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Weather presented its usual challenges during our state associations’ football championships – in expected and unexpected places – but from all accounts, the majority of our state associations enjoyed another successful series of events.

While the 2009 high school football season has reached a conclusion, the topic of concussions in the sport of football (and other sports) at all levels of play continues to attract much media attention. In December, the National Football League (NFL), which heretofore had allowed players to return to the field – even in the same game – if symptoms disappeared, said players who exhibit any significant sign of concussion should be removed from a game or practice and be barred from returning the same day.

The NCAA followed the NFL ruling with a recommendation from its Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports that would sideline an athlete – in all sports – for at least the rest of the day if he or she loses consciousness or shows other worrisome symptoms during competition.

With more than 7½ million participants in high school sports, management of concussions has been a major focus by the NFHS and its member state associations for a number of years – predating the current efforts by the NCAA and NFL. As the publisher of playing rules in 17 sports for boys and girls competition in high school sports, minimizing the risk of injury has been and remains one of the chief tasks of our rules committees as they meet on an annual basis.

In addition to coaches, officials and state association administrators who serve on rules committees, the NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee, which is partially composed of highly respected physicians from around the country, has appropriately dealt with the issue of concussions in several ways.

The NFHS Sports Medicine Handbook has a six-page section on dealing with concussions. The third edition of this Handbook, which contains detailed information regarding concussions, was distributed to every high school in the country during the 2008-09 school year. The committee also was involved with producing the brochure entitled “Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion in Sports,” which has been posted on the NFHS Web site (www.nfhs.org) for several years.

Most recently, the Sports Medicine Advisory Committee revised the rules language regarding concussions for all 2010-11 NFHS rules books. Following is the revised concussion rule:

“The committee produced a position statement, which has been approved by the NFHS Board of Directors, entitled “Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion.” This statement will be placed in all NFHS rules books during the 2010-11 series of publications. About one million rules books in 17 sports are distributed to more than 19,000 schools each year.

The position statement lists common symptoms of concussion and suggests a four-step concussion management protocol:

1. No athlete shall return to play (RTP) or practice on the same day of a concussion.
2. Any athlete suspected of having a concussion shall be evaluated by an appropriate health-care professional that day.
3. Any athlete with a concussion shall be medically cleared by an appropriate health-care professional prior to resuming participation in any practice or competition.
4. After medical clearance, RTP should follow a step-wise protocol with provisions for delayed RTP based upon return of any signs or symptoms.

The issue of concussions is a serious one, but our various medical and sport professionals and experts have been reviewing the subject for a number of years and will continue to monitor developments. While the NFHS cannot mandate the adoption of specific concussion protocol at the local level, we continue to provide up-to-date resources to assist state associations and schools in developing policies that are in the best interests of the participants.

Minimizing the risk of injury for high school student-athletes has been a foremost priority of the NFHS rules-writing process, and we will continue to champion that task in the years to come.
Stars in Line

Members of the Sandia (New Mexico) High School Las Toreras Matadors Dance Team compete at the 2008 New Mexico Activities Association State Spirit Competition.

Photograph provided by Kim Jew Photographic, New Mexico.
Welcome

We hope you enjoy this publication and welcome your feedback. You may contact Bruce Howard or John Gillis, editors of High School Today, at bhoward@nfhs.org or jgillis@nfhs.org.
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Donovan McNabb

BY AARON HOMMELL

Donovan McNabb was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois, where he attended Mount Carmel High School.

McNabb was a gifted athlete long before he garnered all-Big East Conference nods at Syracuse (New York) University. McNabb was a star player not only on the football field, but on the hardwood as well. At Mount Carmel, McNabb’s teammates included former National Football League (NFL) player Simeon Rice on the football team and National Basketball Association player Antoine Walker on the basketball team. Surrounded by talent, McNabb was easily set for success.

Success in high school came from high numbers on the field as McNabb helped the football team win the 1991 Illinois High School Association state championship. He also was a standout in track.

McNabb was recruited for football and decided to attend Syracuse (New York) University. While setting Big East Conference records, McNabb also was a reserve player on the Orange basketball team. The basketball team made a Final Four appearance while he was playing.

McNabb was drafted by the Philadelphia Eagles in the 1999 NFL draft and continues to be a force with the Eagles today. Despite some challenges early in his career, McNabb has become one of the league’s top quarterbacks and an even better leader.

McNabb currently is the national spokesman for the American Diabetes Association. He has had relatives succumb to the disease and he resultantely believes it is his obligation to give back to the community in that capacity.

Aaron Hommell was a fall intern in the NFHS Publications/Communications Department. Hommell is a junior at Franklin (Indiana) College, majoring in journalism.
Attending a professional sporting event can be an exciting activity for any sports fan. Big screens, enormous stadiums, concession stands at every corner, and famous athletes doing what they do best. But at times, all this oversized fun comes with an oversized price.

The average ticket price of a National Basketball Association (NBA) game is $50 and, on average, it is $75 for a ticket to a National Football League (NFL) game. And that’s just the average price of one ticket. That doesn’t include parking, concessions, programs and souvenirs. Most people don’t attend an athletic event alone, either. So prepare for those prices to be doubled or even quadrupled if the whole family plans on going.

For sports fans looking to save a few bucks, high school sports are an inexpensive alternative. High school athletics provide entertaining games, fueled by community and school spirit, that are filled with excitement and intense competition. Plus, these events are significantly less expensive. Attending a high school athletic event is typically hundreds of dollars cheaper than attending a professional event.

Plus, tickets to professional events aren’t getting any cheaper. Last year, the average ticket price for an NBA game increased by 2.8 percent, according to Team Marketing Report (TMR), a Chicago-based company that conducts yearly reports on the ticket sales of professional sports. For the 2009 season, the average price of an NFL ticket increased by 3.9 percent.

Each year, TMR releases a Fan Cost Index, which measures how much it would cost for a family of four to attend a professional sporting event. TMR’s survey states that the Fan Cost Index is determined by examining what a family of four would likely spend at a game. The price of four average-priced tickets, two small draft beers, four small soft drinks, four hot dogs, parking for one car, two game programs and two of the least-expensive caps are all included in the Fan Cost Index.

The Dallas Cowboys are the most expensive team in the NFL. For a family of four to see the Cowboys in action at their new stadium, it must pay $758.58. The New England Patriots are in second place at $597.25 for a family of four. The least-expensive NFL team is Buffalo, with a relatively low cost of $303.96.

For those who prefer basketball, seeing the Los Angeles Lakers play comes with a $479.48 price tag, according to TMR’s 2008 survey, with the New York Knicks in a close second at $420.04. For NBA fans looking to save money, a family of four can attend a Memphis Grizzlies’ game for $182.94.

With prices like that, many sports fans may want to consider a cheaper alternative.

For example, instead of paying $420 to see the Knicks play, a family could travel to Marcellus (New York) Central High School and watch a boys basketball game for only $42. This price includes four tickets, four hot dogs, four sodas and two hats. At Marcellus Central, parking is always free. Tickets are only $2. Linda Kelly, a
member of the Marcellus Athletic Booster Club, admitted that tournament events may be a bit more expensive.

“Sectional events are more, maybe $5-$7, but a reasonable buy to experience the joy of watching kids play their sports,” Kelly said.

Lakers fans could save several hundred dollars by attending a doubleheader featuring the boys and girls basketball teams at Villa Park (California) High School for only $28.

Tom Fox, athletic director at Villa Park, pointed out the value of a family being able to enjoy three hours of entertainment for less than $30.

Community members are certainly taking advantage of this opportunity. Fox said around 1,800 fans typically attend the boys and girls basketball games – both teams had winning records last year.

“We have a pretty good following of people who don’t have kids at the school yet or whose kids already graduated but still go to the games,” Fox said.

At Villa Park, students are allowed to attend games for free as a way to encourage attendance and support, Fox added.

In addition to the economic benefits, Fox said there is more to attending a high school athletic event than just saving money.

“It’s a civic thing,” Fox said. “The school is the face of the community. There’s a sense of pride and ownership.”

Richard Esposito, athletic booster club vice president at Fairfax (Virginia) Robinson Secondary School, said this sense of ownership and involvement with high school football games is more exciting than being at FedEx Field watching the Washington Redskins play from an upper-level seat.

Esposito, who has three kids – a daughter who graduated last May from Robinson, a son who is a sophomore football player and another son who is in seventh grade – appreciates the low cost of attending a high school football game.

