport rules
- Have round-table discussion with students, officials and parents
- Donate sportsmanship book or video to library on behalf of officials
- Send certificates of recognition and appreciation letters to officials
- Post signs thanking officials
- Provide NFHS sportsmanship cards to all officials who work contests at your school
- Present the NFHS Sportsmanship-Ethics-Integrity Award to deserving officials, coaches, advisors and supporters.

OCTOBER 21-27, 2018
NATIONAL COMMUNITY SERVICE/YOUTH AWARENESS WEEK

Purpose: A time to give back to your community and show your appreciation for their support of your programs. This week also can be used to promote fund-raising efforts that support interscholastic programs. In addition, this is a perfect opportunity to promote healthy lifestyles and prevention efforts.

What you can do:

- Recognize business partners in program or announcements at contests or events
- Offer a beneficial service to business partners, i.e., clean parking lot, cut grass, etc.
- Offer free admission to event to representatives of program advertisers
- Hold open house in gymnasium; invite alumni, businesses and media to attend
- Learn more about high school activities on the Internet at www.nfhs.org
- Do radio (school) and TV PSAs (community access) with activities participants
- Offer school souvenirs at auction
- Put announcement on school marquee
- Invite local print and electronic media to do a story on the event
- Videotape and put on YouTube or on the school's website
- Offer pregame meal with nutritional analysis
- Hold student workshops on health issues; recognize school nurse, trainer and team doctor
- Offer students opportunity to "shadow" health professionals
- Create and display bulletin boards and posters dealing with healthy lifestyle issues
- Ask students to prepare resource directory of community agencies
- Read a "health tip of the hour"
- Hold assembly with guest speakers, such as nutritionists, local county health officials, and local college or university experts

2018 NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES MONTH
WAYS TO CELEBRATE

October 1-6 National Sportsmanship, Fan Appreciation and Public-Address Announcers Week	October 7-13 National Performing Arts Activities Week	October 14-20 National Coaches/ Sponsors/Advisors/Officials Week	October 21-27 National Community Service/Youth Awareness Week
Make up positive cheers, chants or songs	Recognize performing arts participants at pep rally	Ask noncoaching faculty to be "coaches of the day"	Offer free admission to event to representatives of program advertisers
Print bookmarks with sportsmanship ideas; ask library to slip them into all books	Invite middle school band students to perform with high school band at football game	Host breakfast for all sponsors and coaches	Hold open house; invite school board members, alumni, businesses and media to attend
Give incentives to faculty, staff and students "caught" being a sport	Give program at elementary school or judge "You Got Talent" program	Honor different coaches and advisors each hour of the day	Do radio or television public-service announcements with activities participants
Make posters for contest	Do feature story in campus newspaper	Play "Name that Coach" clue game	Recognize business partners and school board members in programs
Use table tents in cafeteria, reading lounges or library for sportsmanship messages	Invite local actors or musicians for performance with students	Recognize coaches, sponsors and their families during events	Offer school souvenirs at auction for funding community service project
Welcome visiting teams with announcement over PA system	Organize youth talent program for community	Let "fan of the week" sit on bench with team	Set aside a portion of practice time to discuss healthy lifestyle issues
Provide Booster Club members coupon for free pop and popcorn	Present drama skit during lunch	Host breakfast for officials who help in sports and performing arts	Hold workshops on health issues; recognize school nurse, athletic trainer, team doctor
Present free program to fans (based on school colors or other criteria)	Have former band members return to play with current band	Class competition of "You Make the Call;" feature questions on sports rules	Create and display bulletin boards and posters dealing with healthy lifestyle issues
Give school shirt to most avid fans (student and adult)	Sponsor "Mystery Dinner" (a dinner where guests have a role in the mystery-themed play)	Have round-table discussion with students, officials and parents	Offer pregame meal with nutritional analysis
Offer tailgate party with refreshments		Post signs thanking officials	Offer students opportunity to "shadow" health professionals
Introduce parents of players and cheerleaders during pregame ceremony		Donate sportsmanship-related book or video to library on behalf of officials	Have students prepare directory of community agencies
Ask media to feature fan with longest attendance record at high school event		Send certificates of recognition and appreciation letters to officials, coaches, advisors and supporters.	

NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES MONTH
OCTOBER 2018

TO PUBLICIZE OR CELEBRATE THROUGHOUT THE MONTH

- ☑ Use social media to promote activities at your school
- ☑ Invite school board members to read a public-service announcement on the value of activities at school functions or pep rallies
- ☑ Display school board members photos with athletes and/or activity participants around school or in school event programs
- ☑ Public-service announcements to local radio and television stations and newspapers
- ☑ Place on school website, school radio or television station PSA spots
- ☑ Morning or home-room announcements
- ☑ School phone messages
- ☑ Posters or bulletin board displays
- ☑ Assembly or pep rally
- ☑ Poster or essay contest
- ☑ Mayoral proclamation
- ☑ Invite public officials to be guests at contests or planned activities and recognize their attendance
- ☑ Send letters to local church leaders asking them to recognize participating high school students
- ☑ Ask civic organizations to recognize student participants, their parents or fans who are members of their organization
- ☑ Ask local merchants to advertise discounts during week to those with ticket stub or program from school event
- ☑ Create a contest between each class (freshman, sophomore, junior and senior) to devise the best way to celebrate National High School Activities Month

National Federation of State High School Associations

What High School Activities Mean to Me. . .

CHARACTER IS WHAT YOU ARE WHEN NO ONE IS LOOKING

When wealth is lost, nothing is lost;
When health is lost, something is lost;
When character is lost, all is lost.

– Author Unknown

We would like to thank the members of the NFHS Student Services Committee for securing the following testimonials.

TESTIMONIALS



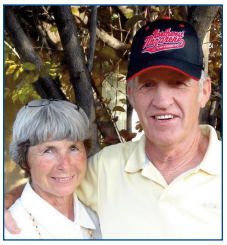
Shawn Stanley, Coach, West Salem (Oregon) High School

I sit here as a coach and teacher of 23 years and cannot imagine where I would be without the coaches and teammates from my formative years. Many fabulous teachers make great connections with young people during the school day. However, I believe that nothing compares to athletics and activities when it comes to molding young women and men of character. These extracurricular activities provide coaches and student-athletes unmatched opportunities to develop and solidify all the things that will make them successful when their playing days are over – things like being a part of something bigger than themselves and sacrificing for the team. Secondly, the discipline that comes from training and practicing. There is no better place to learn how to win with class, but most importantly bounce back from defeat and disappointment. Our athletes learn how to be "coachable" and accept constructive criticism. I also believe they are forced to develop the ability to solve problems, whether the problem is related to a sport or to relationships with teammates and coaches. I am very aware that everything that a coach does is noticed by his or her players. How my coaches treated me, how they treated others, and how they held me accountable to those standards is what shaped me into the man, father and husband I am today. I got into coaching to try to give back to young people the character traits and values that were instilled in me by my coaches. I truly believe that athletics participation is one of the last places where young people can be held to the highest standards of character, ethics and values. Developing the character of my athletes is not part of my job, it IS my job. I am extremely grateful for the opportunity that I have been given to help mold young people into adults of character, and I cannot think of a greater calling.



Shawn Pratt, Director of Athletics, McKinney (Texas) Independent School District

Over the years when presenting about educational athletics to our coaches, parents and community, I have always tried to communicate how important athletics can be in the overall educational experience of a student-athlete. My oldest son exemplified this during his time as a student-athlete in our school district. My son was a good high school player but was not an all-star or Division I material. He excelled academically, finishing No. 5 in his class out of 550 students. He was one point away from a perfect score of 32 on the ACT exam. He is academically gifted. His senior year he received the Chancellor's Scholarship to Texas Christian University, a scholarship worth almost $180,000. Despite all of his academic accolades, athletics was equally important as it influenced my son's educational experience. As I have explained to different groups, being a member of his high school football team helped establish qualities and habits that have helped him become the outstanding young man he is today. Being in a program with 300 other young men from different neighborhoods, religions and socio-economic backgrounds provided him an opportunity to love, respect and work together for a common goal; an experience that has served as an invaluable lesson and one he will never forget. Athletics teaches young people grit and the courage to overcome obstacles. I use the reference of taking an athlete, placing them in an oven and turning it up to 400 degrees which teaches them to endure the heat to overcome hurdles in life. I am proud my son was an example of what I preach on a daily basis regarding our profession and what it does for kids.



