

The Value of Having a Certified Athletic Administrator at Every School

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Introduction

Dr. Jeffrey Sullivan, CMAA

- Director, Systemwide Athletics for Montgomery County (MD) Public Schools
 - 14th largest school district in the country
 - 25 high schools
 - 40 middle schools
- President-Elect, Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (MPSSAA)
- 20+ years as athletic administrator



Background

In Montgomery County, we have:

- Redefined the athletic administrator position, including 12-month, flex hours, and certification incentives
- Successfully advocated for a compliance coordinator position to monitor certification and compliance across the program, including administrators and coaches
- Created a database to monitor and track coursework for staff members
- Committed to certification and professional development, as lifelong learners



Outcomes

This presentation will address:

- Current state of athletic administration
- Redefining athletic administration & advocating for change
- NIAAA Certification
- Incentives for certification
- Resources for certification and professional learning
- Means of tracking certification
- Value of having a certified athletic administrator and coach at every school



Athletic Administration in 2023

Current State

- The athletic administrator job has drastically changed in a short period of time
- Staff and students have increased needs
- Responsibilities have changed drastically since the early 2000's
- Dynamics of high school sports have changed – the AD position has evolved
- ADs wear a myriad of hats and assume increasing number of responsibilities
- Job spans beyond the realm of competition – into the broader school community
- Despite budget constraints, school systems need to commit to athletics and acknowledge the importance of leadership

Athletic Administration in 2023

Enhanced Responsibilities

- Coach certification and compliance
- Online registration for athletics
- Health & safety initiatives
- Addition of certified athletic trainers & sports medicine
- Expansion of the athletics program, including corollary athletics for students with disabilities



Athletic Administration in 2023

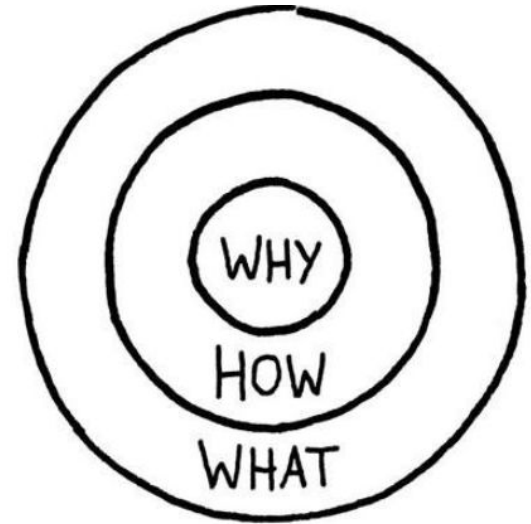
Enhanced Responsibilities

- Technology responsibilities, including website management and social media presence
- Sportsmanship award program
- After school safety and supervision initiatives
- Game and event management responsibilities
- Budget and financial management
- Equity and access initiatives and promotion of the athletics program

Redefining the AD Position - Advocating

Key Considerations

- Do your homework - benchmarking
- Write and organize information
- Game plan - Why, How, What - Who?
- Mobilize resources - written and human
- Elevate the importance of the position
- Communicate the outcomes for students
- Highlight the benefits of certification - an avenue for advocacy!



