

OCTOBER 11

HighSchool

TODAY™ THE VOICE OF EDUCATION-BASED ATHLETIC AND PERFORMING ARTS ACTIVITIES

Sports Participation

Continues Upward Climb

Legal Issues

Student postings on social media sites

Risk

Management

State associations defend field hockey eyewear rule

Sports Medicine

Academic accommodations after sports-related concussion





Celebrating the Value of High School Activity Programs

BY ROBERT B. GARDNER, NFHS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AND RICK WULKOW, NFHS PRESIDENT

No matter where you live in this great country, October likely is one of your favorite months of the year. The heat is winding down in the South, leaves are falling in the Midwest with the transition of seasons, snow has yet to accumulate in the Northeast and the West Coast is as gorgeous as ever.

October is a marquee month in high school sports as well. Throughout the 50 states and the District of Columbia, on any given Friday night, there are approximately 7,000 high school football games involving more than one million student-athletes.

During the week there are cross country meets, volleyball and soccer matches, and field hockey games. In many of those same schools, students are involved in the various performing arts activities such as speech, debate, music and theatre.

More than 11 million students participate in activity programs at the high school level, and the NFHS has designated October as "National High School Activities Month." In the past, the third week in October was set aside for "National High School Activities Week," but we've expanded the celebration to the entire month this year.

And there is much to celebrate. Our cover story on page 12 reports on another record-breaking year in sports participation. During the 2010-11 school year, participation in high school sports increased for the 22nd consecutive time and produced a record-breaking total of 7,667,955 participants. And the survey showed that more than 55 percent of students enrolled in high schools participate in athletics.

Outdoor track and field, cross country and the emerging sport of lacrosse registered significant increases in participation, along with boys and girls soccer, girls volleyball and boys basketball. Girls lacrosse increased nine percent from the previous year and cracked the girls Top 10 listing for the first time.

That great news came on the heels of our feature in the September issue of *High School Today* which indicated that approximately 510 million fans attended high school sporting events during the 2009-10 school year, including 468 million during regular-season events and 42 million for state association playoff contests.

About two-thirds of those fans (336 million) attended high school regular-season and playoff games in football and girls and

boys basketball – more than 2½ times the 133 million spectators who attended events in those sports at the college and professional levels combined. Girls and boys basketball accounted for 170 million fans, while football was close behind at 166 million, with soccer third at 24 million.

Granted, there are many more games played at the high school level to reach that prodigious figure, but it is a great sign that high school sports continue to be a big part of communities throughout our nation. A ticket to a high school sporting event remains one of the best values for the entertainment dollar.

While these latest surveys on participation and attendance were extremely encouraging, we know there is much work ahead. With budget issues forcing many schools to find alternative methods of funding or cut back on programs, school leaders must continue to champion the cause for high school athletic and performing arts programs.

These vital programs provide one of the best bargains in our community and will continue to do so as long as our nation supports them as an integral part of the education of our young people. These programs teach more than 11 million young people valuable life skills lessons such as ethics, integrity and healthy lifestyles.

There is fundamental, empirical evidence that high school activity programs provide a successful way in which to create healthy and successful citizens. Many of these studies are documented in *The Case for High School Activities*, which is available on our Web site at www.nfhs.org.

Although promoting the value of these programs in our nation's schools should be an ongoing, year-long event, we encourage you to go the extra mile this month as we celebrate National High School Activities Month. Take this opportunity to toot your horn even louder, to show appreciation to your communities for their support of your programs, to thank those spectators who support your activity programs throughout the year, and recognize the coaches and contest officials who make it all possible.

Thanks for all you do to keep the doors of opportunity open for the nation's student-athletes. ☺



PORTLAND

EVENT CENTER

Big Block

A Papillion-LaVista South High School player blocks a shot against Omaha Burke High School in first-round action at the 2010 Nebraska School Activities Association Class A Girls Volleyball Championship in Grand Island, Nebraska.

Photograph provided by Nebraska School Activities Association.

Great Shot



HighSchool TODAY™

THE VOICE OF EDUCATION-BASED ATHLETIC AND PERFORMING ARTS ACTIVITIES

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We hope you enjoy this publication and welcome your feedback. You may contact Bruce Howard, editor of High School Today, at bhoward@nfhs.org.

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Cover photo provided by Kim Jew Photography, New Mexico.

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Unusual Nicknames



Mayfair Monsoons

Despite its location in sunny, Southern California, **Mayfair High School in Lakewood**, rains on its opponents as the **Monsoons**. The school, located in Los Angeles County, uses a tornado as its mascot and continues the meteorological theme with the name of its newspaper (The Windjammer) and its yearbook (Tradewinds). Notable alumni include the NBA's Josh Childress and Alterraun Verner of the Tennessee Titans. ☉

Top High School Performances

Hawkeye State produces back-to-back record-holders



Twice in two weeks, an Iowa high school football player tied the national record for most interceptions returned for a touchdown in a quarter of an 11-player football game.

On August 26, **Urbandale (Iowa) High School sophomore Allen Lazard** (left) returned two interceptions for touchdowns in the first quarter of Urbandale's game with Des Moines (Iowa) Hoover.

Just one week later on September 2, senior safety **Tim Kilfoy** of **Davenport (Iowa) Assumption High School** did the same thing against Burlington (Iowa) High School. The 6-1, 190-pound Kilfoy returned interceptions of 53 and 77 yards for touchdowns in the second quarter of Assumption's 42-7 victory.

In the process, Kilfoy etched his name into the NFHS' National High School Sports Record Book along with Lazard as national record-holders in that category. Kilfoy now has 14 interceptions in his career. ☉

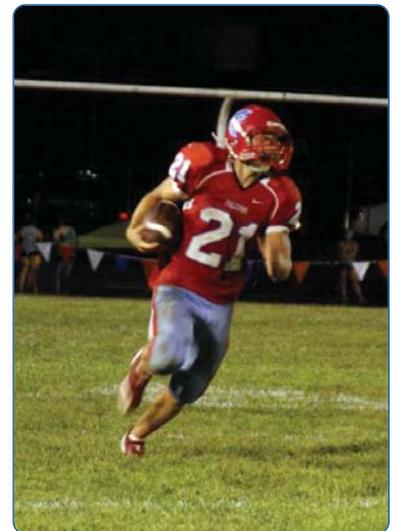
Vaughn ties national record

Hailing from the Show-Me State, **Springfield (Missouri) Glendale High School** running back **Trevor Vaughn** has certainly shown the nation his ability to turn kickoffs into touchdowns.

In Glendale's season-opening 50-37 home victory over Joplin (Missouri) High School on September 9, the 5-foot-9, 170-pound senior returned three kickoffs for touchdowns. He accomplished that feat on returns of 93, 92 and 68 yards.

In the process, not only did he set the new Missouri single-game state record, he also tied the national record of three kickoff returns for scores. According to National Federation of State High School Association's National High School Sports Record Book, five other players had previously performed that feat.

Glendale also received four touchdowns from 6-4, 210-pound senior wide receiver Cameron Johnson, who scored three touchdowns through receptions and one on an interception return. ☉



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got milk?

Legal Brief

Editor's Note: This column features an analysis of a landmark court case highlighting a key standard of practice for scholastic sports programs. This material is provided by Lee Green, an attorney and member of the High School Today Publications Committee.

Brokaw v. McSorley & Winfield-Mt. UCSD Iowa Court of Appeals 2008

Facts: A basketball player filed a civil suit for battery against an opposing player for injuries sustained from an intentional and malicious elbow to the face during a game. The suit also alleged negligent supervision against the opposing school and its coaches for encouraging excessively rough play and the use of a level of violence that violated the rules of basketball.

Issue: Can a sports participant recover damages from another participant and/or opposing coaches and schools for injuries sustained during an athletic contest?

Ruling: Although the "contact sports exception" shields participants from liability for injuries resulting

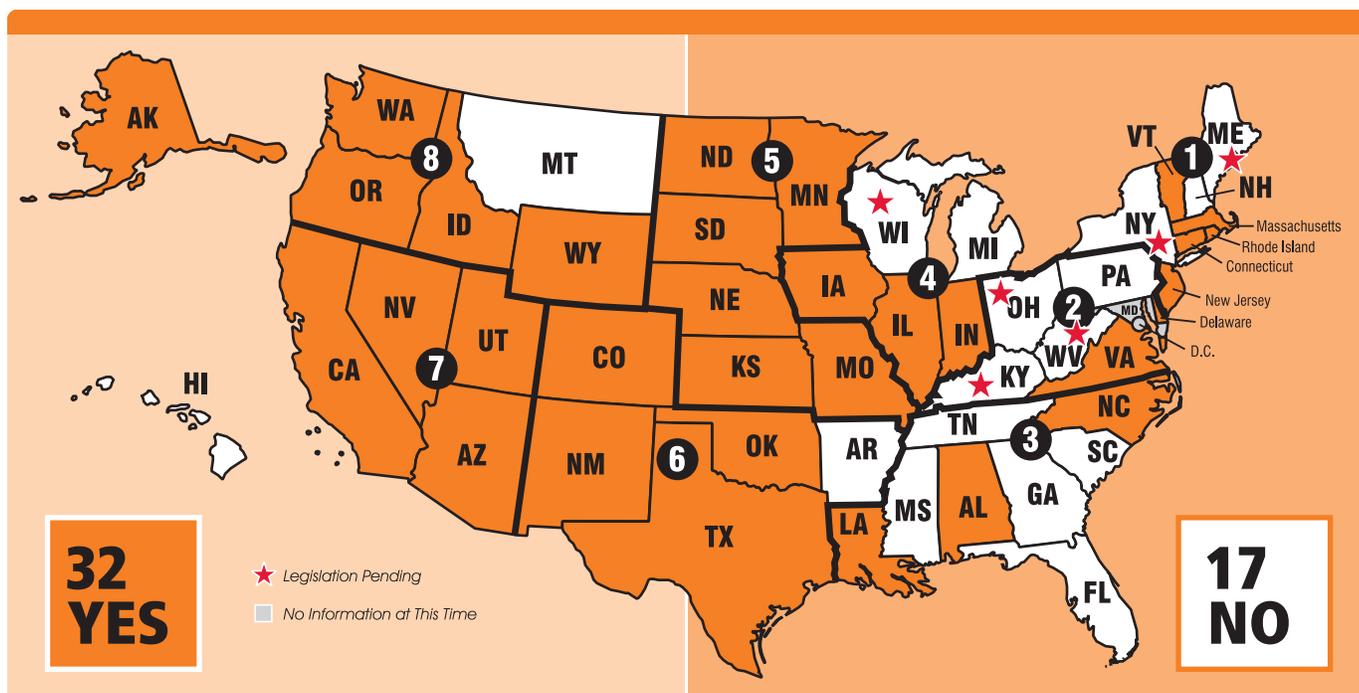


from ordinary negligence during a contest, the exception does not shield participants who commit intentional or malicious acts or coaches who encourage the use of excessively violent techniques. The court found the opposing player liable for battery and \$23,000 in damages, but concluded that the coaches were not liable because they had never encouraged the use of violent or illegal techniques.

Standard of Practice: One aspect of the duty of supervision for athletics personnel is to coach and monitor players to prevent the use of excessively violent or illegal techniques that foreseeably could injure opposing players. ©

Around the Nation

Question: Has your state legislature mandated a concussion law and/or education in your state?