Joel and Vikki Price, Spectators, Adrian (Oregon) High School

We've been watching school sports for 45 years. We've seen students begin tentatively and then finish seasons confidently. It is a "stage" for students to participate/experience something surrounded by the community that cares. It can be their first experience being a part of something larger than family. They learn commitment, completion and teamwork, thus gaining self-confidence. We love it! There is no place we'd rather be than Adrian Schools and cheering for kids. OSAA activities are where coaches, families and community come together for a valuable experience of life – winners regardless of the score.



Jim Hoar, Coach, Dennis-Yarmouth Regional High School, South Yarmouth, Massachusetts

There is a lot more to coaching the high school athlete than just wins and losses. The goal is to set up a program that will be consistent year in and year out, season after season. If this is done correctly, the successes will follow. Remember, a coach's role is of an educator first, and a coach second. Athletics is an extension of the classroom, teaching many lessons of life on the field, court or track. These lessons can be categorized into the 6 Cs.

- Commitment – an agreement or pledge to do something that you said you were going to do.
- Courage – mental or moral strength to persevere and withstand danger or fear.
- Character – the attributes or features that make up and distinguish you as an individual.
- Confidence – a feeling of one's inner strength or powers of self-reliance.
- Class – a group sharing the common goal, competing with dignity whether one is successful or not.
- Communication – being accountable to your team and coaches, making sure you talk or share with them what is going on in your world.

Today's athletes are no different than yesterday's. They are more informed by social media and perhaps parents are more involved; however, they are still all striving to improve and conquer their goals. A coach's job is to find their strengths, weaknesses and what motivates them. Long gone are the days of a coach telling an athlete "it's my way or the highway." There is too much information readily available to make many believe coaching is just looking up the latest workout on YouTube. Those who coach realize it's more than that. Every athlete is multidimensional and every dimension needs to be addressed.

The expectation of an exceptional coach should be challenging, motivating and educational all while meeting the individual needs of each athlete. Being consistent with the 6 Cs will foster your athletes to be the best they can be to themselves and their team.



Mikayla Chandler, Student, Old Rochester Regional High School, Mattapoisett, Massachusetts

Without sports, I don't know where I'd be today. I'm a little person, standing only 4-foot-2, from a small town in Massachusetts. But growing up, my parents never let my size be an excuse for not joining sports.

My earliest memory competing in sports was when I was five years old, playing soccer. I loved the game, but it soon became difficult for me to keep up with the other kids due to their size and speed. I did struggle frequently on the field, but my parents and friends always cheered me on, boosting my confidence. Even at the age of seven, I was filled with determination and a drive to be the best that I could be, that I never let anything stop me from doing what I loved.

Sports has taught me the importance and values of a team. When I think of my field hockey and track teammates and coaches, I think of family, rather than just people I play sports with. They're the people that make me the best athlete, as well as person, I can be every day. They're the ones constantly supporting me, and cheering me on loudly while I'm running, throwing, dribbling a ball down a field, or making or stopping goals.

Today, I'm a Paralympic-hopeful, internationally-ranked shot put thrower, and have been named an All-American two years in a row. Had it not been for my parents' simple act of signing me up for town soccer, I don't believe that I could have achieved these great things. Sports has taught me so many life lessons that extend beyond the classroom, and I hope that through my participation in athletics, I can continue to show others that you can do anything you put your mind to.



Allison Cook, Official, Portland, Oregon

Giving a technical foul that results in a game ejection is the most difficult call that I have ever made as an official. Often times, this hostile situation presents itself toward the end of a competitive game. All of a sudden, a teammate acts out of desperation and the official must end the student-athlete's participation for the evening. But what does that ejection really represent? A chance to mentor through discipline. High school sports are intended to create an inclusive, yet rigorous environment by administering consistent games under established sets of rules. By calling the technical foul, the official is communicating that the student-athlete's action is unacceptable. This form of discipline holds them accountable for their actions and requires them to have a respect for authority. Through this particular situation, the student-athlete is forced to practice self-control and develop some of life's necessary coping mechanisms.

As a whole, participation in athletics enables student-athletes to learn the fundamental character traits necessary to be successful in both the classroom and in all aspects of life to follow. I am thankful for the opportunity to mentor our future leaders; I hope that through effective communication sports will continue to cultivate integrity and respect in many generations to come.



Brandon Andrews, Assistant Principal, Swainsboro (Georgia) High School

As a product of a combined 70 years of education, my parents (Father-Assistant Principal/Athletic Director/Head Football and Mother-Business Education teacher), exuded in their children three priorities of life: God, family and education. Through my personal and professional life, the lessons of my parents from those three priorities are more evident each and every day. With parents who were extreme campaigners in education, they were also advocates of athletics and extracurricular activities. Throughout my life, I have been a high school/collegiate student-athlete, a state and national champion, teacher, coach and currently an assistant principal. Many variables and factors have played a major role in my equation for success throughout my life. One would venture to say the old adage "it takes a village to raise a child" served as a true real-life application. While a great deal of homage is owed to my parents, I must pay my reverence to the field of athletics and the individuals bestowed upon me as a vessel throughout my athletic career. Athletics served as enhancement and enrichment lessons already set forth by my parents. Interestingly, athletics served as a preparer for each phase(s) of my life experienced. The simple characteristics acquired from athletics such as doing right, being on time, working collaboratively with others, or just believing in something greater than yourself has prepared me for each and every journey traveled. Then, you have those dynamic characteristics acquired from athletics such as overcoming adversity, failure is not an option, being faithful in the midst of trials and tribulations, or loving and blessing each person you come in contact with each day with your God-given gift and talents. As a student-athlete, blood, sweat and tears are shared among a group of individuals who share a purpose that in many cases may lead to a statistical win or loss result. However, in life, morally, ethically and with values that have no price, that blood, sweat and tears will bring more wins than losses each day of our lives. As an adult, I find it amazing how transparent my life is to athletics as I shed the same blood, sweat and tears in this game we call life.



Kai Peterson, Student-Athlete, Waltrip High School, Houston, Texas

Today, as a student-athlete, life isn't a joy ride. There is so much pressure of performing in the classroom and on the court. There are many ways to approach these challenges. I use these situations to learn and guide my future to accomplish my career goals. In my career as a student I take pride in academics. I'm looking forward to furthering my education at college. School has taught me how to manage my time while playing sports. Being an athlete has helped me become modest. I admire athletes who are team players on the court and in the community. Athletes are portrayed as leaders, and I appreciate my success as an athlete. I'm glad I understand what it takes to become a student-athlete, and become mentally and physically balanced as a person.



Susan Kotowich-Dubrule, Parent, St. Paul (Alberta, Canada) Regional High School

I am a parent of two boys: my oldest, 18, is attending his first year of university; my youngest, 15, is in grade 10. They both became involved in school and community sports at a young age. Soccer, hockey and bantam football outside of school and then once in junior and senior high school, they were active members of the cross country running, volleyball, football, basketball, curling, badminton and track and field teams. As a person who was not involved in sports growing up, I quickly saw the value of children participating in sports whether as an individual or as a member of a team. Organized sport teaches children so many skills – punctuality, patience, resilience, work ethic, time management and leadership to name a few. Their involvement in sports has improved their communication skills and their ability to work with others. Being part of numerous sports teams has taught them to work and adjust to different leadership styles. They have learned how to be a good winner and a good loser. Sports have also shown them the value of volunteerism as they have experience their coaches giving of their personal time. My children took these lessons from their sports and applied them to their school work and other extracurricular activities. This has led to the development of a strong and confident character in both of my boys. Their study habits and work ethic are as strong in the classroom as on the court or field. An obvious impact of their involvement in sports has been their desire to stay fit by exercising, eating properly and getting enough sleep. Much of what they have gained from community and school sports will be used in their journey through life.