NIAAA Certification Levels

RAA - Registered Athletic Administrator

CAA - Certified Athletic Administrator

CMAA - Certified Master Athletic Administrator

RMSAA - Registered Middle School Athletic Administrator

RIAA - Registered International Athletic Administrator

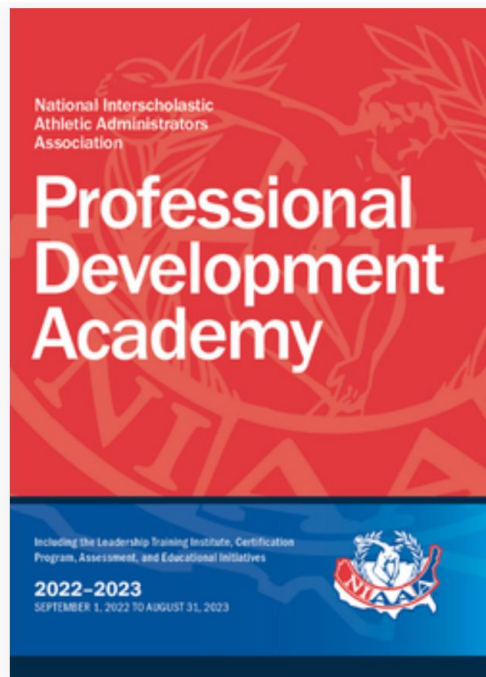
CIAA - Certified International Athletic Administrator



Incentivizing Certification

- Emphasize importance of certification and professional learning
- Incorporate certification into job requirements:
 - RAA - job requirement at time of hire or within first 6 months
 - CAA - requirement under 5 years of hire
 - CMAA - requirement within 10 years of hire
- Money Talks!
 - Annual incentives for certification - retirement benefits
 - \$500 annual benefit for CAA
 - \$1,500 annual benefit for CMAA
 - Encourages certification - sooner and higher
- Creates a culture of professional learning, starting at the top
 - Coaches will also embrace certification and professional development

Resources for Certification



- NIAAA website - [Member Resources](#)
- [Member portal](#) - track certification & courses
- [NIAAA classroom](#) - overview of LTC courses
- [Professional Development Academy](#)
- State LTC/LTI Coordinator
- Local District Compliance Coordinator
- NIAAA Office

Tracking Certification

- NIAAA Member Portal - individual
- School & District Certification Database
- Compliance Coordinator for School/District
- Certification updates to school system human resources and local principal and/or district athletic offices
- Multi-school districts - one database across schools
- Compliance and Accountability are Key!
- Liability - benefits, but ensure accountability for requirements

Certification by the Numbers

Prior to 2020:

CMAA - 4

CAA - 9

RAA - 3

No Certification - 9

2022-2023 School Year:

CMAA - 11

CAA - 8

RAA - 6

No Certification - 0

Montgomery County - prioritizing certification & allocating resources

Benefits of Certification

- Completion of Leadership Training Courses
- Knowledge of position responsibilities
- Commitment to lifelong learning
- Legal and liability benefits
- Increased service to student-athletes, staff, and community
- CMAA project - a benefit to schools and programs
- Creation of a local, state, and national network of colleagues



Outcomes for Student-Athletes



- Athletic departments on the cutting-edge - latest guidance
- Athletic administrators modeling lifelong learning for coaches and student-athletes
- Coaches committed to certification - better coaching
- Positive culture, founded on equity and access
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion - DEI-focused programming
- Efficient game/event operations - safety & security

NFHS Certification Levels

New Certification Levels:



Incentivizing Coaches

Requirements to Consider:

- Level 1 - before starting
- District or school-level compliance training
- State requirements - Law & State association

Incentives to Consider:

- Level 2 & Level 3 bonuses
- Longevity Bonuses
- Retirement Incentives



Tracking Coach Certification

- NFHS website - User Lookup
- Create a school and/or district database - profiles
- Upfront certification, along with ongoing certification
- Accountability measures - who is responsible?
- Coach responsible - AD and principal accountable
- Legal and liability concerns



Coach Certification Benefits

- Consistent learning across coaches
- Knowledge of position responsibilities and sport-specific info
- Commitment to lifelong learning
- Enhanced communication across program
- Non-teacher coaches need additional training and support
- Legal and liability benefits
- Increased service to student-athletes, staff, and community

Compliance Coordinator

- Consider position in Department of Athletics for large districts
- Responsibility of Human Resources and/or principal
- Monitors certification and compliance of athletic administrators and coaches
- Creation of a systemwide database
- Utilization of NIAAA and NFHS databases
- Coaches - ultimately responsible
- Can assume other responsibilities for accountability
- [MCPS Job Description](#)



Questions & Answers

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