It All Started Here



Lauren Cheney

BY SHANE MONAGHAN

Despite being born with a congenital heart defect and undergoing open-heart surgery at age three, Lauren Cheney of Indianapolis, Indiana, refused to let those challenges deter her from her dreams.

After the surgery, Cheney's medical team encouraged her parents to keep her active and get her involved with sports to keep her heart strong. Before turning six, she had become a soccer standout. And at age eight, her one and only goal was to become an Olympic soccer player.

Cheney went to Indianapolis (Indiana) Ben Davis High School, where she continued her soccer career. Cheney immediately became an asset to the team, receiving Metropolitan Interscholastic Conference (MIC) All-Conference honors as a freshman. Not only was Cheney a soccer standout during her four years at Ben Davis, but she was also a member of the varsity basketball team until her senior year.

Alongside then-teammates, University of Connecticut midfielder Annie Yi and University of Louisville midfielder Kate Cunningham, Cheney led Ben Davis to its best record in school history, and also led the team with 35 goals and 15 assists in her senior season. Ben Davis advanced to the semi-state round of the Indiana High School Athletic Association 2A state tournament in 2005, eventually falling to Zionsville (Indiana) High School.

During her career at Ben Davis, Cheney amassed multiple accolades including MIC All-Conference honors in 2003, 2004 and 2005. Cheney was the Indianapolis Star and Metro Player of the Year in 2004 and the Super Team Player of the Year in 2005. She

was also named both Indiana Girls State Player of the Year and National Soccer Coaches Association of America National Youth and High School Player of the Year in 2005.

After her senior season, Cheney graduated midyear from Ben Davis to train full-time with the United States Under-20 (U-20) team for the FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup. Cheney went on to play at UCLA, where she set school records for points with 173 and game-winning goals with 28. She tied former Bruin Traci Arkenberg for the school record for career goals with 71. During Cheney's four years at UCLA, the Bruins played in four consecutive NCAA College Cups.

In 2008, Cheney's Olympic dream was answered as she was named to the U.S. roster for the 2008 Summer Olympics, where she appeared in three games as a substitute as the United States won the Gold Medal.

In January 2010, Cheney was selected with the second overall pick by the Boston Breakers of Women's Professional Soccer.

As a member of the United States Women's National Team in the 2011 FIFA Women's World Cup, Cheney scored her first goal for the U.S. team against North Korea. She scored the first goal and assisted on the winning goal in the semifinal against France. The United States eventually lost to Japan in the finals.

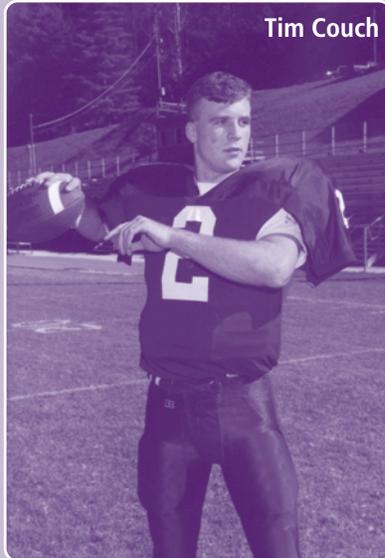
Without a doubt, wherever Cheney goes, success is sure to follow. From an open-heart surgery procedure, to her high school career and eventually her Olympic success, Cheney is proof of that dreams really do come true. ☺

Shane Monaghan is a fall intern in the NFHS Publications/Communications and Events Departments. Monaghan is a graduate of Ball State (Indiana) University, where he specialized in sports administration.

For the Record

FOOTBALL

Highest Completion Percentage, Season



75.2%

Dano Graves
(Folsom, CA), 2009

75.1%

Tim Couch
(Hyden Leslie County, KY), 1994

73.7%

Corey Robinson
(Lone Oak, KY), 2007

73.2%

Garrett Grayson
(Vancouver Heritage, WA), 2009

72.3%

Daniel Gonzalez
(Los Angeles Franklin, CA), 1999

Source: 2011 National High School Sports Record Book. To view the Record Book, visit the NFHS Web site at www.nfhs.org and select "Publications" on the home page.

The Cost

STRING INSTRUMENTS



Item	Average Price	Low	High	Item	Average Price	Low	High
(A) Violin (Under size)	\$450	\$99	\$800	(E) Cello (Under size)	\$1,425	\$350	\$2,500
(B) Violin (Full size)	\$900	\$99	\$1,700	(F) Cello (Full size)	\$2,000	\$500	\$3,500
(C) Viola (Under size)	\$575	\$150	\$1,000	(G) String Bass (Under size)	\$2,100	\$700	\$3,500
(D) Viola (Full size)	\$1,125	\$250	\$2,000	(H) String Bass (Full size)	\$3,100	\$1,200	\$5,000
				(I) Harp	\$6,500	\$3,000	\$10,000

*These prices serve as approximate costs and are not intended to reflect any specific manufacturer's prices.

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High School Sports Participation Continues Upward Climb

Participation in high school sports increased for the 22nd consecutive school year in 2010-11, according to the annual High School Athletics Participation Survey conducted by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS).

Based on figures from the 50 state high school athletic/activity associations, plus the District of Columbia, that are members of the NFHS, sports participation for the 2010-11 school year reached another record-breaking total of 7,667,955 participants.

Boys and girls participation figures also reached respective all-time highs with 4,494,406 boys and 3,173,549 girls participating in 2010-11 – an overall increase of 39,578 participants from 2009-10.

“While the overall increase was not as much as we’ve seen in the past few years, we are definitely encouraged with these totals given the financial challenges facing our nation’s high schools,” said Bob Gardner, NFHS executive director. “The benefits of edu-

cation-based athletics at the high school level are well-documented, and we encourage communities throughout the nation to keep these doors of opportunity open.

“Based on the survey, 55.5 percent of students enrolled in high schools participate in athletics, which emphasizes and reinforces the idea that high school sports continue to have a significant role in student involvement in schools across the country.”

Cross country and outdoor track and field gained the most participants in boys sports last year, with increases of 7,340 and 7,179, respectively. Other boys sports with significant jumps were soccer (6,512), basketball (5,637) and lacrosse (5,013). Three sports with lower overall participation totals registered large percentage gains in 2010-11 – fencing (up 38 percent to 2,027 participants), weightlifting (up 12 percent to 22,161 participants) and badminton (up 9.4 percent to 4,693 participants).

TEN MOST POPULAR GIRLS PROGRAMS

Schools

1. Basketball	17,767
2. Track and Field – Outdoor	16,030
3. Volleyball	15,479
4. Softball – Fast Pitch	15,338
5. Cross Country	13,839
6. Soccer	11,047
7. Tennis	10,181
8. Golf	9,609
9. Swimming and Diving	7,164
10. Competitive Spirit Squads	4,266

Participants

1. Track and Field – Outdoor	475,265
2. Basketball	438,933
3. Volleyball	409,332
4. Softball – Fast Pitch	373,535
5. Soccer	361,556
6. Cross Country	204,653
7. Tennis	182,074
8. Swimming and Diving	160,881
9. Competitive Spirit Squads	96,718
10. Lacrosse	74,927

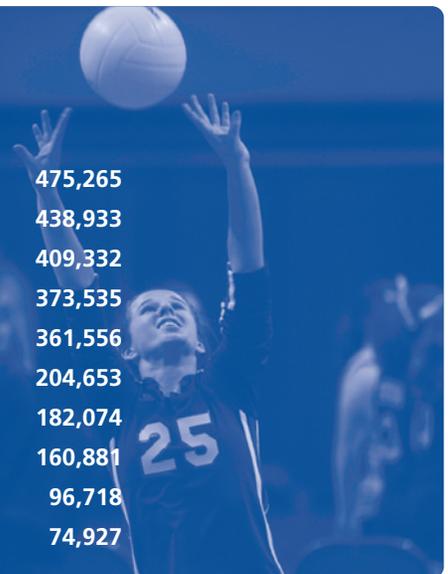


Photo provided by Action Image Photography, Wellsburg, West Virginia.

Among girls sports, the emerging sport of lacrosse led the way with an additional 6,155 participants – an increase of nine percent from the previous year. With 74,927 participants nationwide, lacrosse cracked the girls Top 10 listing for the first time as it moved past golf (71,764). Outdoor track and field was close behind lacrosse with an additional 6,088 participants, followed by soccer (5,440), volleyball (5,347) and cross country (2,685).

Sports with lower overall girls participation totals that registered the largest percentage gains were wrestling (up 19.8 percent to 7,351 participants), badminton (up 14 percent to 12,083 participants) and weightlifting (up 11 percent to 8,237 participants).

The top 10 participatory sports for boys remained the same from 2009-10: Eleven-player football led the way with 1,108,441, followed by outdoor track and field (579,302), basketball (545,844), baseball (471,025), soccer (398,351), wrestling (273,732), cross country (246,948), tennis (161,367), golf (156,866), and swimming and diving (133,900).

Outdoor track and field was the top sport for girls again last year with 475,265 participants, followed by basketball (438,933), volleyball (409,332), fast-pitch softball (373,535), soccer (361,556), cross country (204,653), tennis (182,074), swimming and diving (160,881), competitive spirit squads (96,718) and lacrosse (74,927).

Texas and California once again topped the list of participants by state with 786,626 and 774,767, respectively, followed by New York (388,527), Illinois (350,144), Ohio (328,430), Pennsylvania (316,687), Michigan (314,354), New Jersey (255,893), Florida (245,079) and Minnesota (234,901).

Although the rise in girls participation numbers was not as large this past year (due, in part, to significant drops in competitive spirit numbers in two states), the percentage increase rate has more than doubled the rate for boys during the past 20 years – 63 percent to 31 percent. Twenty years ago, girls constituted 36 percent of the

total number of participants; this past year, that number has climbed to 41 percent. In Oklahoma, the number of female participants actually exceeded the number of boys this past year – 44,112 to 42,694.

The participation survey has been compiled since 1971 by the NFHS through numbers it receives from its member associations. The complete 2010-11 High School Athletics Participation Survey is available on the NFHS Web site at www.nfhs.org. ©



Photos provided by 2020 Photographic, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan.

TEN MOST POPULAR BOYS PROGRAMS

Schools

1. Basketball	18,150
2. Track and Field – Outdoor	15,954
3. Baseball	15,863
4. Football – 11-Player	14,279
5. Cross Country	14,097
6. Golf	13,681
7. Soccer	11,503
8. Wrestling	10,407
9. Tennis	9,839
10. Swimming and Diving	6,899

Participants

1. Football – 11-Player	1,108,441
2. Track and Field – Outdoor	579,302
3. Basketball	545,844
4. Baseball	471,025
5. Soccer	398,351
6. Wrestling	273,732
7. Cross Country	246,948
8. Tennis	161,367
9. Golf	156,866
10. Swimming and Diving	133,900



Photo provided by Northwest Sports Photography, Beaverton, Oregon.

Free Speech Rights vs. Student Postings on Social Media Sites

BY LEE GREEN, J.D.

The Issue

Since the launch of MySpace in 2003, Facebook in 2004, Twitter in 2006, Google+ in 2011 and their numerous social networking progeny, schools and athletics programs have been struggling with a new issue related to codes of conduct for students and student-athletes: the extent of school legal authority over off-campus postings by students on social media Web sites.

An increasing number of lawsuits are being filed each year by students suspended from school or athletics for allegedly inappropriate postings on such sites, with the plaintiffs asserting that they have protected First Amendment free speech rights to engage in off-campus, online speech and that the codes of conduct pursuant to which they were disciplined were unconstitutionally vague because the policies did not adequately define prohibited behaviors.