Joan Killick, Parent, Bishop Carroll High School, Calgary, Alberta, Canada

My son is a multi-sport athlete who lives and breathes participating in sports. I can't begin to adequately describe how important of a role school sports have played in his life. By the time he completes Grade 12, he will have played on 16 different sports teams in three years of high school, barring any injuries. This encompasses seven different sports. He also plays club soccer and competitive golf. He can't wait for rugby season to start even though it means waking up very early, practicing in the dark, in freezing temperatures, on icy fields. He has learned so much about sportsmanship, team goals, patience, dedication, hard work, communication and motivation through team sports. He passes these values onto the U10 soccer boys that he coaches. He strives to be a role model to them, as his coaches have been to him. He has learned to balance his workload with academics, sports and volunteerism. Sports have promoted that balance in his life and that sense of giving back to the community. He possesses leadership qualities that he developed through playing on teams. This led to helping co-found an athletic leadership council at school where they promote school athletics. Athletics permeates everything he does and helps to make him a better student. He will always be grateful to team sports for the huge impact they have made in his personal development and to the amazing coaches who helped him along the way.



Carlos Bagni, Student-Athlete, Bishop Carroll High School, Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Studying with a ball at my feet or working out before a test is a typical aspect of my academic routine. In my experience, athleticism and academics are intertwined, for me one cannot be accomplished without the other. Going from morning practice to participating in classes all day, and then having afternoon practice is not an uncommon day and mastering time management has become an essential skill, especially when trying to uphold a strong academic standard. Throughout my high school years, being involved on various teams has taught me how vital success in one correlates to success in the other. Becoming a student-athlete has reaped many benefits other than the achievements that comes with the sport. High school athletics has taught me what it means to be accountable not only for myself, but my teammates and the school I represent. What I do on the court is not solely a reflection of myself, but a reflection of my school and I strive to represent both as well as I can. Furthermore, my coaches have always stressed that I am a student first and an athlete second. This paramounts academics as well as having utmost respect for teammates and opposition alike above pure athletic ability. I personally believe that my success in high school, in relationship building and in character growth, is attributed to the lessons I have learned from being a high school athlete.



Nathan DeLany, Athletic Director, Marshfield (Wisconsin) High School

The late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in the moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy." Students who participate in activities will tell you that challenges, controversy and failure, or disappointment, are fears they have in their participation. How soon they forget their repeated attempts to ride their bikes as children. The drive and excitement, with tears, they had in knowing and believing it was possible and they were going to figure it out. Today, these perceived fears continue, but they are actual opportunities for greater understanding, knowledge, a work ethic and displays of perseverance. These opportunities teach students to rely on and trust teammates, coaches, advisors and classmates through these frustrating and difficult moments in time. Like the child on the bike, these are moments where we face a challenge and get back on the bike and try again. In my life's experience, as it is today, education-based athletics and activities provide the platform where students can experience challenges and can experiment with their mental and physical abilities, along with their classmates, to throw a four-seam fastball, find the solution or build a new molecular structure, or perform in a Broadway Musical. Those experiences help enhance the character of each individual, show the path to be an integral part of their communities and provide lasting memories long after they leave interscholastic activities.



Roxanne Price, Director of Compliance and Sporting Behavior, Ohio High School Athletic Association

I have often said that no one bears the pride of a school more than the one who puts on the uniform. I had the pleasure of wearing a purple-and-white uniform in tennis, basketball and track as a student-athlete at Fremont Ross High School in Fremont, Ohio, 40-plus years ago. My only regret is that I had the chance to wear the uniform(s) but three years, having grown up in the "junior high era." My high school at the time was a three-year high school. I also had the "misfortune" of not having interscholastic opportunities at the junior high level. I attended school during the time females did not have the interscholastic opportunities they have today.

Those three years were some of the most instrumental, pivotal years of my life. It was interscholastic athletics that gave me my sense of community. Whether I was rooting for the Little Giants or participating for them, I knew that win, lose or draw, I was in Little Giant country. Sports was not about championships, it was about community. My interscholastic experience taught me that drills increase skills, repetition improves results, and that sacrifice can lead to success.

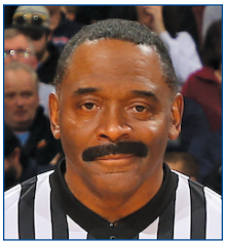
I fret that the sense of community, the sense of "hometown" and the camaraderie that sports helps to foster is being compromised. I was happy to be given the chance to participate in interscholastic athletics with those and for those with whom I grew up. Loyalty, pride, kinship and teamwork are words that describe my relationships and interscholastic experience. There was not the player movement, or the attempt to showcase individual skills like there is today. The form of competition that fosters community, loyalty and competitive balance is vital to our youth. Let us preserve the type of interscholastic participation that promotes these values.



Andrea Haas, Teacher, Wethersfield (Connecticut) High School

Anyone who has ever seen a student become excited, energized and confident through artistic exploration has seen first-hand how arts education engages children and contributes to their overall development. The arts – dance, music, theatre, visual arts and media arts – are recognized as "core academic subjects." While each of the arts disciplines has its own unique set of knowledge, skills and processes, the arts share common characteristics that make arts education powerful preparation for college, career and a fulfilling life. Involvement in the arts is associated with gains in math, reading, cognitive ability, critical thinking and verbal skill. Arts learning improves motivation, concentration, confidence and teamwork, and promotes flexibility, adaptability, leadership, responsibility and risk-taking. My students know that there are no mistakes, only opportunities. The arts classroom provides students a safe place to be themselves. Arts education opportunities help increase attendance. I have had students come in during every free period, arrive early and stay late just to be in the art classroom. A number of students have told me that the only reason they come to school was for art, and several have told me that if it wasn't for my class they would have already dropped out. I have had numerous parents thank me, one parent told me I was their hero, and several told me my class saved their child's life.

The arts promote the 21st Century Skills, including work habits that cultivate curiosity imagination, creativity and evaluation skills. Students who possess these skills are able to better tolerate ambiguity, explore new realms of possibility, express their own thoughts and feelings, and understand the perspectives of others. Employers say creativity is important in hiring, but they have a difficult time finding candidates with those skills. The creative economy is a huge section of both Connecticut's and the nation's economy. Furthermore, the arts can help produce globally-aware, collaborative and responsible citizens who are prepared for the future. In this time of increasing diversity and cultural and political division, the arts have the capacity to connect, engage and challenge everyone. All levels of American society can and do participate in the arts. There are no barriers of race, religion, culture, geography or socioeconomic levels. It is documented that arts education can narrow the achievement gap as long as there is no opportunity gap, and all learners have access to a quality, sequential, equitable and comprehensive arts education.



Robert Crowe, Official, St. Paul (Minnesota) High School

There are many reasons why people officiate high school sports. For most, myself included, it's a passion for sports and a desire to stay involved. I want to give back to the sports programs that brought so much joy and excitement to my life.

In school communities across the nation, officials voluntarily commit 8-10 hours a week, if not more, working together with student-athletes and coaches to call a near-perfect game. I say near-perfect because none of us are perfect. When we're not officiating, most officials team up with their partners to talk about rules and/or review game video to make sure they get things right. This compares to student-athletes who voluntarily commit 12-15 hours a week to practice and prepare for a game. And like an official, students review video and game notes to better understand their roles and assignments.

This type of learning and preparation is hard to find in the workplace. It happens most often in sports, which in my opinion, makes education-based sports one of the best teachers of teamwork and time management. These skills, coupled with respect and responsibility, will no doubt, make a lasting difference in the lives of students, and ultimately, improve the quality of their lives.

I am proud to be a part of the learning that takes place on the fields of competition.