“I think that’s more in line with what people are willing to pay or, honestly, can afford to pay,” Esposito, said of Robinson’s $5 tickets. “Especially with the economy now, people can’t afford [Redskins’ tickets]. A family of four or five can go to a high school game or go to George Mason [University] to see good basketball for a more reasonable price.”

The Robinson football team is ranked in the top 10 in the Washington metropolitan area, but fans come to the games for the fun environment as well as the great football.

“Principal Dan Meier and the boosters have created a very exciting atmosphere,” Esposito said. “Robinson has a T-shirt gun that the principal shoots into the crowd after touchdowns. It adds to the excitement of being there – especially for little kids catching the T-shirts.”

Unlike professional athletics, a high school sporting event is a social gathering as well as a sporting event for a community. The families of the football players, the cheerleaders and the marching band are all in attendance as well as community members such as neighbors or parents whose children have already graduated.

“The younger children know this will be their high school,” Esposito said. “They come to see the big boys play.

“The girlfriends, mothers and friends are all wearing the away jerseys in the stands while the players wear the home jerseys on the field.

“Everyone knows on Friday nights they’re going to come enjoy the evening with neighbors. It’s a social event. Watching the game is important, but so is saying hello to friends you may not have seen in awhile.”

And paying hundreds of dollars less than you would at a professional game doesn’t hurt either. ☺
Dealing with Out-of-control Fans

BY JOHN UNDERWOOD

You deserve what you accept – that is a prevention standard that unfortunately is absolutely true. The second reality is that once a negative behavior is accepted as normative behavior, it accelerates to the next level. At that point, it is much more difficult to change.

Foul language, chants, taunting, interfering with a contest, fan rivalry conflict and irrational acts are quite common at athletic venues today. No one should have to simply put up with such behaviors.

The privilege of attending a game or contest has been challenged in recent years by the increasing perception that the purchase of a ticket somehow entitles the holder to any choice of behaviors, including many behaviors of concern.

The problem of negative fan behavior has reached levels of concern in all sport venues and needs to be seriously addressed. The American Athletic Institute through its mandated high school chemical-health program, “Life of an Athlete,” suggested a yellow card/red card warning system for any individual or group that vio-

“... increasing perception that the purchase of a ticket somehow entitles the holder to any choice of behaviors...”
lates the fan standards of behavior at an athletic contest. (Fan-behavioral expectations or privileges should be posted on the school district’s Web site and at venues). The original basis for this concept is unknown but certainly deserves credit for originality and content. These cards can be wallet-size and easy to remove and use.

The response in New York was immediate and highly successful. This simple, non-confrontational method of addressing out-of-character behaviors has helped establish decency and clear and consistent boundaries for behavior that ensures positive environments for any youth community setting. A school district or sport league logo may be added to the cards to indicate the authority of a host organization.

Often, fans simply act out based on the flow of emotions taking place during a contest. Many of these disruptive individuals are oblivious to the negative ripple effect their behavior is having on those around them; however, no one should have to put up with violent, disruptive, expletive or out-of-character behaviors while they are spectators at any youth community setting.

A simple strategy modeled after the red card/yellow card system and used in the sport of soccer, is a highly successful deterrent for such behaviors.

These cards were issued statewide during the first year of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association’s “Life of an Athlete” program. At the annual state athletic directors meeting the following year, most athletic directors said they used the yellow card, but only two indicated they had used the red card.

Another aspect of this successful approach is that it is non-confrontational. Certainly, from a liability standpoint, we must have someone supervising an athletic contest. Often it is not an individual who has a high level of authority within the school district. This can potentially be a powder keg in the worst way. When an individual simply walks up into the stands and hands you “the card,” your options are in play.

Quite simply, the message, context and delivery of that message to an out-of-control fan gives that individual or group of individuals three options: 1) They can cease the behavior of concern, 2) they can leave the venue or 3) they can be made to leave. In this day of cell phones, the next level of authority is just a phone call away. Your local police, SRO or law enforcement should also be made aware of the implementation of this program so that they may respond appropriately and timely.

The feedback from many is that the message written by youth for spectators is the most powerful part of the message. I would have to agree. Most out-of-control spectators simply get lost in the emotions of the moment.

**Spinoffs**

The village of Hoosick Falls, New York took this concept to the next level by instituting the yellow card/red card system village-wide, for all youth venues, as part of a community-wide code of conduct for youth and adults. They presented the impact of that program at the Department of Justices’ National Leadership Conference in 2008.

Many referee and officiating associations have utilized these cards and have actually stopped contests to hand cards to out-of-control fans. The National Field Hockey Coaches Association approached the American Athletic Institute in 2009 to ask for these card templates.

**Yellow Cards:**

**WARNING**

This card has been given to you as a warning that your behavior may not be appropriate for this youth educational setting. Please realize that your admittance to this venue is a privilege to observe and support this athletic event, not a license by act, word or deed to assault anyone.

The athletes participating here today wrote you the following message:

“It’s not your game – it’s ours, the athletes. We hope you will watch and enjoy, encourage us and be proud of us, win or lose. We need your support and enthusiasm.”

Please conduct yourself with CHARACTER and CLASS

**Red Cards:**

**ATTENTION**

The officials in charge of this venue request that you leave this property immediately. Failure to comply with this request will result in contact of law enforcement authorities.

Your privileges to attend this athletic event have been revoked.

**Try it, Use it... it Works.**

A former NCAA All-American, International-level distance runner and World Masters Champion, John Underwood has coached or advised more than two dozen Olympians, including world and Olympic champions. He holds three International Olympic Solidarity diplomas for coaching and has been a crusader for drug-free sport at all levels. Underwood’s innovative program, “The Life of an ATHLETE,” has gained international prominence. He is the chemical-health consultant for the New York State Public High School Athletic Association drug-prevention program.
Dr. Gwen Poss is no stranger to the principal's office, and it's not because she was a disruptive child. Poss has been a principal for 14 years. Often, Poss also finds herself in the athletic director's office as she understands and promotes the benefits of education-based athletics in today's high schools.

"Activity participation is a big part of who I am, and has a big impact on the way I view activities as an educational tool for our school," Poss said.

Poss was involved in high school athletics as a member of Ottawa (Kansas) High School's first girls track team. Poss continued on to participate in collegiate athletics at the University of Kansas for legendary track coach Bob Timmons. She won the Big Eight indoor 60-meter hurdles and the Big Eight outdoor 100-meter hurdles during her senior season. Running hurdles next to Olympic medalists are some of her fondest memories that impact her as a principal of a school that values activities participation.

"I am a better principal because of my athletic participation because I learned how to handle pressure, work as a team player and understood that all learning doesn't happen in the school itself," Poss said.

Poss put in long hours studying, which more than equaled the time she put in on the track. Poss earned master's degrees both in physical education and educational administration, respectively, and she also earned a doctorate. During her own high school and collegiate careers, Poss had to be able to balance time effectively and show leadership and excellence in and out of the classroom, as well as on and off the track.

Poss transfers her own experiences into the way she leads her school. Athletic and activity opportunities have been critical in forming an educational bond outside of the classroom at Northwest High School. Poss believes they have been the key to educational successes in her school.

"I really believe activities constitute the climate of a high school. Working with kids from 3 to 6:30 in the afternoon spills over into your school day. It's all intertwined," Poss said.

Northwest High School has a robotics team that is similar in size to its football team. The volleyball team is ranked as one of the top five teams in the state. For Poss' school, it is the understanding that the heartbeat of the school and the attitudes of its students are what create an enthusiasm for learning.

Outside of athletic opportunities, the school boasts an "E-Communications" program that is designed to guide students to excel in graphic design, Web design, animation, broadcasting and video design. The school even has its own working television studio.

Each week, the school broadcasts "ONW Now," which is a student-created television broadcast of announcements about the school. The program is broadcasted to students once a week by some students who participate in the E-Communications program.

The student newspaper, "The Raven's Beak," has won the National Scholastic Press Association's Pacemaker award for excellence in student journalism. This award is one of the highest honors a student newspaper can receive. Without these programs and the opportunities the school has provided in the form of great educators...
and after-school activities, this honor would not have been bestowed in “The Raven’s Beak.”

Along with the E-communications program, the school also boasts an aerospace and engineering program that immerses students in all facets of mathematics and physics. Students are urged to complete internships in their senior year and join the highly popular robotics club.