The challenge for schools attempting to develop social media policies has been the lack of clear legal guidelines regarding school authority to restrict off-campus student speech that takes place via new technologies. However, during 2011, five social media lawsuits have been decided by U.S. Courts of Appeal – three in favor of students and two in favor of schools.

Two of the cases, one decided in favor of a student and one decided in favor of a school, are being appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court and the confusion created by the conflicting rulings has created the type of perfect judicial storm into which the Supreme Court is likely to intervene in order to create uniformity of law across the country.

Doninger v. Niehoff

In April, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit ruled in favor of administrators at Lewis S. Mills High School in Connecticut who took disciplinary action against a student, Avery Doninger, who as a protest against the rescheduling of a student council event made off-campus postings on her blog that referred to school personnel as “douchebags” and encouraged readers to inundate school personnel with phone calls and e-mails in order to “piss them off more.” Although Doninger was not suspended from school, she was prohibited



from running for a class office and her supporters were also prohibited from wearing “Team Avery” t-shirts at a school election assembly.

In ruling in favor of school personnel, the Second Circuit relied on the “substantial disruption” standard established by the U.S. Supreme Court in the 1969 *Tinker v. Des Moines* case, stating that Doninger’s conduct “posed a reasonably foreseeable risk that it would come to the attention of school authorities and materially and substantially disrupt the work and discipline of the school.”

The court also relied on the Sixth Circuit’s 2007 decision in *Lowery v. Euverard* upholding the suspension from a high school football team of players who were actively campaigning to have their coach fired. The Sixth Circuit used the *Tinker* substantial disruption standard in concluding that the players were undermining the authority of their coach and materially interfering with the orderly operation of the team.

In July, Doninger filed a petition for a writ of certiorari with the U.S. Supreme Court, but as of mid-September, the Court had not yet announced whether it will hear her appeal.

J.S. v. Blue Mountain School District

In June, the Third Circuit sitting *en banc* (all 14 circuit judges participating) held that the Blue Mountain School District (BMSD) in Pennsylvania violated the free speech rights of a minor, J.S., when it suspended her from school for creating on her home computer a fake MySpace profile of her school principal that incorporated profanity and characterized him as a sex addict and pedophile.

Using *Tinker* analysis, the court stated that “[her] speech did not cause a substantial disruption in the school” and the court also concluded that the Supreme Court’s ruling in the 1986 case *Bethel School*

District v. Frasier that schools may prohibit “sexually explicit, indecent, or lewd speech” does not apply to speech that takes place off-campus.

In July, the BMSD announced that it intends to petition the U.S. Supreme Court to review the case, but as of mid-September, the district’s application for certiorari had not yet been filed with the Court.

Layshock v. Hermitage School District

On the same day as its decision in *J.S. v. Blue Mountain School District*, the Third Circuit sitting *en banc* held that the Hermitage School District (HSD) in Pennsylvania violated the free speech rights of a student, Justin Layshock, who had on his grandmother’s home computer created a parody MySpace profile of his school principal, when it suspended him, transferred him into an alternative education program and prohibited him from participating in graduation ceremonies. The profile contained numerous vulgarities and sexual innuendos and a picture of the principal taken from the HSD Web site.

The Third Circuit rejected the HSD argument that the student’s behavior was “on-campus” because of his use of the district Web site to download the principal’s picture and in ruling for the student stated “we do not think that the First Amendment can tolerate the School District stretching its authority into Justin’s grandmother’s home and reaching Justin while he is sitting at her computer.”

Kowalski v. Berkeley County Schools

On July 27, the Fourth Circuit ruled that the Berkeley County Schools (BCS) in West Virginia did not violate the free speech rights of a student, Kara Kowalski, who created a MySpace discussion group page designed solely as a vehicle for her two dozen “friends” who joined the page to cyberbully another student, Shay N., through the use of profane and offensive postings of derogatory comments about and altered photographs of the target student. Kowalski’s name for the page, S.A.S.H., was an acronym for “Students Against Shay’s Herpes” and doctored photos falsely implied that Shay N. suffered from the disease.

The BCS found Kowalski in violation of the district’s anti-bullying policy and suspended her from school for 10 days and extracurricular activities for 90 days, thus barring her from participating in cheerleading and the school’s “Charm Review” club, a finishing school-type activity for which Kowalski had the previous year been elected “Charm Queen.”

The Fourth Circuit’s decision upholding the district’s discipline of Kowalski concluded that bullying, cyberbullying and other forms of harassment satisfy the *Tinker* “substantial disruption” standard. Despite Kowalski’s argument that off-campus speech is beyond the authority of the school to regulate, the court stated that “when she used the Internet as the medium, Kowalski indeed pushed her computer’s keys in her home, but she knew that the electronic response would be, as it in fact was, published beyond her home and could

reasonably be expected to reach the school and impact the school environment.”

D.J.M. v. Hannibal Public School District

On August 1, the Eighth Circuit ruled that the Hannibal Public School District (HPSD) in Missouri did not violate the free speech rights of a student, D.J.M., who used instant-messaging on his home computer to communicate highly derogatory and threatening messages that he intended to use a gun to kill specific students, including his older brother, other named individuals, and particular members of certain groups he hated, including “midgets, fags and Negro bitches.”

Upon learning of D.J.M.’s electronic communications, district personnel contacted law enforcement and the student was arrested, referred for psychiatric evaluation and briefly detained in a juvenile facility. After the HPSD suspended him for the remainder of the school year, D.J.M. filed suit against the district, asserting that his online messages had been a joke and that the disciplinary action violated his free speech rights.

The Eighth Circuit concluded that D.J.M.’s speech was not constitutionally protected because it constituted a “true threat” – “a statement that a reasonable recipient would have interpreted as a serious expression of intent to cause harm or injury to another.” Although acknowledging that the Supreme Court has not yet addressed the issue of school authority over student speech that occurs away from school, the Eighth Circuit commented that the *Tinker* substantial disruption should be applied to off-campus speech where school officials “might reasonably forecast substantial disruption or material interference with school activities.”

T.V. & M.K. v. Smith-Green Community Schools

On August 10, a U.S. District Court in Indiana ruled that the Smith-Green Community Schools (SGCS) violated the free speech rights of two volleyball players when they were suspended from the team and other extracurricular activities for off-campus postings of profanely captioned photographs on social media sites depicting themselves at a slumber party in various states of undress and engaged in sexually suggestive poses with phallus-shaped lollipops. Although the court never addressed the issue as to whether the *Tinker* substantial disruption standard applies to off-campus speech, the court concluded that the postings did not create a substantial disruption of the school or athletics environment. The court also concluded that the SGCS’s code of conduct for students participating in extracurricular activities and athletics was unconstitutionally vague and that to be enforceable, codes of conduct and social media policies need to be highly specific with regard to defining prohibited behaviors. ☉

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Strategies to Generate Support for Interscholastic Programs

BY GARY STEVENS

At a time when school systems are struggling financially to maintain existing programs, the future of interscholastic athletics is at a crossroads. Athletic administrators throughout the nation have been charged by school superintendents to maintain programs with little or no additional financial support. Needs-based budgeting has been replaced by a new imperative to do more with less. Under conditions of economic duress, athletic directors have been given a simple choice: find alternative methods to raise money to fund their programs or make drastic cuts to operate within limited means.

Complicating this scenario is the proliferation of sport alternatives for students. No longer can school athletics lay claim to being the “only show in town.” Club athletics and recreational activities are competing with schools for the same participants who have historically populated school teams. In a time when many athletic directors are reducing the number of contests and limiting travel, club programs may appear more appealing to elite athletes and those youngsters seeking exposure to college coaches.

Given these challenges, athletic administrators must take the lead role in providing support and justification for these programs. Validating the need for education-based athletics requires the athletic director to assert his/her role as an educational leader. Through collection and publication of data related to student-athlete performance in the classroom, promotion of the positive publicity generated by both athletes and coaches, and department procedures supporting the school’s educational mission, the athletic director can effectively make the case that school athletics is more than “extracurricular.”

Athletic administrators should use a variety of strategies to support the case for their programs. Collecting information related to how athletics supports a school system’s mission is an essential part of the process. Even when financial resources are adequate, it is important to gather statistical and anecdotal data about how athletics fosters student learning. The following strategies may prove helpful

to an athletic director seeking to make this connection:

Track the educational achievements of student-athletes

Athletic administrators should make great efforts to track the academic accomplishments of student-athletes on a seasonal basis. Many athletic administrators track the grade-point averages of their teams and publicly recognize squads that exceed targeted levels. Others recognize individual students who maintain honor status as “scholar-athletes” or who earn all-academic honors at the state or conference levels. In turn, the names of students receiving these honors should be reported to the local educational authorities.

Collect attendance data on student-athletes

Peggy Johnson, director of athletics for the Savannah-Chatham (Georgia) Public Schools, oversees athletic programs involving 35,000 youngsters in seven high schools and 12 middle schools in her system. As part of her data collection process, she analyzes information related to student attendance rates for all students. Johnson observes that attendance rates for students involved in activities significantly exceed those of youngsters who are non-participants. She observes that student-athletes outperform all others in the classroom and are less likely to drop out of school.

Johnson presents this information to her school board each year as part of her rationale for maintaining programs, and her efforts have yielded impressive results. Johnson’s budgets have actually increased by more than 33 percent each year. “This is a bargain price for what you get for each dollar,” Johnson observes. “[As a result] school boards recognize we cannot cut athletics.”

Collect cost-per-pupil data to demonstrate the efficiency of your operation

Efficiency is a hallmark of a good athletic director. In today’s economic climate, athletic administrators assume the responsibility of

demonstrating that each dollar raised through public funding, participation fees, game admissions or concession sales is utilized in a responsible manner. Costs associated with each sport should be tabulated and calculated on a cost-per-pupil basis. Delivering programs at the same or reduced costs on a yearly basis will demonstrate to district leadership that the athletic program is operating in an efficient manner. When circumstances such as purchasing necessary safety equipment or unanticipated expenses dictate a cost increase, these changes should be documented in writing.

Document honors earned by student-athletes

Non-statistical data can help the athletic administrator make the case for a school's program as well. The publicity generated by student-athletes who are recognized in the print and electronic media is positive for the school as a whole. Athletic administrators should



document and archive all honors earned by participants in their programs and file reports as needed. This information should be prominently documented on the school's athletic Web site and updated regularly as necessary. For purposes of fairness, inclusion and Title IX compliance, all activities should be displayed equitably.

Document and publicize community service activities conducted by interscholastic athletic teams

Interscholastic athletic programs offer a myriad of learning experiences for participants. School athletic teams enrich the life of their communities in many ways. When adopting a charity, volunteering at a soup kitchen or officiating a youth basketball game, student-athletes learn the importance of service to others. Athletic administrators should document these types of service projects and publicize them to key decision-makers in the school system. Illustrating that community service is as ingrained in the culture of the athletic pro-

gram as is competition provides a strong argument that athletics is an indispensable part of the overall educational program.

Minimize the loss of academic time when scheduling

Supporting a school's educational purposes requires the athletic director to schedule events responsibly. Classroom teachers become frustrated when students involved in athletics miss class time to participate in an athletic event. Whenever possible, game times should be scheduled so that bus departures occur after the dismissal bell.