Sam Payne, Student-Athlete, Magrath (Alberta, Canada) High School

When thinking back on all the ways that participating in high school sports has affected my life it's hard to put my finger on all of them, but I'll touch on a few. Overall, sports have taught me to become a leader and to be more outspoken. In the past, I was a very shy individual and was very soft spoken. Playing sports has allowed me to step into a leadership role where I can speak out, and I am now comfortable with being more vocal and communicating with my teammates. Another aspect of sports that has helped me to develop overall in growing as a person has been learning how to work together with others to accomplish a certain goal. In sports, it is impossible to have a successful season if you do not work together as a cohesive unit to accomplish your objectives. That is why it is imperative to communicate well with others and understand their points of view, so you can work well together as a team. Sports have also allowed me to learn how to manage my time more effectively. When playing sports, I must manage school work, practices and other family responsibilities. Sports have taught me discipline when it comes to time management. Overall, sports have taught me many important lessons that can be carried into post-secondary schooling, the workplace and whatever other obstacles may come my way in life. I'm thankful for my opportunity to play high school sports and the valuable life lessons it has taught me. I wouldn't have traded it for the world.



Jessica Payne, Parent, Magrath (Alberta, Canada) High School

I am a mother of several multi-sport children who are involved in athletics. I have put thousands of kilometers on my vehicles driving to and from practices, games and tournaments. I try not to think of the total dollar amount, which has been invested in sports gear, athletic fees, physiotherapy, gas, food and lodging while supporting them in their athletic endeavors. I am genuinely surprised that my backside has not permanently melded into the shape of a bleacher seat.

Throughout the years of my children's participation in athletics, I have seen some of my children battle injuries – ones which have sidelined them for a significant period of time and required extensive rehabilitation, and others with which they have continued to play, pushing themselves through games and urging themselves past the brink of their physical capacity; afterwards returning home, hobbling straight for the freezer and grabbing ice packs to rest on their aching limbs. Many times, my heart has ached for a child who has been disappointed in his performance and struggled to control his emotions of discouragement. There have been many quiet drives home after tough losses.

After all this, one may justifiably ask the question, "Is it really worth it?" I have sometimes wondered the same thing; however, I have seen the strength and resolve which my children have gained from participation in athletics, and so in turn, I must answer in the positive that yes, the adversity my children have encountered in athletics is what has truly given them the tools they need to succeed – not just in athletics, but in future life experiences. They have learned to overcome adversity and to work with others for a common goal. Athletics has given them an awareness of their surroundings and the ability to be forward thinking. It has taught them discipline and given them a strong work ethic. Sports participation has taught my child how to pick himself up after a missed shot and work even harder to succeed. In sports there is no time to dwell on your failures – you must move on because the next play is already happening.

Success is not measured in our home by how many points are scored, but whether my children can look at their performance and conduct on the court and be proud of who they were and what they accomplished. Personal expectations of achievement may not always be met, but when this happens we encourage them to harness their energy into an increased drive to improve. Athletics teaches that mistakes will inevitably be made, but to learn from those mistakes. My children have learned that if success is the ultimate goal, there cannot be fear of failure. Moments of glory are exhilarating, but often these moments are few and far between. I catch glimpses of greatness in my children, but it is not necessarily when they are winning; often it is when I see the character and strength that has been instilled in them through their participation in athletics. I firmly believe that the perseverance and dedication to improving oneself learned through athletics will propel my children far beyond the successes they achieve on the court. These invaluable lessons will undeniably aid them in all the future challenges they encounter throughout their lives.

National Federation of State High School Associations

The Case for High School Activities



INTRODUCTION

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and its member state associations champion interscholastic athletics and performing arts activities because they promote citizenship and sportsmanship in the 11 million students who participate nationwide. Activity programs instill a sense of pride in school and community, teach lifelong lessons and skills of teamwork and self-discipline, and facilitate the physical and emotional development of the nation's youth.

There is no better time than now to assert "The Case for High School Activities." Education and community leaders across America need the facts contained in this material documenting the benefits of participation in interscholastic sports, music, theatre, debate and other activities, to provide support needed for these programs. These activities provide important developmental experiences that enrich a student's high school experience and entire life, and these programs must be protected and sustained.







Cost Benefit

At a cost of only one to three percent (or less in many cases) of an overall school's budget, high school activity programs are one of today's best bargains. It is in these vital programs – sports, music, speech, theatre, debate – where young people learn lifelong lessons that complement the academic lessons taught in the classroom. From a cost standpoint, activity programs are an exceptional bargain when matched against the overall school district's education budget.

Examinations of various school districts' budget information across the country reveal that activity programs make up very small percentages of school budgets. In the 2014-15 school year, the city of Chicago's Public School Board of Education's budget was $4.93 billion; the activity program's portion was $17.6 million. In the Los Angeles Unified School District, activity programs received $6.33 million of the overall $7.27 billion budget for 2014-15. Finally, in the Miami – Dade, Florida School District, its Board of Education had a 2014-15 overall budget of $3.7 billion, while setting aside $17.2 million for activity programs. In all of these examples, the budget for school activity programs is less than one percent of the overall district's budget. Considering the benefits, which are outlined below, at such small proportions of overall school district budgets, school activity programs are one of the most effective investments being made in secondary school education programs today.

The NFHS supports cocurricular endeavors through many avenues, including:

- **Rules-writing Process** – The NFHS produces more than eight million copies of publications and support materials annually for 15 rules books covering 16 sports. The NFHS publishes case books, officials' manuals, handbooks, and simplified and illustrated books in many sports.

- **The NFHS Coach Education Program** – The NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching Course provides a unique student-centered curriculum for interscholastic coaches that assists coaches in creating a healthy and age-appropriate sport experience. With over than one million courses viewed and taken, this tool enhances the education for the adults who have committed to the betterment of their young people. More information can be accessed by going to www.nfhslearn.com.

- **National High School Activities Month** – The nation's high schools are encouraged to promote the values inherent in high school athletics, speech, music, theatre, debate and spirit squads during this celebration in the month of October.

- **Public-service Announcements** – Various sportsmanship messages are created and distributed in electronic and radio formats, as well as healthy lifestyle messages that tackle difficult but current topics such as steroid usage and hazing education.

- **High School Activities: A Community Investment in America** – This presentation is an NFHS educational product. It documents the value of high school athletic and fine arts activities through an excellent PowerPoint presentation with videos on a CD-ROM. This product is available by calling NFHS Customer Service at 800-776-3462.

- **SPORTSMANSHIP. *IT'S UP TO YOU.* ™ TOOLKIT** – This is the newest initiative for improving sportsmanship in schools and in the community. Sportsmanship is an issue that affects everyone and is everyone's responsibility. The new Sportsmanship, It's Up to You™ campaign is based on respect and involves personal responsibility. It starts with a mindset and ends with behavioral choices. The toolkit contains two DVDs, radio spots, customizable posters, Student Pledge Cards and an implementation guide on how to utilize the components of the toolkit. The toolkit can be ordered by calling NFHS Customer Service at 800-776-3462.

Benefits of Cocurricular Activities

- **Activities Support the Academic Mission of Schools.** They are not a diversion, but rather an extension of a good educational program. Students who participate in activity programs tend to have higher grade-point averages, better attendance records, lower dropout rates and fewer discipline problems than students generally.

- **Activities are Inherently Educational.** Activity programs provide valuable lessons and skills for practical situations – like teamwork, fair play and hard work. Through participation in activity programs, students learn self-discipline, build self-confidence and develop skills to handle competitive situations. These are qualities students need if they are to become responsible adults, productive citizens and skilled professionals.

- **Activities Promote Health and Well-being.** Mental and physical health are improved through activities. Self-concept, self-image, physical activity and weight management are a few of these health benefits realized through activity participation.

- **Activities Foster Success in Later Life.** Participation in high school activities is often a predictor of later success – in college, a career and becoming a contributing healthy member of society.