Athletic opportunities are also available at the school with 22 varsity sports teams that represent Northwest High School. The school has adopted its own mission statement specifically for the athletic program.

“The Olathe Northwest Athletic Department will promote scholastic achievement as a fundamental basis for a well-balanced program. Our Department will develop effective citizenship through the practice of good sportsmanship,” reads the Northwest High School athletic department homepage.

With an athletic department that looks for the overall well-balanced student-athlete, the school is destined to produce the same. Poss is grateful for the support of the activities at her high school as they produce better young adults through involvement outside the classroom.

“We are pumped to be able to give students the unique opportunities that we offer here at Olathe Northwest,” Poss said.

With the understanding that her school has some unique opportunities, Poss went on to explain that, “Activities are the social piece of any school. Anywhere in America you will find that activities represent so much of a school and drive the school day.”

Aaron Hommell was a fall intern in the NFHS Publications/Communications Department. Hommell is a junior at Franklin (Indiana) College, majoring in journalism.

**FINE ARTS**

China and Military Deployment Final Choices for 2010-11 Debate Topic

The National Federation of State High School Associations recently tabulated debate ballots from 31 states, the National Catholic Forensic League, National Debate Coaches Association and the National Forensic League. The returned ballots narrowed the five proposed topics to two for placement on the final ballot to select the 2010-11 national high school debate topic. The five topic areas were ranked 1-5 with the two topic areas receiving the lowest totals – China and Military Deployment – placed on the final ballot. On January 8, 2010, the NFHS will announce the preferred topic area and resolution.

In addition to the NFL, NCFL and NDCA, the following states returned ballots:


Within each of the five topic areas appears one resolution. The resolutions within the two final topic areas are:

**CHINA**

Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially increase its economic engagement with the People’s Republic of China on one or more of the following issues: trade, economy, environment.

**MILITARY DEPLOYMENT**

Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially reduce its military and/or police presence in one or more of the following: South Korea, Japan, Afghanistan, Kuwait, Iraq, Turkey.

The following chart summarizes the balloting on the topic areas and their respective resolutions.

**Areas ranked 1-2-3-4-5 with low combined total indicative of top ranking.**

**National CX Debate Topic Area Balloting:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Resolution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>108</td>
<td>Latin America – Topic 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83</td>
<td>China – Topic 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>122</td>
<td>Russia – Topic 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>126</td>
<td>UN Reform – Topic 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>Military Deployment – Topic 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pressure for high schools to comply with Title IX continues to escalate. With the High School Athletic Accountability Act looming in both Congress and the Senate, some high school athletic administrators may be feeling the pressure and scrutiny by stakeholders to take Title IX more seriously.

While the framework for Title IX has existed for 37 years, it sometimes becomes clouded in the interpretation or translation. Increasingly, high schools across the country find themselves embroiled in Title IX compliance issues when, in fact, there are steps that could be taken to prevent any problems.

**Be proactive**

As with many aspects of athletic administration, being proactive ensures consistency. It also shows stakeholders that you are concerned and take the issues seriously. To achieve this effort, it is important to take the time to learn about and understand the law including the regulations and policy interpretations, and to find the resources to assist you in understanding its application.

Generally speaking, when policy is ignored problems occur. “That’s how we’ve always done it” is no longer an acceptable excuse. When you are consistent, fair and objective in your approach, and believe that diversity and inclusion are important, the chances of stakeholder complaints and criticisms decrease. To be proactive means to be prepared, knowledgeable, analytical and not emotional.

**Monitor booster clubs**

In these challenging economic times, schools are increasingly looking to outside sources such as booster clubs, alumni and corporate sponsorships to supplement funding for their athletic programs. Although budgets for boys and girls teams do not have to be equal under Title IX, the benefits provided must be equal. Accordingly, educational institutions cannot use an economic justification for discrimination.

When a school accepts money from an outside source, such as a booster club, the school can use the money in the manner specified by the outside source. If the money, however, results in an inequity along gender lines, the district must correct the inequity, using its own funds if needed.

Since the school district and school board are responsible for the operation of the school, the authority and supervision of booster clubs and any other outside resource must come from them. The most viable solution is for each school district to establish an all-inclusive school-wide sports booster club policy.

This governing policy should include procedures, administrative guidelines and bylaws reflecting the philosophy and mission of the school district as well as oversight provisions. Athletic programs are not separate entities from a school. They are school-sponsored and funded by taxpayers. Athletics should be as much of an educational program of a school as math, science, English and history and are not exempt from equitable inclusion. Although booster clubs can and do provide great assistance to athletic programs, they should not be the “tail that is wagging the dog.”

**Pay attention to the law**

Title IX has weathered nine legal challenges in 37 years and has always won. As a Civil Rights amendment, Title IX is here to stay.

In the spring of 2009, the “High School Sports Information Collection Act” and the “The High School Athletics Accountability Act” were reintroduced in the Senate and in Congress. With a new federal administration, the expectation of passage of these bills is high and predictably inevitable.

This passage will have a profound impact and effect on high schools across the country. The High School Data Collection Bills will require high schools to report basic data on the number of female and male students and athletes, as well as the budgets and expenditures made for each sports team. Schools will be required...
Identify your Title IX compliance officer

By law, school systems, including all public schools, charter schools and magnet schools, must designate at least one professional employee as the Title IX coordinator. This individual investigates any complaints of sex discrimination including sexual harassment claims. Accordingly, all students, employees, parents/guardians and residents must be notified of the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the designated coordinator(s) of Title IX.

Unfortunately at times, sexual harassment complaints originate from a coach/student-athlete relationship. It may not, therefore, be appropriate for a school’s athletic administrator to serve as the Title IX coordinator. This would cause a conflict of interest.

Since the history of application of Title IX has been mainly to athletics, it would make sense for the athletic administrator to have a close working relationship with the district’s Title IX coordinator.

Create a committee and begin with a strategic plan

Through the collection and analysis of data, including student interest surveys, a committee should review the school’s gender equity in athletics. The committee members along with the district Title IX coordinator and athletic director(s) should include school administrators, school board members, members of the public and any individual who possesses an interest in ensuring gender equity in athletics.

When developing a Title IX strategic plan for the school district, the approach may consist of evaluating the existing program. In addition, you should identify community resources that may assist the program and review program goals and priorities. It will also be important to notify staff of Title IX regulations, organize training sessions to educate staff and school district personnel and provide an ongoing evaluation plan of action. Finally, exploring alternative or additional funding options, and developing a process to determine interest levels for programs should be included in the plan.

The Title IX committee and strategic planning process is not a static process. It is dynamic and challenging and should be a permanent plan that is constantly monitored and adjusted. Each school year, programs should be reviewed and the committee should begin to address issues of concern through a collaborative process.

Educate, educate, educate

Athletic administrators are viewed as and expected to be professionals and experts in their field. It is important to do your homework and become knowledgeable in all aspects of the position including Title IX law and its application to athletics. Make sure you know what Title IX is, how it affects all students, and be aware of the changes that occur as well as be up-to-date on current issues regarding the law. In order to garner support from the school board and upper-level administration, it may be necessary to educate these individuals or groups about the law.

By using the committee process and a strategic plan, steps can be taken to educate people about Title IX. In addition, there are many resources available including the Internet, books, various state and national athletic administrators organizations as well as individual experts who can provide workshops and other educational opportunities for school district personnel.

Hide nothing

Skirting issues or hiding problems does nothing to gain support from stakeholders – it only instills distrust and may give the perception of not caring or even a sense of deliberate indifference. Today, parents are more involved with their children than ever and are constantly looking for accountability in all aspects of education.

Parents expect school personnel to be the experts in their field – to do what is right for their children including following the law. The High School Data Collection Bills will open the door for stakeholder scrutiny and questions. It really makes no sense to pretend or ignore issues, but rather address them head-on in order to do the right thing for all students.

When dealing with Title IX, as with most aspects of athletic administration, use collaboration. Today’s high school athletic administrator operates on a whole new level compared to 20 or 30 years ago. In order to be taken seriously and garner the respect for the position, athletic directors must embrace all challenges with equal fervor and take on even those issues that seemingly are not understood.