There are occasions when daylight considerations or state-mandated playoff games necessitate mid-afternoon start times and early dismissals for student-athletes. When those circumstances arise, the athletic director should communicate the names of all affected student-athletes in a timely manner and support teachers' academic expectations. When early departures are the exception, not the custom, and athletic administrators communicate all pertinent information, classroom teachers are generally supportive.

Collect feedback from alumni to demonstrate how athletics has positively impacted their lives

Graduates of the school are some of the most ardent supporters of athletics. An athletic administrator should initiate and maintain contact with alumni and collect information as to how participation in interscholastic sports impacted them personally and professionally. Anecdotal data about how the educational values instilled through competition have shaped the experiences of graduates can be used as a justification for maintaining programs, even when budgets are lean. Given that many alumni may still reside in the community and pay taxes, these individuals may become important allies during challenging times.

Of course, there is no guarantee that any or all of these strategies will work under all circumstances. A community experiencing widespread unemployment or a major taxpayer revolt will create prevailing winds that will be difficult for the athletic director to navigate.

What is certain, however, is that interscholastic athletics is competing with a host of other programs for limited financial dollars. It is incumbent upon every athletic director to understand and articulate the role that school sports programs play in the educational process and to support that stance with clear data. The fruit of one's labor in collecting measures of how school sports have impacted student success in the classroom and later life may be the preservation of the interscholastic athletic experience for future generations of youngsters to enjoy. ☺

Gary Stevens, CMAA, is the athletic administrator at Thornton Academy in Saco, Maine.

In the Limelight: Sustaining a Successful Theatre Program

BY JENNIFER GREEN

East Carteret High School, located in Beaufort, North Carolina, is a 1A school in the eastern part of the state. Approximately one-fifth of the students are consistently involved in the annual musical production or enrolled in theatre arts. Community members and feeder students enthusiastically anticipate what has become a local fixture.

There are many aspects to building and sustaining a successful theatre program, and the following suggestions should be helpful as schools develop these kinds of performing arts programs:

- **Be willing to spend money.** Licensing costs, script purchase/rental, building supplies, costumes, snacks for actors, water for backstage, printing costs and supplements for adults/staff not paid all add to the cost of pulling off major shows. Don't be afraid to spend some money for a quality and worthwhile production.
- **Find the best ways to raise money.** Whether through fundraising, donation drives or fees, be prepared to supplement your budget. Offering ads in your program can be a great incentive for local businesses to donate. Charging a flat fee for participation in theatre should be a last resort. A donation drive will help students learn valuable communication skills and generate a vested interest from your community.
- **Schedule one big "blockbuster."** One big musical or family show can support the rest of your program for the school year.
- **Run for two consecutive weekends.** Following a successful opening weekend, word of mouth will generate interest for the remaining shows. You also get more life out of sets, costumes and other purchased/rented materials.
- **Ask for help.** Don't be afraid to let your faculty, community members and especially your parents know you need help and appreciate their talents. A successful program cannot be run by one or two people, no matter how hard-working and dedicated.
- **Accept help.** Even if it means giving up a little control. See above.
- **Have open auditions.** Have a least one large production that is open to everyone. The lack of requirements and preset expectations will encourage more students to give theatre a chance.
- **Find a spot for everyone.** If a student has the nerve to audition and the determination to come to rehearsals, find a spot for that student in your cast or crew. These are the students who will be the backbone of your program because they "want" it and are willing to work for it.
- **Know your audience.** For your large, "money-making" productions, know what your community will pay to see. Know the script rating. Don't advertise a PG-13 or R script to your area families.
- **Do not skimp on sets.** You can go with the minimum, but put as much effort and attention to detail into them as you would your multi-level revolving pieces. Poorly designed, constructed or painted sets can ruin an otherwise strong performance.
- **Reuse and recycle.** Last year's sets can be taken apart and rebuilt. Wood is expensive, as are wheels, hinges, etc. Find a place on campus or a local storage company that will work a deal to store your materials.
- **Put any extra money back into your program.** Set a goal to end the season with as much money in your account as you started. Any extra should be set aside for improvements to your equipment or additions to your prop closet.
- **Put your money into sound.** If you can't hear the actors or singers, it doesn't matter how good they are. Invest in a good wireless system and keep your equipment in good shape.
- **Do as much "in house" as possible.** From printing your programs, to making your costumes, props and sets, it is usually more cost-effective to do it yourself.
- **Leave safety to the experts.** Unless you have the technical skill, find the parents who are electricians and contractors. Leave the big stuff, such as flying rigs, to experts.
- **Make your tickets affordable.** Set a price that will not exclude members of your community. Offer reserved seats at a high price for a one-third of your seating and general admission for the remaining seats. Consider breaking down pricing for



general admission with students/children getting in for less. Lower ticket prices may lead to repeat visits to your longer running performances. Consider free admissions and donations for smaller productions (especially one-night events.)

- **Give back to your community.** Pursue partnerships with local events or charities. Costumed actors can liven up almost any event.
- **Set high expectations.** The expectations of the director and other adults will become the expectations of the actors, crew and business team. Expect perfection. Don't let actors be seen in costume before the show or during an intermission. Don't allow gum or food in acting areas. Don't settle for "good enough."
- **Advertise.** Get to know the public relations person in your county or district. Send e-mails and invitations to other schools/faculties to promote your event. Invite local newspapers or TV reporters to a dress rehearsal. Help promote your charity involvement with posters, flyers or in-school news shows and/or announcements.
- **Offer discounts.** Offer free, opening-night admission to faculty and staff in your district. Many schools start their runs on a Thursday night to get the "jitters" out before the weekend. Free tickets for faculty/staff will help fill your seats with an appreciative audience.
- **Schedule preview shows.** No matter the size, length or run of your show, it's always helpful for you and your actors to preview some or even all of your show to a small audience willing to provide constructive feedback.
- **Put academics first.** Never forget that academics come before any extracurricular drama programs or events. Know how your students are performing in the classroom as well as in the theatre. Encourage them to bring homework to rehearsal. There is

often spare time to knock out some homework. Also, encourage them to form study groups within the cast.

- **Be willing to share your students.** Depending on the size of your school and the interests of your cast and crew, very few of them will be involved only in theatre. Drama students are also student-athletes, student government leaders, club members and academic scholars. Finding a way to share and work together as a school is vital to the success of everyone involved.
- **Thrift costumes.** Thrift your costumes whenever possible. Taking a full day to drive from thrift store to thrift store – cast measurements in hand – can save hundreds of dollars in costumes. At the end of the run, keep the costumes, sell them to your sentimental cast members or donate them to the thrift store or other local charity organization.
- **Have a costume/prop room.** Space permitting, keep all of your old costumes, props, shoes, wigs, etc. A fully-stocked costume room can carry you through smaller productions without having to make, rent or buy more costumes. For repeat performances such as annual holiday-themed events, you will have your costumes and accessories available from year to year.
- **Keep good records.** Good financial records will help you make the most of your money, and being able to re-order hard-to-find theatrical items will save time and money over the years.
- **Have fun.** If you and – more importantly – your students are having fun, and your audiences are entertained, you have a successful theatre program. ☺

In her sixth year as the drama director and eighth year as an English teacher at East Carteret High School in Beaufort, North Carolina, Jennifer Green is responsible for teaching all theatre classes, directing the school musical and advising the Thespian Society. With the help of her husband, Tim, a middle school math teacher and former engineer, and choral instructor Shannon Ehlers, Green designs and builds the sets for annual productions and helps her students continually give back to their community through annual charity events.

‘Officials for Kids’ Program Makes the Right Call

BY EAMONN REYNOLDS

The job of a high school contest official is not exactly easy. It is an avocation where the noble recognition deserved for overseeing a well-regulated athletic contest is almost always trumped by the criticism and heckling of fans after a single missed call or judgment on the field.

But few will argue the call that a Michigan officials organization is making to ensure that the future of children’s health care is in good hands for years to come.

The team is called “Officials For Kids,” a group of mid-Michigan officials who are dedicated to improving children’s health care at every Children’s Miracle Network Hospital in the state of Michigan. The program was founded in 2003 by Ken Sudall, the owner of Go Green Auto Glass and a retired umpire who got the idea after developing a community service relationship with Sparrow Hospital in the Lansing area.

“When I opened my company, we wanted to get involved in the community, so we chose Sparrow Hospital’s children’s ward,” Sudall said. “I soon became aware of its Coaches and Athletes program, and I realized that you can’t have an athletic contest without coaches, athletes and the third part being officials. So that’s where I got the idea for Officials For Kids.”

Sudall began promoting his organization by parking cars at the state basketball tournaments and a local festival called “Common Ground.” With help from the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA), Sudall was soon able to promote his program on a much larger scale, as the Officials For Kids name has now spread to officials associations in Detroit, Flint and Grand Rapids.

The program’s most recent fundraising effort is an idea known as “Give-A-Game,” a charitable project that the Lansing and Grand Rapids associations have adopted that designates the first Thursday in May as a day when all baseball and softball umpires donate game fees to their local hospitals.



“We get a tremendous response whenever we do this,” Sudall said. “We are part of this community and we want people to know that we are willing to give back.”

But the giving does not stop there. MHSAA Communications Director John Johnson said that while the Lansing and Grand Rapids officials associations were the first to promote the Give-A-Game trend, Flint, Detroit and other surrounding areas all have their own unique ways of contributing. In Flint, an activities camp was held for kids who are at high risk for obesity, while in Detroit, a group launched a “Referees For Reading” program in which referees visit hospitals and read to children.

“There is a lot of good stuff going on,” Johnson said. “I know in Grand Rapids they also held an activities camp for visually impaired children where they get to do bike-riding, horse-riding and things like that. The West Michigan Officials Association also did a Give-A-Game night with football. It’s very fun stuff.”

Sudall said that there are approximately 13,000 registered officials in the state, all of whom who have participated in his program in some way.

“All of them have participated at some point in time, but our goal is to get all of them participating at the same time,” Sudall said. “We have a group of umpires who have done the Give-A-

Game for years now, but our goal is to have the associations across the state step up as well.”

For such a novel idea, the results have been nothing but positive. According to Sudall, the various methods of contribution by Officials For Kids have raised between \$300,000 and \$400,000, and the Lansing-area officials continue to generate \$15,000 to \$20,000 annually through their respective programs.

“We’re only a small part of the overall success,” Sudall said. “We’re the blue-collar part. We’re the nickels and dimes.”

Johnson added that the only thing more important than the successful fundraising is the constructive feedback he has seen and heard from officials, parents and schools, emphasizing that keeping the program local has been imperative.

“The buy-in from everyone has been huge, especially when they hear that this is something that is going back to a place that’s local,” Johnson said. “Schools are more than happy to be involved, and the people are happy to give because this is money that is staying right here and is going exactly where it says it’s going to go.”

While Johnson said that he is not aware of such a program in other areas outside of Michigan, he knows that there has been some interest and that other states are inquiring about introducing similar ideas.

“There has been some interest and I know it’s been talked about in officials circles beyond the state of Michigan,” Johnson said. “But this is something that people should want to be affiliated with. It’s one of those things where it’s such a feel-good concept that you can’t not want to step up and join.”

Sudall said that for the upcoming year, Officials For Kids will work toward four specific goals. By the end of 2012, the organization hopes to have all 13,000 registered Michigan officials pledge \$100 annually, institute a dedicated “Give-A-Game Day” per sport, have every approved association in the state create a plan for involvement and develop an approach to reach out to the other non-registered sports officials in the state.