Following are some of these benefits identified more specifically and documented. This updated version of the Case for High School Activities presents additional and more recent study results and includes additional categories of benefits. Several of the studies have findings that fit into more than one category. In most cases, the study was listed in the category that fit best for most of its findings, and in some cases the other findings for the study (that may have fit better in another category) were also mentioned alongside the major findings. Only a couple of studies were listed in two categories because the study had major findings in both categories. While many of the studies refer to "extracurricular activities," the NFHS prefers the term "education-based" activities to indicate that activities support the academic mission of schools, are inherently educational and are a significant part of the school or education system.

- BETTER EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES
- ENHANCED SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT AND SENSE OF BELONGING
- POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT/LIFE SKILLS
- HEALTHIER BEHAVIORS

- POST HIGH SCHOOL POSITIVE RESULTS
- DEVELOPING BETTER CITIZENS
- SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Better Educational Outcomes

Students who compete in high school activity programs have better educational outcomes, including higher grades, higher achievement test scores and higher educational expectations beyond high school.

- Students in school-sponsored activities had higher math achievement test scores and expectations for attending college according to a report that examined data from two national longitudinal education cohort studies (from the National Center for Education Statistics). The results also showed that the relationship between these outcomes and extracurricular activities held for students in the 1990s (Generation X) and the early 2000s (Millennial Generation). The author comments that these outcomes may be because school activities involvement increases school engagement in the schools' academic culture and also that students in the 2000s were participating more in these "academically beneficial" school-sponsored activities. (Dumais, 2009).

- A study of nearly 140,000 Kansas high school students, examining data from the Kansas State High School Activities Association and the Kansas State Department of Education, revealed that "athletes earned higher grades, graduated at a higher rate, dropped out of school less frequently and scored higher on state assessments than did non-athletes." Student-athletes of color contributed to these overall results having much higher grade point averages, much higher graduation rates, and much lower dropout rates than non-athlete students of color. This led authors to say that although pay-to-play "may seem like a reasonable alternative to eliminating sport programs altogether, it discriminates against students who do not have the financial means to pay for membership on a high school sports team." (Lumpkin & Favor, 2012). Thus, eliminating sports programs, and likely other extracurricular activities, or implementing pay-to-play (or increasing the cost) is likely to have a more negative impact on students who come from families that are poorer, and generally students of color are over-represented among poorer families.

- When looking at the relationship of physical activity and sports team participation with grade-point average (GPA), sports team participation was independently associated with a higher GPA for high school girls and boys. The effect of sports team participation had an independent effect on GPA beyond physical activity. This suggests that other factors involved in sports team participation beyond physical activity play a role in academic outcomes. Possible explanations from







the authors included: sports participation promotes identification with school and school-related values, such as doing well academically, pro-educational social norms among teammates and coaches, and academic requirements for participation. They also note, "For adolescent students, in particular, sports team participation may be the major route by which they are physically active, and multiple studies suggest that participation on sports teams is also associated with better academic outcomes." (Fox et al., 2010).

- An earlier study looking at physical activity and academic performance in younger students found that those who participated in vigorous physical activity did approximately 10 percent better in math, science, English and social studies than students who did no or little vigorous activities. Yet, the study noted that many of the students reporting higher levels of vigorous activities were involved in organized sports like soccer, football or basketball. (Coe et al., 2006).

- Participation in school-sponsored athletics "is associated with a two percent increase in math and science test scores," school-sponsored" club participation is associated with a one percent increase in math test scores" and " involvement in either sports or clubs is associated with a five percent increase in bachelor's degree attainment expectations," according to an investigation of National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS) data. The author notes that such outcomes, high school test scores and degree attainment expectations, are "strongly related to educational attainment and future wages," and that "society ought to have a better understanding of the benefits these activities [school-sponsored clubs and sports] afford." (Lipscomb, 2007).

- Other research analyzing NELS data shows that high school participation in extracurricular school activities (ESAs) is more strongly related to positive school outcomes than out-of-school extracurricular activities. These school outcomes were higher grades in 12th grade and higher rates of college attendance two years after high school, even when controlling for earlier grades. The study did find "diminishing returns for extremely high levels of ESA." The authors also noted that extracurricular school activities "benefited socioeconomically disadvantaged students as much or more than advantaged students." (Marsh & Kleitman, 2002).

- A Minnesota State High School League survey of 300 Minnesota high schools showed that the average GPA of a student-athlete was 2.84, compared with 2.68 for the non-participating student, and that student-athletes missed an average of only 7.4 days of school each year, compared with 8.8 for the non-participating student. (Born, 2007). This supports previous results from a study done in collaboration with the North Carolina High School Athletic Association that found significant differences between North Carolina high school students who were athletes and those who were not athletes in GPA (2.98 for athletes vs. 2.17 for non-athletes), missed days of school per school year (6.3 for athletes vs. 11.9 for non-athletes), disciple referrals (33.3% of athletes vs. 41.8% of non-athletes), dropout rate (0.6% for athletes vs. 10.32% for non-athletes), and graduation rate (99.4% for athletes vs. 93.5% for non-athletes). (Overton, 2001).

- A report for the College Entrance Examination Board on the study of the relationship of extracurricular activity involvement in high school and SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) scores concluded that "participation in extracurricular activities provides all students – including students from disadvantaged backgrounds, minorities and those with less-than-distinguished academic achievements in high school – a measurable and meaningful gain in their college admissions test scores. The important reasoning abilities measured by tests like the SAT, evidently, are indeed developed both in and out of the classroom." This conclusion was reached by analyzing the SAT verbal and mathematics scores of more than 480,000 high school students after controlling for a number of socioeconomic background and academic achievement factors. Also, the impact of extracurricular activity participation was larger than the family socioeconomic factors and academic achievement levels used in this study. (Everson & Millsap, 2005).

- An examination of 2001 SAT scores revealed that music students scored about 11 percent higher than non-music students. Students with coursework/experience in music performance and music appreciation scored higher on the SAT than students with no arts participation, about 60 points higher in verbal area of the SAT and over 40 points higher in math. (CEEB, 2001).

Enhanced School Engagement and Sense of Belonging

Participation in high school activities is a valuable part of the overall high school experience, enhancing students' school engagement and sense of belonging.

- Examination of data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health showed strong evidence that school extracurricular activities were positively associated with adolescents' friendships, both supporting existing friendships and developing new ones. Friendship ties were more likely to exist among activity co-participants while controlling for other friendship processes. The authors noted that extracurricular activities provide settings "within schools that are uniquely poised to promote friendships, as they are typically voluntary, safe settings that allow adolescents space to interact and engage with their friends." (Schaefer et al., 2011).

- A study looking at social adjustment in making the transition from middle school (8th grade) to high school (9th grade) found involvement in sports helped students with friendships during the transition. The authors wrote, "Continuous involvement in sports and initiation of academic activities was associated with having more friendships." (Bohnert et al., 2013).

- School arts participation and engagement are associated with enhanced academic motivation and engagement measures as well as [non-academic] measures of well-being, including a sense of meaning and purpose according to a longitudinal study of students in 15 Australian schools. It also showed that in-school arts participation and engagement measures were more strongly correlated with academic motivation and engagement outcomes and some measures of well-being than non-school related participation measures. (Martin et al., 2013).

- Involvement in a moderate number of activity domains – academic/leadership groups, arts activities, clubs, sports – promotes a greater sense of belonging at school, increased academic engagement and higher academic performance as measured by grade-point average, according to a study of urban, ethnically diverse students (40.7% Latino, 16.8% African-American, 12.7% Asian-American, 11.2% Caucasian and 18.5% other ethnicity of two or more ethnic groups). The study authors suggest that it is necessary for schools to "retain ample extracurricular opportunities in order to foster adolescents' sense of belonging at school and higher academic performance." They conclude that, "it is essential that schools offer a number of extracurricular activities that capture the diverse interests of the entire student body. Schools can maximize the impact of these activities by encouraging disconnected, low-achieving students to join a couple of activities. At a time when school budgets face reductions, this type of research argues for the importance of maintaining a breadth of extracurricular opportunities for students attending urban high schools." (Knifsend & Graham, 2012).