Peg Pennepacker, CAA, is assistant principal/athletic director at Susquehanna Township High School, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and has been in public education for 29 years and a high school athletic director for 19 years. She is an advocate for Title IX at the high school level and serves as a Title IX consultant for the Pennsylvania State Athletic Directors Association as well as several school districts across Pennsylvania. She can be contacted at 570-385-4069 or ppackt9@yahoo.com.
Tyler Brown of McComb (Ohio) High School scored a one-yard touchdown in a game against Vanlue (Ohio) High School on October 2. Most of the time, that sentence would be the end of the story – the last line in a small-town newspaper box score. One touchdown: six points.

In this case, though, Brown is the team’s manager. That fact alone makes the story intriguing. It’s the stuff of which movies are made. The fact that Brown is blind is what gives this story its own mystique. This is the stuff of which legends are made.

Brown’s parents were told their son was without sight before Tyler’s first birthday. Tyler grew up much like the kids around him although he couldn’t see it. His sight is limited to very blurry shapes. Peripheral vision is about the only way he sees what is around him, and even that is unclear. He shares a passion for sports, and football is his favorite, although he never got to actually play on an organized team.

Brown has managed the McComb Panthers football, basketball and baseball teams since seventh grade. He has always been the kid who would bring water, balls and other equipment to practice. He was the kid who was overlooked by fans in the stands.

He didn’t play any other sports as a kid, but when he got into high school, he started to lift weights. His size gave him a good football body. Brown is six feet, two inches tall and weighs 200 pounds. He has the build of a tough running back in any conference. He is even listed on the roster as No. 2. Most eyes would feel deceived seeing him on the sideline handing out water instead of seeing him as a player; suited up ready to run into the game at a moment’s notice.

Kris Alge, coach of the Panthers, noticed Brown from his work ethic in the weight room that rivaled his work ethic on the sideline. Alge started looking into possibly getting Brown on the field as a running back.

Alge approached Brown before this season and told the junior, “I want you to come out for football and play this year.”
“I thought he was joking,” Brown said.
“We convinced his parents to let him dress. We got him to the
doctor for a physical and sized him up for pads,” Alge said.
“I was nervous and so were my parents. Coach explained that
I was ready and my parents made sure I was happy with the deci-
sion,” Brown said.

Alge got Brown in on a few plays as a nose guard early in the
season. The plays were not anything special, except to Brown and
his teammates. Opposing coaches had no idea that one player lined
up for McComb could barely see the
sidelines as they guided their rushers
down the field. Van Buren (Ohio) High
School had no clue as to why the Mc-
Comb fans were cheering as an oppos-
ing team made its way its way down
the field.

Later in the season during the Van-
lue game, Brown got the opportunity
to run the ball from the one-yard line.
On his first carry, Brown bounced off a
would-be tackler and rolled into the
strong arms of defenders that forced
him to the ground. Then, he got an-
other chance. Still situated on the one-
yard line, Brown took the handoff and
promptly fumbled the ball despite a
large hole that would have made for an
easy score for the junior Panther.

Brown thought his ship had sailed.
He trotted to the sideline upset that he
let the team down more than not get-
ting a touchdown for himself. He told
players on the sidelines, “Sorry guys.”

At halftime, Alge was pulled aside by the McComb center,
Michael Keller, who had an idea of how to get Brown into the end
zone. Keller wanted Brown to line up at quarterback. Keller fig-
ered a sneak would be easier than an inside run and that Brown
could score easily with the help of extra blockers in the form of a
fullback or tailback. Keller was calling for a “Bush Push.”

Coach Alge agreed. He told Brown to practice taking snaps.
“I told him to practice with our center, but I figured we would
never have another chance from the one,” Alge said.

Finally in the fourth quarter, the Panthers again had the op-
portunity to score from the one-yard line after a long pass. Alge
told Brown it was time to run the play they worked on at halftime.

“Get in there. Go!” Alge yelled.
“You serious, coach?” Brown replied.
“Yeah, you’ve earned it,” Alge said.

Brown ran into the game and had no need to huddle the of-

defense. Every McComb player knew what play was being called.
snapped the ball.

Brown took the snap and stutter-stepped as the fullback and
tailback helped push Brown into the end zone for a score.

“They told me I was in. That’s when I started to get excited,”
Brown said.

The team couldn’t believe it. For a split second, no one thought
any differently about the score. On film, viewers notice how it takes
a moment to realize what had just hap-
pened. Brown, a blind manager, had
scored a touchdown.

“Just to know those guys helped me;
It really meant a lot to me,” Brown said.

The Panthers started jumping up and
down. Coach Alge smiled and high-fived
assistants. The players on the field
slapped Brown on the helmet. Bonnie
Brown, Tyler’s mother, cried. The other
team had no clue why everyone was
overly happy about a touchdown in a
game where the outcome was all but
decided.

It wasn’t until after the game that
the Vanlue football team found out that
No. 2 for the Panthers was not the av-
erage tailback. Even McComb coaches
found themselves at a loss for words.

“I asked if he wanted to go in any
more this season and he said that he
was receiving too much attention and
wanted other players to get in there and
feel like he does. Tyler is just a neat kid,” Alge said.

“Neat” may be the understatement of the year. Brown is the
kid who makes the bell curve have outliers. Brown is unselfish and
has a self-realization that his touchdown and play for the McComb
Panthers meant more to the parents and fans of the team than any
other six points all season. That’s transcendent.

“He told me after the game that next season he wants to throw
a pass because our opponents will always think he will sneak it if
he is in. I hope he ends next season one-for-one passing,” Alge
said.

Brown is still the team manager. But for one day, and maybe a
few more, he can say he is an explosive quarterback for the Mc-
Comb High School Panthers. That’s the title he always envisioned
for himself.

Aaron Hommell was a fall intern in the NFHS Publications/Communications Depart-
ment. Hommell is a junior at Franklin (Indiana) College, majoring in journalism.
Sports Law Year-in-review: 2009

BY LEE GREEN

The Legal Issues

Criminal law. Hazing. Title IX. Liability for sports injuries. Drug testing. Sports-related federal and state legislation. Free exercise of religion. Throughout 2009, court cases have been decided and legislation has been enacted related to each of these areas of the law impacting athletics programs and school districts. In each instance, both the events giving rise to the litigation or legislation, and the legal principles established by the judicial ruling or legislative action, clearly illustrate the importance for athletics personnel and school administrators of understanding contemporary issues in sports law and proactively applying that knowledge to improve and safeguard their schools’ athletics programs.

Criminal Law

On September 17, 2009, a Jefferson County (Kentucky) jury acquitted former Pleasure Ridge Park High School football coach Jason Stinson of reckless homicide and wanton endangerment in the August 20, 2008 heat-stroke death of football player Max Gilpin.

The trial had been the nation’s first prosecution of a football coach in a player’s heat-related death. Prosecutors argued that Stinson withheld water from players, ran them excessively, ignored the signs of heat exhaustion being suffered by a number of his players, told the players they would run until someone quit the team, failed to stop the running even as another player collapsed before Gilpin, and ignored specific indicia of heat stroke as Gilpin began shaking and stumbling during his final sprints before he collapsed. Defense attorneys, however, contended that the causes of death were prescription medication being taken by Gilpin, consumption by the victim of the over-the-counter supplement creatine, and a viral illness allegedly suffered by Gilpin at the time of the incident.

Stinson, who had faced up to 10 years in prison if convicted, returned to his teaching position the week after his acquittal and was cleared to apply for coaching jobs in the district. In an appearance on ABC’s Good Morning America, he denied any responsibility for Gilpin’s death. “I understand her [Gilpin’s mother] loss,” Stinson said, “but I cannot sit here and take responsibility for something I’m not responsible for.”

In July 2009, two of the three Wilson (New York) High School baseball players charged in an April 2008 hazing incident on a team bus returning from a road game were found not guilty in a non-jury trial. Prosecutors had initially charged the players with felony counts of aggravated sexual abuse for alleged acts of sodomy with foreign objects against underclass teammates, but those charges were reduced to hazing, forcible touching and misdemeanor child abuse. Before trial, the other accused player pleaded guilty to child endangerment and was spared jail time when sentenced. Two Wilson High School coaches had been charged in the hazing incident with endangering the welfare of a child, but the Niagara County District Attorney’s Office dismissed the case on the day of the scheduled start of the coaches’ trial.

Hazing

Hazing continues to be one of the most highly litigated claims against school districts and athletics personnel, often with verdicts imposing liability for negligence either because of the failure to create...
an anti-hazing policy or for developing a policy that is substantively inadequately or ineffectively implemented.