So far, the ruling on the field indicates that the program is on the right track.

“All people really know about officials is he or she blew that call,” Sudall said. “So, at least for the two hours during these games or in the time they spend helping kids, we hope people will gain a respect for all of our officials involved. Our overall goal is to let people know that we stand for more than just the calls we make.” ☉

Eamonn Reynolds was the summer intern in the NFHS Publications/Communications Department and is a senior at Ohio University majoring in journalism and public relations.

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Basketball Buffer Zones: Accidents Waiting to Happen

BY TODD L. SEIDLER, PH.D.

During basketball practice in 2001, 14-year-old Katie Patrick went to take a charge, fell backwards and hit her head on the unpadded metal wall of the gym, less than 4 feet from the end line. Patrick sustained a traumatic brain injury and later filed suit against the coaches, athletic director and school district, settling for a significant amount.

In order to provide a reasonably safe environment, most sport and recreational activities require a certain amount of space between the activity area and any obstructions such as walls, benches and equipment. This space is commonly referred to as a buffer zone or safety zone.

Numerous participants have been seriously or catastrophically injured, and some have died, by running into walls and other obstructions that are close to the court (Steinbach, 2004). Buffer-zone accidents are one of the most common causes of serious injuries related to basketball. As a result of many of these injuries, lawsuits were filed claiming that teachers, coaches, school boards and other service providers were negligent in the conduct of their programs.

A recent analysis of lawsuits that claim negligence in the conduct of sport and physical activity programs (Dougherty, 2006) revealed that the lack of a sufficient buffer zone was alleged to have been the primary cause of injury in 67 percent of basketball lawsuits. Buffer-zone injuries occur from time to time, but because these injuries typically receive only local coverage, many people underestimate the potential for such incidents in their gym.

Oriana Bruno was chasing a loose ball during high school basketball practice, accidentally stepped on the ball and was propelled headfirst into the concrete wall less than 6 feet from the end line, sustaining traumatic brain and shoulder injuries. The wall was par-



tially padded, extending 9 feet on either side of the center line of the court, but Oriana hit the wall a couple of feet beyond the padding. The Brunos later filed suit against the school, settling for a significant amount.

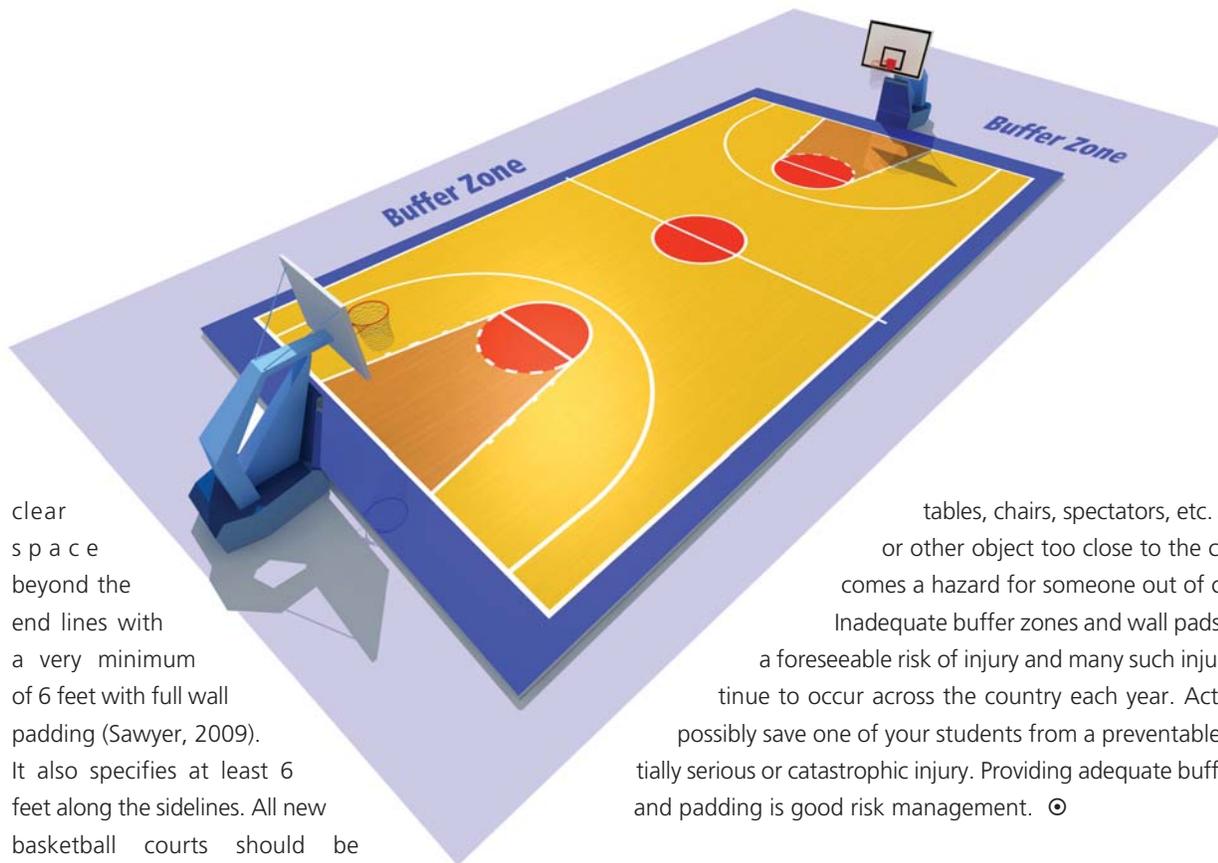
In 1997, eighth-grader Lamar Pope was playing basketball during open gym. The cross-courts were being used when Lamar tripped on another boy's feet and went head-first into the gym wall less than 5 feet from the end line. Lamar was unresponsive for several days, and passed away when he was removed from life support.

Many current basketball facilities were built with inadequate buffer zones, presenting a dangerous condition from the day they opened. Architects often do not understand the importance of designing courts that incorporate adequate buffer zones and

wall padding. Even as athletes continue to become bigger, stronger and faster, little is being done to protect them as they leave the court out of control.

The following are recommendations regarding basketball buffer zones:

1. Rule 1-2-1 of the National Federation of State High School Associations Basketball Rules Book says "there shall be at least 3 feet (and preferably 10 feet) of unobstructed space outside boundaries." In addition, Table 1-1 (Supplement to Basketball Court) states the following: "If possible, building plans should provide for a court with ideal measurements as stated in Rule 1-1, ample out-of-bounds area and necessary seating space. A long court permits use of two crosswise courts for practice and informal games."
2. The American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD) recommends at least 10 feet of



clear space beyond the end lines with a very minimum of 6 feet with full wall padding (Sawyer, 2009).

It also specifies at least 6 feet along the sidelines. All new basketball courts should be planned and constructed with adequate buffer zones in mind. Remember, sidelines for the main court sometimes become the end lines for the cross-courts and many of the previous injuries occurred on the cross-courts. Those playing on cross-courts are no less entitled to a safe environment.

3. For existing courts with inadequate buffer zones, pad the walls. The American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) recently released standards for wall pads. When purchasing wall pads, specify that they meet or exceed the ASTM standard. With courts that have a buffer zone of less than 3 or 4 feet, investigate the possibility of re-stripping the court and moving the baskets in, thereby increasing the buffer zone. It is better to have a court that's a little short than a kid with a serious injury – or worse.
4. The gym walls should be padded the entire width of the court, from no more than 4 inches off the floor to a height of at least 6 feet. Ideally, the gym walls should be completely padded (wall to wall). The reason for padding wall to wall is that, in most gyms, many activities take place other than basketball. If a physical education class is playing Ultimate or the softball team is running sprints, the lines for the basketball courts may be meaningless, but the wall is just as hard.
5. Keep the buffer zone clear of obstructions such as benches,

tables, chairs, spectators, etc. A bench or other object too close to the court becomes a hazard for someone out of control.

Inadequate buffer zones and wall pads present a foreseeable risk of injury and many such injuries continue to occur across the country each year. Act now to possibly save one of your students from a preventable, potentially serious or catastrophic injury. Providing adequate buffer zones and padding is good risk management. ☉

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North Carolina Captain Retreat Program Teaches Leadership, Communication

BY EAMONN REYNOLDS

The “C” emblem on an athlete’s chest conveys the same message to his or her teammates as what it stands for: Captain. Such a role signifies leadership, sportsmanship and, above all, character – three qualities that separate great young men and women from the middle of the pack. In North Carolina, high school athletic programs across the state are not only striving to provide their student-athletes with these tools to succeed, they are watching them bloom firsthand in their communities.

sibilities are as team leaders,” said Mark Dreibelbis, NCHSAA assistant commissioner for student services and supervisor of officials. “The teaching then goes on to prepare them to go back and make a difference.”

The program has been funded by the North Carolina legislature for the past 16 years, and is a part of the NCHSAA’s Student Services department. According to Dreibelbis, every school is allowed to participate in the weekend retreat and is responsible for submitting



“The teaching then goes on to prepare them to go back and make a difference.”

Every spring, the North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA) hosts its Coaches and Captain Retreat in Raleigh, a weekend leadership-development program that brings together student-athletes, coaches and parents from high schools throughout the state. The goal of the program is to train those student-athletes who are team captains – or have potential leadership skills to be captains – and teach them effective ways to communicate in a leadership role.

“The curriculum is designed to teach them what their respon-

the names of all student-athletes, coaches and parents who plan on attending. Once they arrive, the student-athletes are separated into groups with other student-athletes from different schools.

“They learn to interact with one another through a range of different projects,” Dreibelbis said. “The projects deal with issues in their own schools, such as sportsmanship, bullying and hazing, and community service.”

After a day-and-a-half of group planning and decision-making, each school must develop an action plan – an initiative Dreibelbis

said must include a school-based project, a public-service announcement and a community project. When students implement their action plans into their schools, the NCHSAA helps provide funding for school activities.

"Everything they do ties back into our main objectives for the program," Dreibelbis said. "Our objectives are to define leadership qualities in a team captain, identify key issues affecting student-athletes, teach them to communicate effectively with other students and adults, and to understand how they can use their influence to prevent problems and promote healthy lifestyles."

The success of the retreat is indisputable. In fact, Dreibelbis noted that this past year, the program's message about sportsmanship and positive behavior reached 17,693 students and 908,495 adults, as recorded by the NCHSAA.

"We want them to address problems they are witnessing in their schools," Dreibelbis said. "These numbers represent programming and persons who received the programming through the myriad of projects and programs coordinated by our Coach and Captain teams and members."

While the emphasis of the retreat is specifically geared toward the growth of the student-athletes, Dreibelbis said that the real suc-

cess of the program actually comes from the parents who participate.

"With the parents being there, they really help in terms of taking this back to the communities and schools," Dreibelbis said. "They don't just do it for their team; they do it for their communities and their kids' schools."

Dreibelbis sees the retreat as a hands-on, interactive program that will continue to attract more and more schools in years to come. He said that while nearly all of the schools return after participating in the retreat, he receives requests from new schools every year looking to join in the experience.

"We try to empower the student-athletes," Dreibelbis said. "We tell them, 'you can make the difference.' As athletes and team captains, so much is expected of them, so our program gives them the knowledge and confidence to actually go out and make that difference. That's the beauty of it." ☺

Eamonn Reynolds was the summer intern in the NFHS Publications/Communications Department and is a senior at Ohio University majoring in journalism and public relations.