- Contributors to Organized Activities as Contexts of Development: Extracurricular Activities, After-School and Community Programs, noted that making diverse clubs and activities available to a wide range of students is important. The opportunity to embed one's identity in multiple extracurricular contexts and to experience multiple competencies facilitates attachment to school and adjustment. Activity participation is also linked to affiliation with peers who are academically focused. Adolescents can benefit from this synergistic system when they have opportunities to participate in diverse activities. (Barber et al., 2005).

Positive Youth Development/Life Skills

Education-based activity programs promote positive youth development and provide opportunities for learning a number of life skills and values not typically taught in classroom education.

- In a study looking at learning life skills through high school sports, a very diverse group of students participating in high school soccer reported learning skills related to initiative, respect and teamwork/leadership, despite the authors noting they "did not find evidence that the student-athletes were directly taught about the life skills that were reported." (Holt et al., 2008).

- A study of life skills developed through football by award-winning high school coaches found that these coaches saw that the process of participation and striving to win taught life skills such as discipline, work ethic and emotional control. In addition, "these coaches did not view the coaching of life skills as separate from their general coaching strategies for performance enhancement and while highly motivated to win, personal development of their players was a top priority." (Gould et al., 2007).

- A study of model high school coaches and their athletes found that these coaches taught life skills, their student-athletes learned the skills and were able to transfer them to other areas of their lives. The study found that these coaches "had specific strategies to coach life skills," which in addition to modeling behavior included "peer evaluations, taking advantage of teachable moments, and volunteer work," as well as teaching "student-athletes how to transfer life skills." (Camiré et al., 2012).

- Extracurricular activities stand out from other aspects of adolescents' lives at school because they provide opportunities to "develop initiative and allow youth to learn emotional competencies and develop new social skills." These activities



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allow "youth to form new connections with peers and acquire social capital." The authors of this work further stated that activity programs are one of the few contexts, outside of the classroom, where adolescents regularly come in contact with adults to whom they are not related. (Darling et al., 2005).

- In a study commissioned by the Alberta Schools' Athletic Association, corporate and political leaders surveyed in Alberta cited the following benefits or life skills associated with their involvement in high school athletics: teamwork, discipline, goal-setting, leadership, independence, self-confidence, stress relief, character development and personal growth, fair play, and acceptance of others. (Berrett, 2006).

- A survey study of Life Skill Development in Ontario High School Sport concluded that parents, coaches and student-athletes all perceive high school sport as positive and is a context where life skills are developed, that student-athletes score higher on most developmental assets than students who are not in high school sports, and that student-athletes appear to be more engaged and enjoy school more as a result of participating in high school sport. (Williamson et al., 2013).

- A study of students drawn from 26 selected Western Australia high schools found that "in general, participation in any type of extracurricular activity was associated with a higher social and academic self-concept, and general self-worth, compared to no participation." Also, participating in both sport and non-sport extracurricular activities was associated with higher social self-concept and general self-worth, compared to participating in only sports or in just non-sport extracurricular activities. (Blomfield & Barber, 2009)

- Examination of different adolescent activity patterns (sports-focused, sports plus other activities, primarily school-based activities, primarily religious youth groups, and low activity involvement,) "with five categories of youth development outcomes, including competence (e.g., academic ability), confidence (e.g., self-concept of ability), connections (e.g., talking with friends), character (e.g., externalizing behavior problems) and caring (e.g., pro-social behavior)," showed that participation in only sports or primarily only in other school activities was associated with more positive outcomes than little or no participation in activities, but less positive outcomes than participation in sports plus other activities. (Linver et al., 2009).

Healthier Behaviors

Students involved in educational activities often have many healthier behaviors leading to better physical and mental health.

- Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Youth Risk Behavior Surveys (YRBS) administered every two years showed that regardless of year, age, gender or race/ethnicity, compared to non-athletes, athletes were more likely to report engaging in vigorous activity and using a condom and less likely to report carrying a weapon. This data showed additional health benefits associated with sports participation that varied by gender and race/ethnicity. These health behaviors included dietary habits, weight loss, sexual activity, interpersonal violence and suicidality, and substance abuse. Of the 25 health behaviors, white female athletes had the most (19) associations with positive healthful behaviors. There were fewer associations between sports participation and positive health behaviors for African-American, Hispanic and the "Other" racial or ethnic category of female athletes, but there were no associations between any racial/ethnic group of female athletes and negative health behaviors. There were some associations for male athletes with negative health behaviors. Minority male athletes showed more associations with healthy behaviors than did minority female athletes. The study's authors state: "school officials and public health planners can use these findings as a tool to evaluate health costs associated with eliminating sport activities, especially as programs face cuts during economic difficulties." (Taliaferro et al., 2010).

- Earlier findings from YRBS data also showed multiple positive health benefits associated with sports participation. There were some variations between the specific health behaviors associated with sports participation in these two examinations of YRBS data and both studies showed variations by race and ethnicity. However, both studies showed many positive associations with health behaviors for athletes, only a few negative associations, and the significant role sports participation plays in the health of young people. Authors of this earlier study wrote, "sports programs may promote positive health behaviors and deter negative health behaviors by placing a premium on personal health and fitness as prerequisites to optimal sports performance." (Pate et al., 2000).

- Further documentation of the health benefits of sports and other school activities comes from 50,168 Minnesota ninth-grade public school students voluntarily completing a statewide survey. The data revealed that students involved in sports had significantly higher rates of exercise, milk consumption and a healthy self-image, and had significantly lower odds for emotional distress, suicidal behavior, family substance abuse and physical and sexual victimization than students not involved in sports. Students participating in other activities were significantly more involved in doing homework and significantly less involved with alcohol and marijuana use as well as vandalism. Students involved in both sports and other activities had significantly higher odds ratios than those for "the other groups for all healthy behaviors and measures of connectedness, and significantly lower [odds ratios] for all but one of the unhealthy behaviors." (Harrison & Narayan, 2003).

- Examination of cross-sectional data from a nationally representative sample of high school students enrolled in public high schools in the United States showed that students participating in organized sports were 25 percent less likely to be current cigarette smokers. (Castrucci et al., 2004)

- A study using the Arizona Youth Survey data showed that Native American students who reported a high level of availability in their school to be involved in extracurricular activities "were less likely to use substances, less likely to be drunk or high at school, to ride/drive when the driver was under the influence and less likely to sell drugs." Also, the greater their participation in the extracurricular activities at school, the less likely Native American students in this study were to be involved in any of these substance-use and drug-related behaviors. (Moilanen et al., 2014).

- In a specific examination of high school youth and suicide risk using national data from the CDC's YRBS, sports participation was significantly associated with reduced risk of feeling hopeless and suicide behaviors. This was true for both male and female athletes while controlling for levels of physical activity. "These findings indicate that involvement in sport confers unique psychosocial benefits that protect adolescents against suicidality… and suggest that mechanisms other than physical activity contribute to the protective association between sport and reduced suicidality. Social support and integration may account for some of the differences found in suicidality between athletes and nonathletes." (Taliaferro et al., 2008).

- Similar health results have been reported in other parts of the world as well. A study of school-based extracurricular activities (SBEAs) of Chinese students found that those who were engaged in school-based extracurricular activities had a healthier self-concept, were healthier psychologically, showed more emotional stability, adapted better socially and had better career development skills than other students. The authors commented: "Based on the results of our study, we suggest that it might be a good strategy to encourage students to participate in SBEAs to promote positive personality characteristics, good psychological health and adjustment, a healthy self-concept and good career development skills. Schools should create an environment that encourages positive SBEA experiences." They further stated: "School administrators should recognize that most SBEAs have a positive impact on personality, the self-concept and career development skills in adolescents. In particular, SBEAs provide the social support and promote the interpersonal interaction skills that are important to adolescents' and young adults' development." (Shiah et al., 2013).