In addition to the criminal charges that were filed pursuant to the hazing incidents in Wilson, New York and Las Vegas, New Mexico, civil suits seeking money damages have been filed by the victims against the school districts, athletics personnel and the direct perpetrators of the hazing. The lawsuits allege that 1) the districts failed to enact sufficiently effective anti-hazing policies; 2) the procedures that did exist were not adequately communicated to personnel and students; and 3) lax enforcement of the policies contributed to the severity of the resulting hazing incidents.

Several hazing cases received extensive national news coverage in the latter half of 2009. In August, a civil suit was filed by the family of a St. Ignatius (Illinois) Prep water polo player who suffered injuries resulting in permanent quadriplegia after colliding with the bottom of a pool during an alleged hazing incident perpetrated by several of his teammates and an assistant coach. The suit names as defendants a number of school coaches and coaches and seeks compensation for the medical expenses necessary for the lifelong care of a quadriplegic, estimated given the specific circumstances of the case to be in excess of $15 million.

In September, Millburn (New Jersey) High School administrators initiated an investigation of an alleged hazing ritual that may have been an annual occurrence for more than a decade involving the creation at the beginning of the school year by senior girls involved in athletics of a “slut list” intended to humiliate pretty and popular incoming freshmen girls at the school. The list was created by female athletes who then papered the school with copies as a precursor to additional hazing activities that would take place during the school day and after school at sports practices.

The first major research study of hazing in nearly a decade was recently completed by Dr. Mary Madden and Dr. Elizabeth Allan of the University of Maine and is available online at www.umaine.edu/hazingstudy. The National Study on Hazing is based on surveys completed by more than 11,000 students across the United States and includes an extensive analysis of hazing in high school activities such as athletics, performing arts, bands, ROTC and other school clubs. The study includes a set of detailed recommendations designed to assist administrators, coaches and activity supervisors in improving the content and enforcement of an anti-hazing policy.

**Title IX**

A continuing source of Title IX complaints against school districts is the inequities that exist at many schools in the quality of softball facilities as compared to baseball facilities. In April, in the case of *Ollier v. Sweetwater Union High School District*, a federal trial court judge issued a summary judgment against Castle Park (California) High School for creating in its sports program a “significant gender-based disparity” against female student-athletes at the school. The case was filed by softball players who alleged that the school’s baseball team was provided with state-of-the-art facilities while the softball team was assigned to use what essentially amounted to an unenclosed vacant lot that was dramatically inferior to the school’s baseball stadium.

The case is an instructive one for administrators and athletics personnel nationwide. As in so many Title IX cases, the dispute originated with allegations of a relatively narrow, same-sport inequity between a boys and girls team that the district might have chosen to immediately remedy so that the complainants would never have felt the need to contact the U.S. Office for Civil Rights or file a federal lawsuit. However, when the initial, small-in-scope issue is not adequately addressed by the district and the involvement of the OCR or federal courts becomes necessary, the Title IX investigation then expands to cover every aspect of the school’s athletic program. In the Sweetwater case, the suit was eventually granted class-action status on behalf of all present and future Castle Park female student-athletes in all sports and the federal court’s decision in the case addressed an extensive list of problems ranging from a lack of substantial proportionality in participation opportunities for girls at the school to multiple inequities and deficiencies across all girls sports offered at the school.

In the spring of 2009, legislation was introduced in the 111th Congress to revive the efforts to mandate annual reporting by districts of Title IX-related data regarding school sports programs. *H.R. 2882 The High School Accountability Act of 2009* was introduced in the U.S. House by Representative Louise Slaughter (D-NY). The bill has 59 co-sponsors and has been referred to the House Education and Labor Committee. *S.471 The High School Sports Information Collection Act* was introduced in the U.S. Senate by Senator Olympia Snowe (R-ME). The bill has eight co-sponsors and has been referred to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions. Both pieces of legislation would mandate the completion and submission of annual Title IX self-audits by school districts to the U.S. Department of Education, a reporting requirement intended to parallel that applied to universities by the federal *Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act*. The progress of the two bills may be followed at the Library of Congress’ official online tracking system for congressional legislation at www.thomas.gov.

**Sports Injuries**

In June 2009, in *Keeter v. Alpine Towers International*, a jury awarded $4.75 million to a Fort Mills (South Carolina) High School student who was paralyzed in a 20-foot fall from a climbing wall at his high school. The “supervisor” for the activity was a student belayer (spotter) who lost control of the victim’s safety rope as he rappelled down from the top of the 50-foot wall. The suit contended that Alpine Towers was negligent in failing to adequately train school personnel regarding safe use of the wall and that its design was faulty and lacked an automatic locking device that would have prevented the fall.
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In March 2009, in *Welch v. Sudbury Youth Soccer Association*, the Massachusetts’ Supreme Judicial Court ruled that the state’s statutory immunity law shields non-profit organizations conducting sports programs from lawsuits for ordinary negligence, thus barring the plaintiff’s claim against the soccer association. Welch was 12 years old in 1998 when a soccer goal fell on him and broke his leg. The case is important for school administrators for two reasons. First, Welch filed his lawsuit in 1996, shortly before the expiration of the two-year tort statute of limitations that began to run when he reached the age of majority at 18. The eight-year delay between Welch’s injury and the filing of the suit illustrates the importance for sports programs, including scholastic athletics, of retaining for an extended period of time all paperwork, written waivers and injury documentation. Second, the court stated that the statutory immunity law would not have shielded the non-profit sports program for acts of gross negligence related to any of the duties owed to young athletes, including supervision, technique instruction, safe playing environment, and so forth. Administrators should not assume that their schools and personnel will always be protected by statutory immunity – the dividing line between ordinary negligence and gross negligence is a highly discretionary judicial determination.

**Drug Testing**

In May 2009, in *Brown v. Shasta Union High School District*, a California state court judge struck down the district’s random, suspicionless drug-testing policy for students involved in extracurricular activities, drawing a distinction between participation in athletics in which students expect increased scrutiny of their physical status and activities such as band, choir and academic clubs where scrutiny of bodily condition is unexpected and irrelevant. Unlike the 1995 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Board of Education v. Earls*, which interpreted the federal constitution as permitting drug testing of all students involved in extracurricular activities, the California judge decided that such testing schemes violate the explicit privacy protections incorporated into the California state constitution. The Shasta case is the most recent in a series of state court decisions that have struck down school drug-testing programs by ruling that the controlling state constitution provides greater privacy protections than does the U.S. Constitution. For more details, read the April 2009 article in *High School Today* on student drug testing, available online at www.nfhs.org.

**Sports Legislation**

In May 2009, the Washington Legislature enacted the Zachery Lystedt Law that requires all athletes under the age of 18 who are suspected of having a concussion to get written consent from a licensed medical provider trained in evaluating concussions before returning to action. Lystedt suffered a concussion in October 2006 while playing in a Mount Tahoma Junior High School football game and he was allowed by his coaches to return to the game without any medical evaluation. He sustained several more hits, collapsed on the field, and was rushed to a hospital where he underwent emergency life-saving brain surgery. He was in a coma for several months and is now partially paralyzed, dependent on a wheelchair and requires 24/7 care. In September 2009, his family settled its personal injury lawsuit against the Tahoma School District for $14.6 million – the estimated cost of Zachery’s lifetime medical care.

In April 2009, the Kentucky Legislature enacted a law requiring high school coaches to complete a course on sports safety and injury prevention. The bill was written in response to the August 2008 heat-stroke death of Pleasure Ridge Park High School football player Max Gilpin.

**Freedom of Religion**

In March 2009, the United States Supreme Court denied certiorari in the case of *Borden v. East Brunswick School District* and refused to hear the appeal of East Brunswick (New Jersey) High School football coach Marcus Borden. In October 2008, the Third Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that Borden’s participation in team prayers violated the First Amendment’s Establishment Clause because he had for more than two decades organized, participated in and led team prayers and a reasonable observer would conclude that the coach was endorsing religion in general and a particular religious denomination in particular. The Supreme Court’s denial of cert leaves firmly in place the school district’s ban on such actions by its employees. It is important to note that the Court has consistently ruled that the Establishment Clause does not prohibit any school employee or any student from at any time praying on their own; the constitutional mandate limits only the endorsement of a specific religious practice or coercion to participate in a particular religious activity by a public official.