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State Associations Defend New Field Hockey Eyewear Rule

BY EAMONN REYNOLDS



Photo provided by Bob Russell, Maryland.

With the start of the high school field hockey season, one noticeable change has occurred in the 14 states that sponsor the sport. All players throughout the nation are now required to wear protective eyewear on the field during competition.

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Board of Directors voted at its April meeting in Indianapolis to mandate the use of protective eyewear that meets the current American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) standard for field hockey. Acting on a recommendation from the NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee, the Board agreed that the potential risk of injury warranted the requirement of protective eyewear for the 64,000 student-athletes involved in the sport.

"While serious eye injuries in field hockey at the high school level are rare, the NFHS Board of Directors has concluded that an eyewear requirement is the right step," said Elliot Hopkins, NFHS director of educational services and field hockey rules editor.

For sports similar to field hockey, mandatory eye and face protection is the undisputed norm. Girls and boys lacrosse and ice hockey all require helmets, facemasks or goggles to be worn at all times. Ultimately, the Board's goal is to minimize risk for players, an initiative that Hopkins is certain the rule will accomplish.

"In field hockey, not too many people associate the sport with face or eye injuries," Hopkins said. "However, that really only applies to those athletes who play the sport at a much higher level. In high school, these are amateur athletes, so the risk for injury is significantly greater."

Since the passage of the rule in April, some coaches and players have voiced their disapproval, believing that eyewear will affect players' peripheral vision and reduce the quality of their performance. Some individuals believe that eyewear also takes away from the traditional aspects of the sport.

Although the eyewear mandate is now in place for all high schools nationally, five states (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Vermont) previously passed rules on their own to require protective eyewear. Maine Principals' Association (MPA) Assistant Director Mike Burnham believes that it was necessary to make the rule a national standard.

"It is my feeling that if a rule such as the mandatory wearing of eyewear promotes student safety and may save an athlete's eye, then it is a rule worth having in place at the national level," Burnham said.

NFHS official field hockey rules previously allowed – but did not require – the wearing of eyewear that meets the current ASTM

standard. Tom Mezzanotte, executive director of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League, said that states must always put safety of the student-athletes first in any sport, even when it comes to rules changes.

"In Rhode Island, the use of protective eyewear has become a matter of safety and liability, even though the discussion that it would take away from the game has been longstanding," Mezzanotte said.

Burnham agreed, saying that Maine experienced similar negative feedback when the state first added the rule to field hockey.

"The implementation of a rule of this significance is going to create some negativity," Burnham said. "Now, after years of the rule being in place in Maine, there is very little discussion regarding the rule. Eyewear manufacturers have created protective eyewear that addresses many of the issues that were initially raised about not being able to see the ball."

In regard to the rule intruding upon the traditional features of the sport, Bob Hale, a member of the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference Field Hockey Committee, said that in any sport, change is inevitable and must be learned to be dealt with.

"Traditions are important, but so is change and adaptability," Hale said. "There are changes in a lot of sports every year. Look at the changes in football equipment over the years. If we can make field hockey a safer sport, we owe it to our student-athletes to do so."

One of the main causes for injury in field hockey can be the

ter to the hospital, father Bill McCloskey agrees the new eyewear rule is a must.

"The girl she was defending brought her stick up unexpectedly and the injury forced her to get 10 stitches," McCloskey said. "She plays lacrosse too, but she refused to wear goggles for field hockey because nobody else was."

As a parent, McCloskey, who has coached Catholic Youth Organization sports for more than 10 years, believes the NFHS is making "the right call."

"I applaud the NFHS' stance and direction," McCloskey said. "This is a great move and it puts safety first."

As a sport that is played at the amateur, collegiate and Olympic levels, the rule for protective eyewear currently only applies to the high school level. Whether or not the rule will eventually work its way into the higher levels of play remains to be seen.

"Unfortunately, I believe that this will be a rule that is considered at the higher levels only after there has been some type of catastrophic injury that could have been prevented by the wearing of protective eyewear," Burnham said.

Mezzanotte also added that while the rule should at least be considered in the collegiate game, the playing fields used by college programs provide for a safer game, lessening the need for protective eyewear.

"Most, if not all, colleges play on artificial turf or perfectly manicured surfaces which, in my estimation, provide for a much safer



Shannon McCloskey, Nazareth Academy High School.

poor condition of a school's playing field. While the game is meant to be played on artificial turf, Mezzanotte explained that not all schools have access to such a field.

"Playing on a football field or any other traditional grass fields, as is the case with many high school facilities, has proven to be more hazardous, so this rule will help provide some cushion on this problem," Mezzanotte said.

A case-in-point example that supports this new safety precaution is Shannon McCloskey, a field hockey player from Nazareth Academy High School in Philadelphia, who suffered a severe injury after being hit with a stick close to her eye. After taking his daughter

to the hospital, father Bill McCloskey agrees the new eyewear rule is a must.

playing surface," Mezzanotte said. However, Hale sees the rule as a trend that is only cracking the surface and believes that more people involved in the sport will soon take the addition into consideration.

"Adopting this at the national level for high schools will certainly raise the issue at the collegiate level," Hale said. "I suspect that once all of our high school players are used to playing with eyewear, it will be a natural evolution into the game." ☉

Eamonn Reynolds was the summer intern in the NFHS Publications/Communications Department and is a senior at Ohio University majoring in journalism and public relations.

Female Tackles Daunting Task as Wrestling Coach at School for Blind

BY DR. DAVID HOCH, CMAA

Editor's Note: *This interview with Sara Hines, wrestling coach at the Maryland School for the Blind (MSB) in Baltimore, Maryland, was conducted by David Hoch, a member of the High School Today Publications Committee and a retired athletic director from Baltimore County.*



Coach Sara Hines

Q: What was your initial reaction when you were asked to coach wrestling? Was the idea of coaching a little daunting?

Hines: When I first arrived at the Maryland School for the Blind, I heard that it had a wrestling team and wondered how sight-impaired youngsters competed. And I asked the athletic director about the team. Ironically, the position had recently become vacant and the athletic director was thrilled with the inquiry. The athletic director said that I could learn “hands-on” if I was willing to try. Of course, I had no idea what exactly I was getting into, but said “yes.” I like challenges.

I began to do research on blind wrestlers and the adaptations that had to be made. Quickly, I learned that additional disabilities made coaching a little overwhelming at first. My first few weeks of practice, I had no idea what I was going to do with these kids – we were learning together.

Q: Even though you hadn't actually coached wrestling, you did have a link to the sport. What was that connection?

Hines: My younger brother was a wrestler for Bel Air High School and I was the wrestling manager for a few years. After I graduated, I joined the military and volunteered with several high school teams.

Q: After recovering from the preliminary shock of being asked to coach wrestling, what did you do to get ready for your first season?

Hines: The first thing that I did was talk to the former coach. Since the coach wasn't a wrestler himself, he focused more on school procedures and meeting the individual needs of the kids rather than specific techniques. So I called my little brother and talked about the exercises and drills that he did in high school. I tried talking to some local coaches, but they weren't sure how to adapt in order to meet the needs of the wrestlers at MSB. From there, I went online and watched a lot of videos and read a lot of articles on adapted sports. But it really wasn't until I got into the wrestling room with our team that I began to figure things out. I quickly learned why the previous coach focused so much on the kids' needs, because typical coaching just wasn't going to cut it at MSB.

Q: Is there any difference in your preparation and conducting a practice session from that of planning a lesson for and teaching in the classroom?

Hines: There really are a lot of similarities to teaching special education and coaching. With instruction of both there is trial and error. You have to see what works and doesn't for your kids. It takes time to prepare and you also need good observational skills. If you are not paying attention, a kid will get lost.

One huge similarity is that you really never know how things will turn out until you try. You have to be flexible. You can prepare all that you want and things don't work. I have had lessons fail and practices where nothing got done. When you are flexible, you

can make a change at that moment. You do what it takes to get it done, but you also have to have patience that something will work.

Q: How does athletics fit into the philosophy and mission of the Maryland School for the Blind?

Hines: The Maryland School for the Blind ensures that students reach their fullest potential by preparing them with the abilities to be successful, independent and well-rounded contributing members of their communities. Athletics goes hand-in-hand with this philosophy. Playing a team sport teaches so many vital life lessons. It also pushes a young person to his or her fullest potential and makes the student grow and learn as an individual. Sports are universal and the athletes can take what they have learned and apply it to so many parts of their community.

Being part of a team helps young people succeed in the classroom and later on the job. Teamwork, diligence, concentration and goal-setting are skills that are used on the mat and in life. I can't think of a better way to fulfill the mission than participating in athletics.

Q: While most students gain a great deal from participating in athletics, what does it mean for your students?

Hines: The self-esteem and sense of camaraderie are the biggest and best parts of being on our team. Students get to try and accomplish things that they never thought they could. Also, they get to be part of something larger than themselves and have some success with it. Our students learn how to be supportive of one another, and cheer and encourage the others regardless of the outcome of their own match. They get to feel what it is like to be part of a team, and this is irreplaceable.

Q: Has coaching wrestling helped you in the classroom and if so, how?

Hines: I've always felt that being a special education teacher is more like having seven jobs and not one. You have to be a teacher, nurse, counselor, coach, cheerleader, mentor and role model. These are all truly necessary to be effective with each and every student. Therefore, coaching has made me more successful and well-rounded in the classroom. It has reinforced that practice makes perfect. In the classroom, we work out our brains just as we work out our muscles in practice. I use some of the same principles to motivate the kids and, in that way, coaching and teaching go hand-in-hand.



Q: What have you learned or gained by coaching?

Hines: What I gained is priceless. I have savored every smile on an athlete's face after he does something that he never thought he could. Also, I've gained a different perspective of my students.

You see that the students are different on the mat. Maybe math beat them that day, but at practice they win. The kids are in charge, and they can push through and make things happen. Some kids really come alive and thrive. I would never see this in the classroom, and I wouldn't trade one moment that I've been able to spend with them in wrestling.

Q: What advice would you have for a teacher who may not have any experience and is asked, like you were, to coach or direct a student activity for the first time?

Hines: I would say, "Just do it." It will be a wild ride, but it will be totally worth it. In addition, take risks, be patient and flexible. And never forget that this is not about you; it is all about the kids. They could care less if everything you do is perfect. The athletes just want someone to be there for them.

Q: Is there any highlight (or more than one) that quickly comes to mind that have you experienced in your young coaching career?

Hines: The first thing that comes to mind is the point during the first season when the boys began to trust me as their coach. You see, I am a female. They didn't like that too much and, in fact, some were going to quit the team. And I did things differently from their former coach. The guys did not think that this coaching arrangement would work out. But then they saw changes and improvements in their wrestling. I will never forget when they finally started coming to me and asking for extra help. That's when we really became a team.

One other thing comes to mind. We took the third-place trophy in my first year and I will never forget the look on their faces. And most of all, I will never forget when one of our wrestlers was sleeping on the return bus ride with his arms wrapped around the trophy. Priceless! ☺

Dr. David Hoch retired last year as the athletic director at Loch Raven High School in Towson, Maryland (Baltimore County). He assumed this position in 2003 after nine years as director of athletics at Eastern Technological High School in Baltimore County. He has 24 years experience coaching basketball, including 14 years on the collegiate level. Hoch, who has a doctorate in sports management from Temple University, is past president of the Maryland State Athletic Directors Association, and he formerly was president of the Maryland State Coaches Association. He has had more than 350 articles published in professional magazines and journals, as well as two textbook chapters. He is the author of a new book entitled *Blueprint for Better Coaching*. Hoch is a member of the NFHS High School Today Publications Committee.