- In a study asking students how they would like to become more physically active, about 75 percent selected doing more physical activity and sports during and after school, and about 50 percent selected team sports. (Corder et al., 2013). This corresponds with other studies showing that school sports are areas where many students can get more physical activity.

- A research investigation found that the dramatic increase in high school sports participation among girls in the aftermath of the passage of Title IX "was associated with an increase in physical activity and an improvement in weight and body mass among adolescent girls." The study authors wrote that their "results strongly suggest that Title IX and the increase in athletic opportunities among adolescent females it engendered had a beneficial effect on the health of adolescent girls." (Kaestner & Xu, 2006).

Post High School Positive Results

Participation in activity programs yields positive results after high school as well.

- A survey of Alberta's top corporate CEOs and members of the Legislative Assembly revealed that 78.3 percent had participated in interschool sports. Nearly 80 percent indicated that being involved in school sports significantly, extensively or moderately complemented their career development and/or academic pursuits. This same study, commissioned by the Alberta Schools' Athletic Association, pointed out that a normal participation rate for students in high school sports is around 30 to 35 percent. (Berrett, 2006).

- Examination of National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS) data showed that participation in school athletics was correlated with many positive educational achievements, behaviors and aspirations in the end of Grade 12 as well as two years later. The positive outcomes included "school grades, coursework selection, homework, educational and occupational aspirations, self-esteem, university applications, subsequent college enrollment, and eventual educational attainment." These results were consistent across different subgroups for students (e.g., socio-economic status, gender, ethnicity, ability levels, educational aspirations), and were evident when controlling for these factors along with parallel outcome variables in grades 8 and 10. Participation in interscholastic sport "was significantly more beneficial than participation in intramural sport, particularly for more narrowly defined academic outcomes." (Marsh & Kleitman, 2003).

- A more recent study of the NELS data showed that participation in organized activities during high school is positively associated with post secondary educational attainment, voting, volunteering and occupational factors two and eight years after high school (while controlling for several demographic, achievement, individual and family factors). More positive associations with outcomes were found for those who participated in organized activities two or more years during high school vs. those who participated only one year. More associations between school-sponsored vs. community-sponsored activities were found eight years after high school, in particular these were the occupational outcomes of full-time employment and income. One possible explanation put forth by the authors was "that school-sponsored activities, relative to community-sponsored activities, offer developmental supports and opportunities that are more relevant for later occupational success." (Gardner et al., 2008).

- High school leaders, according to self-report responses about being in some typical high school leadership positions used in the NELS, are more likely to attend college and complete a four-year degree according to another examination of NELS data. School extracurricular activities provide many of the leadership opportunities for high school students. The author of this study states, "Since the availability of leadership positions depends upon the existence of school activities that provide such leadership opportunities, the evidence presented in this article indicates that decisions regarding financial cutbacks for extracurricular activities should not be taken lightly." (Rouse, 2012).

- Educationally vulnerable youth, characterized by significant personal and social risks and an absence of assets for achieving educational success, involved in extracurricular activities during high school, particularly sports, were more likely to attend college three years post high school than the average overall college attendance of educationally vulnerable youth. Other high school club involvement also contributed to higher college attendance. The authors wrote: "Our results suggest that when vulnerable youth are exposed to a broad distribution of extracurricular activity settings that afford them constructive, developmentally appropriate opportunities (e.g., to befriend healthy peers, develop competencies and skills, exercise some autonomy, develop long-term mentoring relationships, and explore their commitment to education more generally) then their chances of being educationally resilient are enhanced." (Peck et al., 2008).

- When seeking a job, many students believe highlighting their involvement in extracurricular activities (ECAs) "could be a way to inform employers about soft currencies they possess (e.g., soft skills, teamwork) in addition to hard currencies (e.g., education credentials), but also about their self (e.g., their personality or their values), that is, the full package of personal capital." They can also see involvement in ECAs as a way to distinguish themselves from other applicants. The authors also noted that these students "believe that their degree is not sufficient to ensure them a job after graduation" and see "the need for distinction." The authors also noted that employers see ECA participation positively "because they believe ECAs are signals of individuals' competencies or personality." (Roulin & Bangerter, 2013).

- Participation in high school sports appears to be not only associated with being more physically active now, but well into the future. In examining the physical activity and health of a sample of male World War II veterans over 50 years later "the single strongest predictor of later-life physical activity was whether he played a varsity sport in high school, and this was also related to fewer self-reported visits to the doctor." The authors of the study further stated, "This is relevant at a time when funding for many sports programs is being eliminated and play time is being replaced by screen time." (Dohle & Wansink, 2013).

- A survey of Iowans who graduated 10 to 20 years prior revealed that those who participated in sports during high school experienced a number of positive benefits or behaviors, including "engaging in vigorous physical activity during the week; reporting very good or excellent emotional health; having higher self-esteem; not experiencing long- or short- term depression; feeling satisfied with progress made toward goals in the domains of family, career and general life; making active use of discretionary time outside the home; volunteering in the community; voting in state and national elections; knowing the names of U.S. Senators from Iowa; assessing news outlets every day; completing a four year degree; having an annual household income greater than $50,000; not having trouble paying bills." Those who participated in non-sport extracurricular activities during high school also experienced a number of these benefits and behaviors, including engaging in vigorous physical activity in early adulthood more days per week, higher self-esteem, more active use of discretionary time, more volunteering and completing a four-year degree. (Lutz et al., 2009).

Developing Better Citizens

Education-based activities teach lessons that lead to better citizens.

- Examination of data from the National Survey of Civic Engagement found that 18- to 25-year-olds who participate in sports activities while in high school were more likely than nonparticipants to be engaged in volunteering, voting, feeling comfortable speaking in public settings and watching news (especially sport news). (Lopez & Moore, 2006).

- A study looking at data from both the National Education Longitudinal Survey (NELS) and the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health found participation in a number of high school extracurricular activities positively related to

early adulthood voting, even after controlling for many self-selection factors, and those not participating in any high school extracurriculars had a lower voting rate. Performing arts participation in high school had one of the biggest effects. The authors noted that many of the extracurricular activities that had an impact, like music, had seemingly no political content or taught specific voting-relevant skills. Instead, their theory for these associations lies mainly in the creation of the habit of participation and engagement as noted in the following statements. "Those who get in the habit of participating and engaging in their high school community tend to continue those behaviors and kind of associations into adulthood. Those that find themselves on the track of uninvolvement and detachment tend to remain detached." (Thomas & McFarland, 2010).

- Other analyses of NELS data examining the effects of participation in high school extracurricular activities on political engagement among young Black adults showed that participation in individual varsity sports and nonsport extracurricular activities were significantly related to political engagement, as measured by registering to vote and voting in a presidential election. (Braddock et al., 2007).

- Adolescent participation in extracurricular activities was associated with a greater likelihood of college attendance, voting in national and regional elections, and volunteering for community and religious groups according to another examination of NELS data. Consistent extracurricular activity participation in 8th, 10th, and 12th grades showed effects greater than participation in just one of these grades. These results held "after accounting for control and individual, parent, peer and school process variables." (Zaff et al., 2003).

- A study of behaviors in a sample of World War II veterans found that men who were varsity athletes in high school volunteered time more frequently and donated more to charity than those who were not athletes in high school. In addition, those veterans "who participated in varsity-level high school sports an average of 60 years earlier appeared to demonstrate higher levels of leadership and enjoyed higher-status careers." (Kniffin et al., 2014).

School and Community Benefits

Not only do individual students benefit from education-based activities, schools and communities benefit when more students are involved in education-based activities.

- An examination of information on North Carolina school characteristics, the numbers and types of extracurricular activities available, participation rates, and academic outcomes found that schools that offer more extracurricular activities





usually have higher extracurricular participation rates and "opportunities to participate are associated with positive academic outcomes for the school, even when controlling for school resources." (Stearns & Glennie, 2010).

- Schools that have music programs have significantly higher attendance rates (93.3%) and graduation rates (90.2%) compared to schools that do not have music programs (84.9% and 72.9%, respectively) according to a study done in collaboration with a national and an international music association and with Harris Interactive. (MENC & NAMM, 2006).