To read the complete 2009 legal issues year-in-review article, visit the NFHS Web site at www.nfhs.org and click on High School Today on the home page.

Lee Green is an attorney and a professor at Baker University in Baldwin City, Kansas, where he teaches courses in sports law, business law and constitutional law. He may be contacted at Lee.Green@BakerU.Edu.
hen Charlie Adams was a high school senior in 1954 at Cary High School in North Carolina, he led the Imps to the 1-A state basketball championship. The finals were played that year at tiny Aberdeen High School. Half a century later that game is recognized as one of the most influential in the history of high school athletics in the state.

Adams went on to become the executive director of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA), and in that role his championship memory shaped the future of every NCHSAA athlete for the past 25 years.

“It was great to win a state championship, but when I looked back on it, I realized that I had played almost every game during my senior year in a facility that was better than the one for the state championship. That didn’t seem right,” Adams said.

That Cary team had played against local Raleigh High School at North Carolina State’s Reynolds Coliseum in front of 12,400 fans. The Imps’ home court was better than the championship venue and so were most of the gyms of conference teams. So after he became executive director 25 years ago, one of Adams’ top priorities was moving NCHSAA championship events into outstanding facilities.

As he leaves the position on January 30, every NCHSAA title competition is in either a professional or major college facility. Among the venues used by the NCHSAA are facilities at North Carolina State University, the University of North Carolina, Wake Forest University and the historic golfing resorts of Pinehurst.

“A memory forever” became the NCHSAA’s unofficial marching orders during Adams’ tenure and it meant much more than just finding a nice place for the championship events. “Forever” was a big part of the equation.

Adams wanted to ensure that high school athletic championship competition in North Carolina forever would be available without charging playoff entry or participation fees. He worked with corporate sponsors to help underwrite the championships and later the association and eventually established the most successful state association endowment in the country.

The endowment was funded by a $1 playoff game surcharge, special voluntary endowment games where revenues were split between the schools and the endowment and donations. It is worth close to $10 million and is growing.

The principal cannot be spent, but the interest on the fund helps cover the costs of the playoffs. The schools have also kept millions of dollars as their share of the endowment game proceeds.

“I always wanted to make things better,” Adams said. “I was willing to try something different. Some things worked well. Some didn’t. Some things that didn’t work, we retooled and tried again. The big thing was that we didn’t want to be scared of trying something new.”

Robert F. Kanaby, executive director of the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), said Adams has had a
national impact.

“It is not an exaggeration to say that every high school athlete in the country has been touched by Charlie,” Kanaby said. “He is one of the most innovative people we have had in high school athletics. He was very innovative in North Carolina and he was always willing to share his ideas throughout the country.”

Adams was NFHS president in 1997-98 and traveled to 37 states during his term.

From that platform, Adams preached the necessity of high school athletics to teach sportsmanship, values and character.

“High school athletics is different in every state,” Adams said. “But it is alike in every state, too. My message everywhere I go is that high school athletics have to be more than just a fun activity. We fail our children if we don’t take advantage of the opportunity to help them become better people.”

Adams has impressed what Kanaby has said many times – the purpose of high school athletics is to develop better citizens for our democracy. Adams demonstrated his commitment by emphasizing the NCHSAA’s services, especially its student services program.

“When I came to the NCHSAA, the association was widely seen as a punitive organization,” Adams said. “We’re the ones that ordered forfeits or ruled children ineligible. But we really were a service organization. We exist to serve the schools and their athletic programs and their boys and girls.”

The NCHSAA annually conducts coach-captain retreats where schools send athletes to develop plans to positively impact their schools. The NCHSAA also reaches out to other educational organizations. The Department of Public Instruction and the State School Boards Association have seats on the NCHSAA Board of Directors along with representatives of the coaches association and the officials association.

“We strive to work as a team,” Adams said. “If it is going to be lasting, we all have to be on the same page.”

Adams is a member of the East Carolina University Sports Hall of Fame and a charter member of the Cary High School Athletic Hall of Fame. He is also a member of the North Carolina Athletic Directors Hall of Fame, the North Carolina Sports Hall of Fame, the National High School Hall of Fame and the NCHSAA Hall of Fame.

Adams said he knows he is going to miss his work, but doesn’t regret his decision.

“Sue, my wife, one day said, ‘Charlie, you ought to retire,’” Adams recalled. “I have never been more surprised when I heard myself say, ‘You’re right.’ I always heard that you’d know when it was time to retire. And I am certain that this is my time.

“But I am going to be the biggest cheerleader in the country for high school athletics. I was lucky enough to spend my lifetime playing, coaching or administering high school sports.

“My one big goal was to make it better. Hopefully, I have.”

Tim Stevens is high school sports editor of the News and Observer in Raleigh, North Carolina. A sportswriter for 40 years, Stevens was inducted into the National High School Hall of Fame in 2007.
As a speaker at the 2009 Maryland State Athletic Directors Association conference, I was addressing men and women who had been successful athletes and coaches, and had been selected to be athletic directors because they loved sports and kids and wanted to create the best environment in which they could compete. These are impressive credentials and I did not want to disappoint them.

My background allowed me some credibility to speak about athletics, being an athlete in the 60s when four of the six girls on a basketball court were not allowed to go across halfcourt. There has been much progress made in girls sport, and we are all grateful for the positive effect of Title IX.

My sister was a high school and college athlete, and one of my sons was an All-American baseball player who competed on the high school, college and professional levels. Arranging summer vacations around tournaments, postponing dinner until practice was over and cheering for the success of my children and their teammates are commonplace.

As the wife of a successful coach and athletic director, I understand the dedication and hard work it takes to manage the responsibilities of those two roles. Most coaches care deeply about their players and their sport. And hard work, dedication and patience are required of athletic directors and coaches.

As a high school principal for many years, I know what it is like to supervise crowds, plan pep rallies, settle disputes between coaches and parents, slap five with kids after a victory and hug them when they were defeated. The value of athletics in the lives of young people is unquestioned and the efforts of coaches to combine quality teams with academic achievement and good sportsmanship should be praised.

A survey of athletic directors and principals in our county about the qualities they wanted in a relationship with each other revealed that they wanted what we all desire in a professional relationship – being treated with respect and dignity and supported in their mutual roles. Following is a list of 10 qualities that are needed for an effective principal-athletic director relationship.

**Steps for an Effective Principal-Athletic Director Relationship**

**BY SUZANNE MAXEY**

1. **Establish a principal-athletic director team built on mutual respect.**
   This is the ideal situation because there is an honest flow of ideas, with each person adding his or her strengths to the relationship. Building a positive relationship with your principal takes patience and understanding, but it will free you to discuss situations and ideas openly and honestly.

2. **The principal is the boss ... the athletic director needs to adjust to his/her style of leadership.**
   Every principal has his/her own way of doing things. He/she is accountable for every aspect of the school, so the athletic director really needs to respect the principal’s awesome burden of responsibility. If your principal is a micro-manager, keep him or her informed and take care of all the details. If your principal leaves you alone and lets you do your job without much interference, enjoy it, but be sure to take equally good care of the athletic program. Hands off doesn’t mean they don’t care; it means they don’t want to be involved in all the little details.
3. **Good communication is a must. Include the good, the bad and the ugly.**

Although they work closely together, the athletic director and principal live in their own little worlds of issues and concerns. The principal may receive a complaint from a parent that the athletic director knows nothing about. It is imperative that the principal shares it with the athletic director as soon as possible, so that the athletic director is not blindsided by it as he or she makes the rounds of practices and games. Likewise, the athletic director needs to let the principal know when issues are brewing. The athletic director cannot handle everything, so he or she needs to inform the principal and ask for assistance when necessary. Remember to share the whole story, even the negative part. If the story isn’t shared, someone else will and it probably won’t be explained in a positive light.

4. **Have fun … help each other enjoy your jobs.**

Both jobs require a great deal of effort and perseverance. It’s good to laugh at the end of the day. Help each other to maintain a balanced perspective. After all, this is not life and death and young people need to see that you are human and can laugh with the best of them. Own your jobs, but try not to take things personally. As important as work is, you should never let your ego get in the way of doing the right things for kids and the program.

5. **Listen to and trust each other.**

We are teachers at heart and are accustomed to instructing students about the right way to behave and learn. Nevertheless, we are also problem-solvers and we can’t correct something if we don’t know what it is. So stop, listen and then react. It is amazing what kids can teach us, if we just take the time to listen.