Creating a Positive Experience for a Visiting Team

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS, CMAA AND MICHAEL DUFFY, CMAA

When visiting teams arrive at your facility for an athletic contest, they come with the knowledge that your community can either promote a student-centered, education-based interscholastic sport environment or prove to be a detriment to that experience.

Quite simply, how the home school welcomes and treats its guests is an integral element of sportsmanship. This is the most important, fundamental objective and indicator of an education-based interscholastic athletic program.



Athletic programs that sincerely value sportsmanship and education-based participation generally include the importance of welcoming and treating visiting teams and opponents when training and/or orienting:

- Coaches
- Contest/game/event support
- Officials (umpires, referees)
- Parents
- Students (athletes and non-athletes)
- Community members

Schools should have a comprehensive, written sportsmanship plan that includes a commitment to fair play, ethical behavior and integrity. A “meet and greet” protocol that promotes sportsmanship significantly enhances safety and security, and enriches a fun and competitive learning experience. In perception and practice, sportsmanship is defined by qualities that are characterized by generosity and genuine concern for the visitors from the time they arrive until the time they depart.

Specific steps that create a positive experience for a visiting team can be categorized as:

Pre-Contest:

- Communicate in advance with the visiting team’s athletic administrator, coach and/or principal.
- Determine any special needs of team upon arrival.
- Designate a safe parking area for the visiting team bus as close to the exit as possible.
- Designate someone from your staff to meet and greet the bus.
- Escort the team to a designated pre-contest “team room” or area that includes restrooms.
- Designate someone to meet and greet the contest officials, and escort them to a pre-game, halftime and post-game meeting location that includes restrooms.
- Offer water, ice and, if available, athletic trainer services.
- Post your “Rules of Conduct” that govern athletic contests so that anyone attending the event will see and read them.
- Welcome your guests via the public-address system and scoreboards.
- Use prepared, written public-address announcements that refer to your “Rules of Conduct” while promoting safety, sportsmanship and fair play.
- Encourage spectators, coaches and students to let the “students play, the coaches coach, the officials officiate.”
- Ensure that game security – police, security guards, “teacher-security” – are uniformed, visible and strategically placed for maximum exposure and crowd control.
- Have signs that designate and direct visitors to their bleachers or bench areas.
- Welcome your opponent’s coach prior to warm-ups; wish him or her good luck, and ask if anything is needed.

During the Contest:

- Provide water, ice and trainer services.
- Continue to use public-address announcements that emphasize safety, sportsmanship and fair play.

- Encourage spectators, coaches and students to let the “students play, the coaches coach, the officials officiate.”
- Treat the officials with respect at all times.
- Escort the officials and visiting team to their rooms at halftime.
- Give the officials and visiting team an appropriately timed warning when halftime is nearly completed.
- Escort the visiting team and the officials back to the playing site.
- Use student groups such as cheerleaders and the band members to welcome and host your visitors.

After the Contest:

- Do not allow excessive victory celebrations. Be humble in victory.
- Limit access to the playing area and deter the spectators by strategically placing security personnel.
- Be positive after a loss. Focus on your performance, not the opponent and/or officials.
- Ensure that the coaches lead and participate in the postgame handshake.
- Designate someone to escort the officials off the field to their dressing area.

- Designate someone to escort the visitors to their team dressing area and/or bus.
- Assign someone to assist police in dispersing the hangers-on.
- Administrators for both schools should confer before leaving to be sure that all details have been addressed.

Be aware there is often a direct correlation to the view that opposing school teams and communities hold about your school and community based on how they were received upon arrival and how they were treated throughout the contest. The perceptions created by a thoughtful and well-planned event enhance and enrich a student-centered, education-based interscholastic athletic program for all who take part.

Never forget that while winning is one measure of success, it is neither the only measure nor the most important measure of success in an education-based athletic program. School communities and those students who become lifelong learners and better citizens, over time, all become winners. ☺

Michael Williams is the coordinator of athletics for the Howard County (Maryland) Public School System. He has been an athletic administrator for 24 years. Michael Duffy is the athletics and activities manager at Howard High School in Howard County, Maryland. He has been an athletic administrator for 10 years.

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Meeting Wizard – an Online Scheduling Program

BY STEFFEN PARKER

With life's ever-increasing demands on our time, we often have to add the challenge of scheduling a meeting that occurs on an irregular basis and involves participants coming from various areas in an organization, differing professions or divergent geographic locations. And because meetings are more productive when as many participants as possible can attend, finding a time (and location) that works for everyone becomes paramount.

Meetings involving small groups with similar daily routines can often be achieved with a few e-mails among everyone in the group. For other combinations of participants, there are several Web sites that can assist in finding that elusive time that will provide as many as possible the opportunity to attend and contribute to the meeting.

Most of these scheduling sites provide many of the same services and operate in a similar manner. While some of these sites offer services beyond the scheduling support (Web meetings, shared resources, management of online calendars, appointment schedulers) that can be explored in other articles, one of the easiest and most effective scheduling sites to use is Meeting Wizard (www.meetingwizard.com). Its primary function is the scheduling of meetings and it does that very well with little fanfare.

To start a meeting request:

- Determine possible times and dates, meeting length and location from pull-down menus and a click-on calendar.
- Invitees' e-mail addresses can be manually entered, pulled from an electronic address book or imported from various sources. Groups can then be created of like individuals, thus making the e-mails easier to access and use in the future.
- The invitation should also include the name of the meeting, the organizer's name and a message to the invitees.
- When the invitation is sent, invitees receive an e-mail containing all of the information from the invitation, as well as a link to the page where they can enter their availability and send the organizer a message.
- If desired, it is possible for invitees to view who else was invited and what their responses were.
- For those who need additional encouragement, automatic reminders can also be sent.



- The organizer receives a link to a results page, which can be used to add invitees, change dates and times, view which invitees are available and send additional e-mail reminders.
- Once the meeting can be confirmed, final e-mails are sent to all invitees.

As with most sites, you need to register to use Meeting Wizard (e-mail and password login) and you can edit that registration information at any time. None of your invitees need to register, however, which makes it easier to encourage people to use the system. The invitees can update their responses at any time up to the confirmation of the meeting time and date. The effort needed to respond is very minimal, and with the meeting's significant information and importance written in the e-mailed invitation, most invitees will respond and allow you to make a more informed decision about the meeting.

The use of an online schedule site is no guarantee that your meeting will be well-attended; however, knowing your participants' availability prior to the meeting date being set and using that to confirm the most popular date should ensure more attendees and, therefore, a more successful meeting. If this type of process is done on more than an occasional basis, or if appointments, meetings with co-workers or one-on-one contacts are a part of your daily work, there are other sites (ScheduleOnce.com, for example) that would be a better choice for you and your colleagues. ☺

Steffen Parker has worked with computers since the mid-1970s and has been a Macintosh user since its introduction in 1984. Owner-operator of Music Festival Software Solutions, he develops online registration and information Web sites for music festivals, state organizations and professional societies. Serving as an IT support person for the Vermont Principals' Association and the Data Coach for Addison Rutland Supervisory Union, Parker supports computer use for adults working in education, administration, finance and publications, including the NFHS High School Today Publications Committee serving as the performing arts representative.

Academic Accommodations After a Sports-related Concussion

BY WILLIAM M. HEINZ, M.D.

Late in the second quarter of a recent Friday night football game, an athlete got up slowly after a play and then – even more slowly – walked to the sideline. By the time he got there, he was complaining of a headache, confusion and feeling sick to his stomach. He couldn't remember the play that was just run or even the hit he took.

Five minutes later in the locker room at halftime, he was complaining that his symptoms were worse. The team physician told the coach that the athlete was done playing for the evening.

The physician went to the stands to talk to the player's mother and explain that her son had suffered a concussion and would most likely be out of school and sports activities for two to three weeks. The physician stressed that this was a brain injury, and he wanted the player to rest his brain as much as possible for the next several days. The "rest" included no studying, texting, computer use, video games, loud music, hanging out with friends or even going to class until his symptoms improved.

The player's mother seemed surprised about the directive to not attend classes, but she was told that any activity that made her son's symptoms worse would cause his concussion to take longer to resolve. The physician outlined the progression he wanted her son to take – first to get back to full class activity, and then to sports. She seemed relieved when he explained the academic accommodation program that was already in place at her son's high school.

This program is a combined effort involving the teachers, counselors, school administrators, school nurse, athletic trainer and team physician. It allows athletes with a concussion to slowly progress back to full academic work without being stressed about missing classes, assignments or tests.

Among sports-related injuries, concussions continue to be the proverbial elephant in the room. In spite of our best efforts, including education, legislation, articles in publications and rules changes in sports, the incidence of concussions in high school sports continues to increase. The National High School Sports Injury Surveillance Study (High School RIOTM) shows a consistent increase in concussion rates from 2005 to 2010.

The problem of how to reduce the incidence of concussions is only

one of the many unresolved issues. We continue to have great difficulty confirming the diagnosis of a concussion at the time of the injury, and currently the only effective treatment is brain rest and avoidance of a repeat injury.

Typically, the concussed athletes have a combination of physical, cognitive, emotional and sleep irregularity symptoms. Athletes should be withheld from all sports activities until their symptoms resolve and they return to baseline on balance and neurocognitive testing.

It is recommended that all high schools implement a comprehensive concussion management program that includes the following key elements:

1. Concussion education for athletes, parents, coaches and school personnel.
2. Baseline balance and neurocognitive testing.
3. Post-injury testing performed by the athletic trainer, school nurse, team physician and/or neuropsychologist.
4. Academic support and accommodations during the recovery period.
5. Return to function and play decisions made by collaboration of all individuals involved in the care of the injured athlete.

It is important to understand that these athletes have suffered a brain injury. Granted, it is considered to be mild, but it is still a brain injury. Therefore, in addition to avoiding all sports activity, they need to refrain from full academic activity until their symptoms and neurocognitive function improves. Much the same as we would not expect a student with a recent knee injury to perform a timed running activity for gym class, we cannot expect a student with a concussion to perform at a high cognitive level, such as participating in class discussions, taking tests or completing papers, until their symptoms improve and they return to normal function.

In general, concussed student-athletes will recover more quickly with rest, not only physical rest from athletic activities but also cognitive rest from academic work. During this recovery period, it is important that there is a balance between rest and the amount of academic work the student is required to perform.

Injured student-athletes need to use the concept of “small bites,” meaning they can attempt small, short-duration activities and continue to perform them as long as they remain asymptomatic. If their symptoms worsen, they need to take a step back and allow the symptoms to improve. If they do well, they can attempt a more challenging activity or a longer duration (a larger “bite”). This approach continues until they are back to full academic activity.

In order to keep this progression moving forward, it is essential to have the student-athlete closely monitored by the athletic trainer and/or school nurse on a daily basis. Excellent communication must be maintained between the treating physician, the athletic trainer, school nurses, guidance counselors, teachers and parents.

There has been a quantum shift in the management of concussions during the past decade. Physicians and neuropsychologists have moved away from concussion grading scales and the “cookbook” approach for return to play. In addition, athletes suspected of suffering a concussion are not allowed to return to play in the same contest and not allowed to return to the activity until they are cleared by an appropriate health-care professional.