- A study of Minnesota Department of Education school fiscal and demographic data combined with self-report information from educators found "that increased allocation of a greater proportion of a school's total annual expenditure (i.e., increased resources) to student activities and athletics programming is associated with a decreased risk of physical assault [PA] for the educators working in" the school. Compared to other resource allocations, such as regular instruction, special education, and district administration, "associations between increased resource allocations to student activities expenditures and decreased risks of PA were the strongest." The authors suggest that increased funding provides the opportunity for more students to participate in extracurricular activities, which increases exposure to an adult-supervised environment and consistent with other research, are associated "with prosocial behaviors and other positive educational outcomes." The authors further suggest that "cuts to sports and extracurricular program budgets may have unintended consequences, such as increased violence in the schools." (Sage et al., 2010.)

- A study using a nationally representative sample of roughly 1,200 public high schools found "that schools with higher proportions of sports participants report significantly fewer serious crimes (i.e., violent crimes) and suspensions occurring on school grounds." (Veliz & Shakib, 2012).

Final Thoughts About the Case

As documented here, there are many benefits to participation in education-based activities. Among those studies documenting these benefits, several are from countries other than the United States and Canada, such as Australia, China, Turkey and the United Kingdom. It appears that many of these countries are discovering and studying some of the benefits of education-based activities in addition to considering or actually implementing these activities. Other parts of the world also appear to be recognizing the value of sports, performing arts and other activities in conjunction with academics and within schools. This seems to add further support that schools offering education-based activities can contribute additional benefits to those that can be gained through sports and performing arts activities.

Additionally, although many benefits are cited, several of the studies reviewed for making the Case for High School Activities noted the importance of being intentional about teaching the values, life skills and other characteristics or behaviors it is hoped young people will obtain from participation in education-based activities to assure and strengthen the acquiring of these skills. Although, one or two of the studies above mention student activity participants learning life skills which may not seem to be directly taught, authors of some of the studies caution against assuming too much, particularly around values, life skills and other positive youth development attributes. More will be accomplished for more students if coaches and other activity leaders are intentional and deliberately, directly and diligently teach the values, life skills and positive youth development characteristics they want their student-athletes and activity participants to learn and acquire.

Alcohol and cigarette use serve as notable examples in this regard. Studies are much more consistent in showing that high school students who participate in sports are less likely to smoke cigarettes than those who do not participate in sports. (Castrucci et al., 2004). However, there is less consistency among studies in finding results with alcohol use. In fact, some studies show that students who participate in athletics may be more likely to use alcohol than those who do not participate in athletics. One study finding a positive relationship between sports participation and alcohol use provided a possible rationale suggesting a sports subculture may exist that not only values academic success, but also "partying," which included alcohol use. The authors noted that such findings "draw attention to the relative importance that coaches could have in preventing a culture of alcohol use from forming among members of their teams." (Denault et al., 2009).

Schools are unique settings to provide athletic and performing arts activities, and education-based activities can maximize the benefits that can be gained through sports and performing arts activities. Since students spend much of their time at school, education-based activities may offer easier access to athletic and performing arts activities. This may be particularly true for students who have lesser resources to access, and afford to participate in, such activities. Education-based activities promote more positive attitudes toward school and increase school engagement, which can increase academic motivation and performance. Education-based activities are generally designed to support and work in concert with the academic goals of the schools. Education-based activities staff are trained to not only to teach students athletic or performing arts skills, but skills that help students do well in school and in life. Schools are centers of learning where teaching and learning are intentionally designed and implemented. If communities and societies want to be intentional about what students learn, make the most of athletic and performing arts activity participation as well as help promote academic learning in school, they need education-based activities.



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NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES MONTH
OCTOBER 2018

General Information About Public-service Announcements



A majority of state associations are involved, to some extent, in television and/or radio broadcasts of interscholastic sports. The 1991 Radio and Television Survey indicated sport events were broadcast on radio in at least 46 states and on television in at least 39 states. This measure of high school sports programming also indicates the magnitude of opportunities potentially available for state associations to educate the public about the values and needs of interscholastic programs and encourage sportsmanship.

Several state associations received guaranteed air time for their messages, either instead of or along with, radio and/or television rights fees. Generally, the time is allotted during broadcast of regional and state championship events. A few state associations have negotiated broadcast of their PSAs for other than event-related purposes as a part of their rights fees.

State associations that have been successful in having PSAs broadcast on both radio and television for messages other than upcoming events suggest establishing a relationship with their respective state broadcasters' association. Almost every state broadcasters' association participates in a NCSA (noncommercial sustaining announcement) campaign. However, the degree of involvement in this effort varies among states. For instance, some state broadcasters' associations will help identify specific stations within the state that will help with the actual production of dubbing, as well as distribution of radio PSAs. Also, these broadcasters' associations can provide such information as a directory of all radio stations within each state and appropriate contact persons at the stations.

Finally, many state broadcasters' associations publish a newsletter for distribution to radio and/or television stations. The newsletter can carry notice of upcoming public-service campaigns of nonprofit organizations and encourage participation by radio and television stations. These state broadcasters' associations also can be helpful in documenting the broadcast of PSAs within the state and reporting this information to state associations. In summary, the state broadcasters' association is an important resource for getting our PSAs on the air!

PUBLIC-SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

What do many of our nation's attorneys, politicians and actors have in common? Besides being articulate and persuasive, they were probably involved in high school forensics. Every society needs leaders. High school forensics certainly does its share to train leaders for tomorrow. High school activities and academics make great curriculum partners. A public-service message from your state high school association.

§ §

Participation in high school co-curricular activities offers a plentiful supply of solid real-life examples of the positive values that we place such an emphasis on later in life. Most of us learned to play by the rules through high school activities. The importance of teamwork often was learned on a football field, or in a band, or during a concert or play. The need to respect authority is a vital part of the interscholastic experience as is the value of commitment. A public-service message from your state high school association.

§ §

Respect for the opponent, spectators, coaches and officials is necessary at all levels of athletics and activity programs. At interscholastic contests, everyone's behavior should be characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others. Display this respect the next time you attend a high school event. A public-service message from your state high school association.

§ §

Your ticket to an interscholastic athletic event is a privilege, a privilege to watch youngsters learn on the playing field. One of the lessons taught to players is one spectators can follow as well – that of good sportsmanship. Unruly behavior is unacceptable in the classroom, and the athletic field is a classroom. A public-service message from your state high school association.

§ §

An educational environment is critical to the success of high school athletics and activity programs. An important part of that environment is perspective. Without proper perspective, the lessons learned lose their value. The ability to show that a feeling of self-worth is more important than the outcome of any game is a vital lesson. A public-service message from your state high school association.

§ §

Where do high school students learn about competition, free enterprise, morals, values and how to succeed in our society? In uniquely staged high school activity programs. You can be a part of this valuable learning experience by supporting your local high school by your attendance at music, speech and athletic competitions. Join your friends at the main event … meet them at a high school game! A public-service message from your state high school association.

§ §

Role models are more important than ever in today's society. You can serve as a role model for others the next time you display good sportsmanship at a high school athletic event. Good sports are winners, so the next time you attend a sporting event, remember to be a good sport and act properly. Everyone appreciates the good values portrayed by acts of good sportsmanship. A public-service message from your state high school association.

§ §

Good sportsmanship is learned, practiced and executed. Respect for the opponent, spectators, coaches and officials is necessary at all levels of athletics and activity programs. At interscholastic contests, everyone's behavior should be characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others. Display good sportsmanship the next time you attend a high school event. A public-service message from your state high school association.

§ §

Ethics, integrity and respect are values important in our daily lives. All of these important values are learned by participation in interscholastic activity programs. Coaches should set a good example for players and fans. Participants should treat opponents with respect. Respect should be extended to officials and judges. Fans should be fans, not fanatics. A public-service message from your state high school association.

§ §