6. **Be competent … do your job well.**

The athletic director is the “details” person, so it is important to perform every aspect of the job in an exemplary manner. It is hard for the principal to defend the athletic director if he or she is wrong. Good athletic directors admit they are wrong, apologize, fix the mistake and move on. Good principals do the same!

7. **When you disagree with each other, do so privately.**

The principal and athletic director won’t always agree and shouldn’t win or lose every argument. Never undermine each other and, whenever possible, present a united front.

8. **Be a role model for fairness, sportsmanship and ethical behavior.**

Remember that young people are watching and they take their cues from leaders. People may disagree with your decision, but let them never disagree with your integrity. I live by the slogan that is prominently displayed on the wall of my office. It states, “What is right is not always popular, what is popular is not always right.” This quote reminds us to do what is right, not what is the most expedient or convenient.

9. **Be cheerleaders for your school and students.**

Win or lose, be positive and demonstrate grace under fire. Anyone can be gracious when things are going well. It is the great principals and athletic directors who display class and dignity when the going is tough. Victories may be more fun, but your true character is displayed during moments of defeat.

10. **Keep your focus where it belongs … on the student-athletes.**

It’s not about you or the coaches or the parents. It’s about the kids. Love the children and what they do. As educators, we have the most amazing jobs. We truly do have the power to touch lives and make a difference. Most people go through their whole career and no one ever tells them that they made a difference in their lives. This routinely happens to us. Years later, former students tell us that they have modeled their lives after the principles we taught them. We have the awesome opportunity to make a difference in the world by positively impacting the lives of our people. We need to respect and honor this extraordinary responsibility.

The experiences that young people have in athletics are often the most lasting impressions of high school. It is, therefore, imperative that the principal and athletic director work together to create an atmosphere that is characterized by integrity, caring and good sportsmanship. It’s also fun to win, so don’t be afraid to wear your heart on your sleeve. Most importantly, enjoy what you do! On behalf of the student-athletes, the parents and the coaches whose lives you have touched, thank you for your hard work and dedication. We are all richer for your efforts!

Suzanne Maxey is a consulting principal for the 24 principals in the Montgomery County (Maryland) Schools, which is the 16th-largest school system in the United States. She formerly was principal at Seneca Valley High School in Montgomery County and Bowie High School in Prince George’s County Schools in Maryland. She also has been a teacher, academic coordinator, dean of students and vice principal.
Saluting States Qualifying for the NIAAA Membership Commendation Program

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- District of Columbia (DCIAA)
- Indiana (MSADA)
- Maryland
- Massachusetts (NADA)
- Nevada
- North Dakota (NDIAAA)
- Oregon
- Vermont
- Wyoming

Maintained at least 70% NIAAA membership from among number of athletic directors in state:
- Connecticut (HIAAA)
- Hawaii (HIAAA)
- New Hampshire
- New Mexico
- New York
- North Dakota
- North Carolina
- South Dakota
- South Dakota
- Washington

Raised NIAAA membership by at least 10%:
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- Hawaii
- Idaho
- Iowa
- Kansas
- Louisiana
- Michigan
- New Mexico
- North Carolina
- Ohio
- Oregon
- Pennsylvania
- Washington

Connecticut, Hawaii and Rhode Island are the only states to earn commendation awards every year since the program began in 1991.

Acknowledging state athletic director associations that raised 2007-08 and/or 2008-09 NIAAA membership. State association either increased membership by at least 10% or maintained at least 70% membership among those athletic administrators, directors, liaisons, or coordinators at schools belonging to the respective state athletic association.
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Update on H1N1 Virus — How it is Affecting Schools

BY DR. MICHAEL KOESTER

As the 2009 H1N1 virus spread last spring, a number of schools were closed and local and statewide athletic competitions cancelled in an attempt to limit the extent of the disease. As the traditional peak season for flu infection approaches, questions may arise in the coming months. Much of the following information is liberally adapted from the Center for Disease Control Web site www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu. Further information may be obtained from your state www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/states.htm or local health department.

In April of 2009, a new flu virus began to cause illness. Officially designated the “2009 H1N1 virus,” it is also referred to as the “swine flu.” Initial laboratory testing showed that many of the genes in this virus were quite similar to influenza viruses that normally occur in pigs. Further study has shown that the virus is very different from what normally circulates in pigs and the “swine flu” moniker has been abandoned in the medical literature. On June 11, 2009, the World Health Organization (WHO) signaled that a pandemic (an epidemic over a widespread geographic area) of 2009 H1N1 flu was underway.

What are the signs and symptoms of 2009 H1N1 flu virus infection?
The symptoms of 2009 H1N1 flu virus include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea. Not everyone with the infection will have a fever associated with respiratory symptoms (cough, sore throat, stuffy nose).

How severe is illness associated with 2009 H1N1 flu virus?
Illnesses associated with the 2009 H1N1 virus have ranged from mild to severe. Though most people who have been sick have needed no medical treatment, there are many reports of hospitalizations and deaths from infection with this virus.

How do the severity and infection rates of 2009 H1N1 flu compare to the “typical” seasonal flu?
With seasonal flu, we know that there are great variations in the severity of each season. Seasonal influenza can cause mild to severe, even fatal, illness. Each year, in the United States, about 36,000 people die from flu-related complications and more than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu-related causes. Of those hospitalized, 20,000 are children younger than five years old. More than 90 percent of deaths and about 60 percent of hospitalizations occur in people older than 65.

When the 2009 H1N1 outbreak was first detected, the CDC began working with states to collect data on infections. To date, the information analyzed by the CDC supports the conclusion that 2009 H1N1 flu has been more severe in people younger than 25 years of age than older people. At this time, there are relatively fewer cases and deaths reported in people 65 years and older. This is unusual when compared with seasonal flu, which usually takes a more significant toll upon those older than 65 years.

How long can an infected person spread this virus to others?
People infected with seasonal and 2009 H1N1 flu may be able to infect others from one day before getting sick, to five to seven days after. This contagious time can be longer in some people, especially children and people with weakened immune systems. The fact that people can be contagious before developing signs and symptoms of the infection makes prevention highly problematic.
What are the most effective strategies for reducing the risk of getting the infection?

Spread of 2009 H1N1 virus is thought to occur in the same way that seasonal flu spreads, that is mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing by contagious individuals. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something – such as a surface or object – with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

The following are recommendations by the CDC [www.cdc.gov] that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like the flu. Take these everyday steps to protect your health:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.) Keep away from others as much as possible to keep from making others sick.

Are high school students more at risk for H1N1 infection than the general public?

No. Healthy adolescents are not considered “high risk” for either seasonal flu or 2009 H1N1. In seasonal flu, some groups of people are at “high risk” for a more serious disease course. This includes people 65 years and older, children younger than five years old, pregnant women, and people of any age with certain chronic medical conditions such as pregnancy, diabetes, heart disease, asthma and kidney disease.

Young children are at high risk of serious complications from 2009 H1N1, just as they are from seasonal flu. And while people 65 and older are the least likely to be infected with 2009 H1N1 flu, if they do get sick, they are at “high risk” of a significant illness. Laboratory studies have shown that no children and very few adults younger than 60 years old have existing antibody to 2009 H1N1 flu virus.

What are the risks associated with athletes playing and practicing while infected with 2009 H1N1 or seasonal flu?

The most obvious concern is that of an athlete spreading the infection to his or her teammates. One of the most effective means of limiting the spread of 2009 H1N1 and seasonal flu is to separate infected individuals from those who are not yet ill. The well-being of the infected athlete, of course, is also important. The American Academy of Pediatrics states that febrile athletes should not participate in physical activity as “fever can increase cardiopulmonary effort, reduce exercise capacity, make heat illness more likely, and increase orthostatic hypertension during exercise. Fever may rarely accompany myocarditis (heart infection) or other infections that may make exercise dangerous.”

What are the current guidelines for making decisions regarding school closures and cancellation of athletic events?

Making such decisions depends upon multiple variables and should only be made after consultation with state and/or local public health officials. The CDC has nicely summarized the points to consider:

“The decision to dismiss students should be made locally and should balance the goal of reducing the number of people who become seriously ill or die from influenza with the goal of minimizing social disruption and safety risks to children sometimes associated with school dismissal. Based on the experience and knowledge gained in jurisdictions that had large outbreaks in spring 2009, the potential benefits of pre-emptively dismissing students from school are often outweighed by negative consequences, including students being left home alone, health workers missing shifts when they must stay home with their children, students missing meals, and interruption of students’ education.”