A graduated return-to-play program is now used to ensure the athlete is asymptomatic at both rest and exertion prior to allowing full activity. This same approach can be used in returning concussed athletes to full academic activity because this is every bit as important as the return-to-play decision. Too often, student-athletes try to return to class, take tests/quizzes or work on assigned projects before their brain has recovered from their injury. This only delays their healing and their return to function.

Table 1 outlines possible guidelines for returning student-athletes to full classroom and academic work. Depending on the severity of the concussion and the type and amount of symptoms, the athletes would be started at Academic Stage I, II or III. They are allowed to progress to Stage IV as they can tolerate. Every day, they should be re-evaluated by the school nurse and/or athletic trainer to check on

progress. Also during this time, they typically receive another neurocognitive test to monitor their progress. Not until they advance to Academic Stage IV do they return to any sports activity or start a return-to-play protocol.

These are only guidelines. Every school will need to approach concussions and academic accommodations differently. In addition, every concussion is different, so each one needs to be treated individually.

With regard to the concussed football player mentioned earlier, he was able to attend limited class the following Monday. He started classes later than usual, did not attend band class and he had to leave physics class early because his symptoms got worse. Over the next three days, he was able to progress to full class attendance, but required another week before his symptoms cleared enough to start taking tests and quizzes.

Two weeks after his injury, he “passed” his neurocognitive and balance tests and started the progression back to play. He was able to play in the game the following Friday, and has been symptom-free since. Over the next several weeks, he was able to catch up on the assignments and tests he missed while he was concussed. This approach took all the pressure off him and allowed him to recover from his concussion as quickly and safely as possible. ☺

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Dr. William M. Heinz practices sports medicine in Portland, Maine. He received his undergraduate degree from Purdue (Indiana) University and then graduated from Indiana University School of Medicine. He is the team physician for the Portland Sea Dogs and a team physician for U.S. Soccer. He is also the company physician for the Portland Ballet and the orthopaedic consultant for the Portland Pirates, Bridgton Academy, Gould Academy and Deering High School. Dr. Heinz is a member of the NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee.

Stage	Goals/Key Ideas	Expected Duration	Teacher’s Actions	Student’s Actions
I	Complete rest.	2-6 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contacted by school nurse. • Explanation of injury and current plan of care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of school. • Strict limits for use of computer, cell phone, texting, video games. • No Physical/Sports Activity.
II	Significant deficits in processing and concentration. Cognitive activity as tolerated.	2-14 days	<p>Develop lists of three categories for all assignments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Excused: Not to be made up. 2. Accountable: Responsible for content, not process. May be notes or work shared by a classmate, or may be covered in a review sheet. 3. Responsible: Must be completed by student and will be graded. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In school as tolerated. • When present, observing not participating. Get copies of notes, handouts, etc. • Communicate with teachers about progress/challenges. • Be patient with slow recovery, just do your best. • No Physical/Sports Activity.
III	Gradual increase of time and energy, slowly resuming full workload.	Variable duration. Hopefully 3-7 days, possibly more.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize assignments with student, both make-up work and new work. • Continue to use lists with the three categories for assignments until all work is completed, and assist with setting a timeline for completion of assignments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In class/school full-time. • Communicate with teachers on your progress with assignments. • Communicate with teachers and parents on the pace of resuming a full workload and competing make-up work. • No Physical/Sports Activity (including gym class).
IV	Complete resumption of normal activities.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor completion of assignments. • Communicate with parents and staff as to when student is caught up with assignments and working at the same pace as their classmates. • Communicate with Guidance Office as grades are updated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resume all normal activities. • Progress with athletic trainer – supervision resumption of participation in athletics.

Concussion Course Leading Way for NFHS Coach Education Program

BY COLIN LIKAS

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) is committed to teaching coaches, parents and athletes about concussions in sports. According to recent numbers, it seems that coaches, parents and athletes are committed to learning such information as well.

It has been a little more than a month since the *Concussion in Sports – What You Need to Know* online course was taken for the 200,000th time. Now the course is on the verge of passing the 300,000 mark.

“Having 300,000 people take the concussion course since May 2010 is an exciting milestone; however, we hope it is only the beginning,” said Dan Schuster, NFHS Education Program Specialist.

The course, which was developed by the NFHS in May 2010 as part of its Coach Education Program, is one of the three free online courses that can be taken at (www.nfhslearn.com). Classes entitled *Sportsmanship* and *The Role of the Parent in Sports* are also available for free at the same Web site.

Concussion in Sports is hosted by Michael Koester, M.D., chair of the NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) and director of the Sports Concussion Program at the Slocum Center for Orthopedics and Sports Medicine in Eugene, Oregon. The course is meant to “educate coaches, officials, players, parents and fans to recognize the signs and symptoms of a concussion,” according to Schuster.

“[Being educated about concussions] will create a better environment for all of the young people who participate in athletics and activities,” Schuster said.

Those who complete the course should also be able to quickly identify the signs of a possible concussion and remove the potentially concussed person from his or her activity. The Web site also offers printable resources for the course, including a parents’ guide



to concussion in sports, a coach’s guide, an athlete fact sheet and materials to implement protocol for concussion treatment.

The NFHS and its SMAC have been leading the charge in the concussion discussion since 2007. In 2008, the SMAC announced that a concussed athlete must be removed from play and not allowed to play on the same day. The National Football League, along with a leading group of concussion experts, stood behind the SMAC’s statement in 2009.

The NFHS rules publications also ensure that coaches and players make appropri-

ate decisions with regard to concussions. According to NFHS rules publications covering 17 sports, “any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion, such as loss of consciousness, headaches, dizziness, confusion or balance problems, shall be immediately removed from the contest and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health-care specialist.”

The NFHS Coach Education Program was started in 2007 with two online core courses – *Fundamentals of Coaching* and *First Aid for Coaches*. The program has expanded since then, incorporating 18 more courses. In addition to the core courses and free courses sections, the program’s other sections are sport-specific courses, elective courses and state components.

The 20 courses have been taken more than 560,000 times combined. More than 150,000 coaches have completed *Fundamentals of Coaching*, and 45 of the 51 NFHS-member associations have adopted or recommended the course. All of the courses are available at www.nfhslearn.com. 

Colin Likas is a fall intern in the NFHS Publications/Communications Department. He is a sophomore at Butler (Indiana) University, majoring in journalism.



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Wisconsin Wins Appeal of Streaming Case

BY COLIN LIKAS



The case between the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA) and a local newspaper over the live streaming of a football game has been settled by a Chicago appeals court. In late August, the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the WIAA is allowed to maintain exclusive contracts

for live streaming of sporting events, and other media need to pay for the rights to the same streaming.

"We're looking forward to working with newspapers and the media cooperatively as we have historically," said Todd Clark, the WIAA Communications and Advanced Media Director.

The judgment potentially closes a case that began in 2008, when the WIAA sued The Post-Crescent, an Appleton, Wisconsin, newspaper, for streaming live coverage of a WIAA football game online.

Newspapers have contended they need the ability to provide coverage to those who rely on community newspapers for information about high school sports. On the other hand, the WIAA said it should be able to raise money through streaming contracts with production companies.

The prevailing school of thought among high school athletic associations is streaming exclusivity helps cover the cost of tournaments by signing exclusive contracts with a single video-production company for streaming tournaments. As long as reporters and photographers do not broadcast sporting events from start to finish without a contract, the associations say there is no issue.

In the circuit court's report, the justices wrote, "WIAA has the right to package and distribute its performance. Nothing in the First Amendment confers on the media an affirmative right to broadcast entire performances."

The appeals court's decision noted that reporters can still cover games, interview players and coaches and air up to two minutes of live video coverage for any game. ☉

Colin Likas is a fall intern in the NFHS Publications/Communications Department. He is a sophomore at Butler (Indiana) University, majoring in journalism

Web Site Directed at Aerial-lift Safety

BY SHANE MONAGHAN

A year after a student died in an aerial lift collapse, the University of Notre Dame has launched the Web site "LiftUpRight.org," a site aimed towards the education of responsible aerial lift usage. Along with the National Federation of State High School Associations, the Indiana Department of Labor, the Collegiate Sports Video Association and others, Notre Dame hopes to improve aerial-lift safety and awareness.

"As part of our investigation, we found that a lot of schools did not have specific protocols in place for aerial lifts," said university spokesman Dennis Brown. "Our hope is that some of the things we learned from our investigation will help others in higher education and in high schools know some of the safety measures that need to be in place."

Declan Sullivan, a 20-year-old junior from Long Grove, Illinois, passed away last October when the aerial lift upon which he was filming toppled over onto the street below. According to reports, the lift stood some 50 feet from the ground as winds gusted at 51 miles per hour during the time of the accident. Prior to the incident, Sullivan had indicated on his Twitter account that he was in a dangerous predicament.

"While we cannot bring Declan back, we have said since last fall that we are committed to working with the Sullivan family and [the Indiana Occupational Safety and Health Administration] to share the lessons we have learned to help reduce the possibility of an accident like this ever happening again," said Rev. John I. Jenkins, C.S.C., Notre Dame's president.

The LiftUpRight.org, Web site is easily navigable with four main "tabs" including "Right Setup," "Right Training," "Right Weather Information" and "Right Safety Contact." The Web site also has links and resources to other sites, information about anemometers (wind gauges), downloadable materials and a direct link to the Declan Drumm Sullivan Memorial Fund. ☉

Shane Monaghan is a fall intern in the NFHS Publications/Communications and Events Departments. Monaghan is a graduate of Ball State (Indiana) University, where he specialized in sports administration.

VOICES OF THE NATION

Q

What do you see as the value of activity programs?



Cynthia Morriss

School Board Member
Patagonia (Arizona) Public Schools

These activities provide an outlet for creativity for many of our students and gives them a lift when they are not doing well in school. Activities provide an incentive to attend school and maintain grade-point averages.

Students learn the value of teamwork, individual responsibility, listening skills and good sportsmanship. Keeping physically fit and being a role model for younger students is important. Students may discover and develop their interest and skills in an activity that they carry with them for the rest of their lives.

Building pride, social skills and school spirit ignites the fire within the students to do their best.



Ed Massey

President-Elect
National School Boards Association

Within America's public schools, there is a tremendous value of the extracurricular activities that students are exposed to outside of the classroom setting. While the classroom experience offers knowledge, the activities that students participate in teach social interaction, communication and general life skills. Some of life's lessons are not taught, but learned through engagement with others. Clubs, teams and groups such as the National Honor Society and Beta Club offer students their first real opportunities to express the knowledge they have learned in the classroom. In effect, activities enhance a student's education.



Jerry A. Caravana

Trustee
Crown Point (Indiana) Community School Board

Activity programs provide important exercises in leadership, experimentation and creativity. They enhance the classroom experience. Decision-making during school activities provide no-consequence experiments for youngsters. The results of activities may be intangible but certainly provide for tangible results in adult life. The creativity of U.S. young adults is the envy of the world. The outcomes of school activities are evidenced by critical thinking in employment, family life and the pursuit of other satisfying life experiences.



Sandra Jensen

President, Board of Education
Omaha (Nebraska) Public Schools

School activity programs are a valued part of the comprehensive education of all students. Beyond academic success in the classroom, the talents and unique skills of children are developed through a vast array of activities offered in extracurricular programs. The skills and the interests generated by activity programs provide opportunities for children to develop lifelong leisure interests, social skills and even the beginnings of interests and a foundation of learning for a future career. Activity programs at all grade levels are essential for a well-rounded education for every child. ☉