Dr. Michael Koester, a nonsurgical sports medicine specialist, specializes in the evaluation and treatment of musculoskeletal injuries and conditions. He is trained in both pediatric and adult sports medicine, but has a special interest in the evaluation and care of injuries in young children and adolescents. He practices at the Slocum Center for Orthopedics and Sports Medicine in Eugene, Oregon, where he also directs the Slocum Sports Concussion Program. He is the chair of the Oregon School Activities Association’s Medical Aspects of Sports Committee. He also serves as the team physician for several local high schools in addition to Northwest Christian University, the Eugene Emeralds baseball club and the Eugene Generals hockey team. Koester is also the new chair of the NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee.
Bob Kanaby announces retirement as NFHS executive director

Bob Kanaby, executive director of the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) since March 1993, has announced his plans to retire, effective May 2010. Kanaby informed the NFHS Board of Directors of his retirement plans at the regularly scheduled Board meeting in October.

Kanaby is the fourth full-time executive director to lead the Indianapolis-based national leadership organization for high school athletic and fine arts activities, following H.V. Porter (1940-58), Clifford Fagan (1958-77) and Brice Durbin (1977-93).

“I have been honored to have had the opportunity to promote the core values and purposes of education-based athletics and activities,” Kanaby said. “It has been a journey filled with countless blessings and positive memories associated with young adults and those dedicated individuals who serve them.”

Since joining the NFHS 16 years ago, Kanaby has been instrumental in creating a stronger national presence of the organization throughout the country. Behind Kanaby’s leadership, the NFHS is currently in its fifth three-year strategic plan focusing on national presence, as well as financial and organizational issues.

In recent years, the education of high school coaches and an ongoing mission to protect and promote a positive, education-based culture in high school sports and activities have been among his top priorities. In January 2007, the NFHS started its own Coach Education Program, and more than 90,000 coaches have already taken the core course – Fundamentals of Coaching.

In 2006, through Kanaby’s leadership, the NFHS entered a partnership with T-Mobile USA, Inc., which included the first-ever national event sponsored by the NFHS – the T-Mobile Invitational, a high school basketball tournament that was conducted in Seattle, Washington, in 2006, Albuquerque, New Mexico, in 2007 and Muncie, Indiana in 2008. This year’s tournament will be held in Birmingham, Alabama, in December.

In addition, under Kanaby’s guidance, the NFHS has taken a major proactive role in steroid awareness at the high school level with the creation of the “Make the Right Choice” campaign. In 2005, the NFHS produced two 12-minute videos on one DVD, brochures and posters to help educate high school administrators, athletic directors, coaches, parents and students on steroid abuse. More than 16,000 high schools nationwide received this multimedia package.

In early 2000, Kanaby was instrumental in moving the NFHS national office from Kansas City, Missouri, to Indianapolis, Indiana, adjacent to the new office of the NCAA. Since moving to Indianapolis, Kanaby has worked closely with the NCAA on a number of key issues, including amateurism and preserving Friday nights for high school football. He also was instrumental in starting a National Student Leadership Conference for high school activity participants in Indianapolis. In 2003, Kanaby secured three major partnerships, including Universal Cheerleaders Association.

In his early years as NFHS executive director, Kanaby was responsible for improving the financial position of the organization. In 1996, he started the NFHS Foundation, which has awarded more than $170,000 in grants to member state high school associations. In 1999, he was the driving force behind the creation of the NFHS Authenticating Mark, which has helped promote a level playing field by ensuring consistency in the equipment used in NFHS-sanctioned competition.

Other major events that have occurred under Kanaby’s guidance include education programs for high school coaches and officials, national magazines for high school coaches and officials, a national magazine sent to every high school in the country (High School Today) and a national injury surveillance program for high school sports.
Sports Medicine Committee discusses virus, other issues

BY AARON HOMMELL

The Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) met October 3-5 in Indianapolis to discuss NFHS sports medicine, medical equipment in athletic participation, and how the H1N1 virus is affecting participation.

In addition, the committee discussed the fourth High School Sports-Related Injury Surveillance Study. This injury study is a comprehensive study of athletes in 18 sports from 100 high schools across the country. This data represents the largest dataset that encompasses time-loss sports injuries from a national sample of high school athletes.

“This study gives us a glimpse of the sports-related injuries that are occurring. This allows us to better serve athletes by better understanding sports injuries and why they occur," said Bob Colgate, NFHS assistant director and liaison to the SMAC.

An important facet of the meeting was a statement released jointly by the NFHS and the SMAC as a result of discussion on medical appliances. The statement reads; “When it is necessary for an athlete to wear a medical appliance (such as an insulin pump) during athletic competitions, the device shall be padded and securely attached to the player's body underneath the uniform. Devices attached to the head (such as hearing aids and cochlear implants) do not need to be padded, but shall be firmly secured to the body. No medical appliance should pose a risk of injury to others. It is recommended that the athlete notify the official of the presence of the medical appliance prior to a contest.”

While discussion on the H1N1 virus took place, the committee found that it would be best for state departments of health to take care of and monitor situations with the virus. With the virus already being monitored by the Centers for Disease Control as well as the Department of Health, the committee felt as if the experts in the field should take the lead.

“The virus could be a much bigger threat in one part of the country as opposed to another. We would like to make this issue a more local one through the departments of health in the states in which this has become an issue," Colgate said.

Another issue concerning sports safety was finalizing concussion rules language in the 2010-11 NFHS sports rule books. This topic is one that the committee has noted as a top priority.

“Concussion risk minimization and management on what a concussion actually entails is at the forefront of our discussion. There is still a myth out there that an athlete has to be knocked-out (unconscious) for a concussion to occur. We have found that this is not the case," Colgate said. “A big risk is assessed when a player returns to play too quickly after receiving a concussion. The brain needs time to rest and recover.”

In other discussion, an update on the NFHS Coach Education Program was presented by Tim Flannery and Dan Schuster of the NFHS, where work is in progress on a Health and Risk Minimization Issues program to be included in the Fundamentals of Coaching Course. With special emphasis on concussion awareness, hydration, conditioning and nutrition, the course will give coaches the opportunity to learn more about potentially dangerous activities and how to minimize risk for their student-athletes.

The committee set April 17-19, 2010, as its next meeting at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Downtown Indianapolis.

Aaron Hommell was a fall intern in the NFHS Publications/Communications Department. Hommell is a junior at Franklin (Indiana) College, majoring in journalism.
VOICES OF THE NATION

Q How do you balance academics and activity programs?

Jessica Ball
Brick Township Memorial High School
Brick, New Jersey

“Balancing academics is like a math equation that looks like this:
Good mentality + knowledge of self-limits = success
Despite the fact that you would probably prefer doing something else, keeping the mentality that school precedes extracurricular activities is crucial to the balance. Additionally, it’s a good idea to limit your activities to a number that is manageable. By using this equation, my high school years have not only been successful, but also enjoyable.”

Will MacArthur
Magruder High School
Rockville, Maryland

“Growing up I have always had to balance sports and school. I started playing tennis when I was five. Playing tennis has helped me do well in a demanding college preparatory academic program because it requires me to set goals, organize my study schedule, and keep in shape. School develops my mind, while sports provide a release that feeds my character. Sports have also given me great opportunities to meet people through community service.”

Tyler Floyd
Stephenville High School
Stephenville, Texas

“I always try to get my homework done right after practice each day. If I know I have a game, I make sure to do the assignments ahead of time or make arrangements to do them as soon as possible after the game.”

Kari Russell
McCutcheon High School
Lafayette, Indiana

“I have always worked very hard to balance my academics and activity programs. I think the easiest way I found to do this is by setting goals and prioritizing. I have to put academics and athletics before things such as going to the mall. I use my time in class wisely so that I do not have too much homework to do, and that way I am able to participate in athletics and other activities.”

Samantha Gray
North Shore Country Day School
Winnetka, Illinois

“Critical to balancing academics and athletics is being constantly aware of the fact that I’m a student-athlete, which means my schoolwork comes first. While I am completely committed to my athletic teams, knowing that my coaches understand the rigors of my academics helps me balance the two. Whenever academics interfere with team commitments, I make sure to make up the lost practice time, reinforcing to my coaches and teammates the dual priorities of my pursuits.”