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Holiday Greetings



It seems almost impossible that the Holiday Season is upon us and that very shortly, we will begin a new year.

The Principals' Committee on Athletics, Administration and Staff of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our members and volunteers for all they do to provide quality athletic programs for the student-athletes we serve.

We also want to wish each and everyone best wishes for the holidays. May the spirit of this special season bring you peace and joy ... And may the New Year bring you good health, happiness and success.



During this season of giving, let us remember ...

We all have something to give.
So if you know how to read,
find someone who can't.
If you've got a hammer,
find a nail.
If you're not hungry,
not lonely, not in trouble –
seek out someone who is.

- George Bush -



STRESS AND ADMINISTRATORS

In his doctoral research at St. Louis University, Richard Riggs, Principal of Washington (MO) High School surveyed secondary school administrators about stress. The following are among his findings:

- ♦ 53.7% find it hard to relax
- ♦ 67.7% believe that if something can go wrong, it will
- ♦ 69.4% tend to look on the bright side of things
- ♦ 54.5% tend to be optimistic about the future
- ♦ 48.7% enjoy their friends a lot
- ♦ 57.8% rarely count on good things happening to them
- ♦ 57.8% hardly ever expect things to go their way
- ♦ 37.1% say that telephone interruptions cause them stress
- ♦ 38.0% said that complying with federal regulations causes a great deal of stress
- ♦ 38.8% felt their workload is too heavy
- ♦ 26.4% said that evaluating teachers was a high stressor
- ♦ 38.0% said that excessive (unnecessary) meetings cause a high level of stress
- ♦ 67.7% said they suffer from headaches
- ♦ 47.9% said they suffer from backaches

- ♦ 63.6% said they suffer from ulcers, constipation, diarrhea, or other digestive related illnesses
- ♦ 63.6% said they suffer from hypertension
- ♦ 74.3% said they suffer from sleeplessness
- ♦ 76.0% said they suffer from anxiety and nervousness
- ♦ 62.8% said they exercise to relieve stress
- ♦ 61.9% said they use time management skills to help manage their stress levels
- ♦ 73.5% said they use meditation, yoga, or other techniques to manage their stress
- ♦ 63.6% said they resort to hobbies or other home interests to manage stress

Dr. Riggs recommends not getting tied up in the "administrativia" of the job and to inject a good dose of humor into your life *every* day.

- From: *Illinois Principals' Association Newsletter*
September 2002, p.3



DATING VIOLENCE: IT IS YOUR BUSINESS

In the League's ongoing efforts to work together with the Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence to promote awareness of teen dating violence, we offer the following as an installment in a continuing series of articles addressing the very important issue of teen dating violence. If you have any questions or would like more information on this subject, we encourage you to contact the Coalition at (401) 467-9940 - or - 1-800-494-8100 – or – any one of its member agencies in your area.

Working With a Teen Victim: How To Approach a Suspected Teen Victim

IS IT APPROPRIATE TO ASK?

Most people fear that they will offend someone by mentioning such sensitive topics. The truth is many (not all) victims feel relieved if someone asks; many will wait for others to notice.

Not asking is exactly what the perpetrator wants you to do; it feeds the victim's feelings of helplessness and shame. Your noticing will make the victim feel noticed, relieved, and appreciative of intervention.

DO ...

- ✓ Show sensitivity and concern.
- ✓ Delicately explain the cause of your concern.
- ✓ Offer to go with her/him to get help or talk to the local domestic violence agency.
- ✓ Provide the student with resources; help her/him make a safety plan.
- ✓ Focus on the victim's strengths – emotional abuse will lower self esteem, help to raise that by pointing out her/his skills and ability to make healthy decisions.
- ✓ Assist the victim in getting legal and other protection (protection orders, changing phone numbers, etc.)
- ✓ Empower her/him to make decisions on her/his own.
- ✓ Be a role model for healthy relationships.

- ✓ Make a firm statement that violence under *any* circumstances is unacceptable.
- ✓ Listen and believe.

DON'T ...

- ✓ Be critical of the victim or the victim's partner.
- ✓ Pressure decisions.
- ✓ Ask blaming questions like "Why don't you just break up?"
- ✓ Forbid the teens to see each other.
- ✓ Talk to both victim and abuser at the same time.
- ✓ Assume that the victim wants to leave or that you know what's best for her/him.
- ✓ Make decisions for the victim or assume a "rescuing" mentality.
- ✓ Share private information with others.
- ✓ Hesitate to call a trained domestic violence advocate – they are there to help you.



"If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude. Don't complain."

- Maya Angelou



INTER-SCHOOL SPORTS NOW FACING A CRISIS

by Paul Davis

The writer was a head baseball coach at Dana College and was a Legion baseball coach at Omaha Central and Gross Catholic High Schools. He played baseball for Creighton University and now is pursuing a graduate degree emphasizing sports psychology at UNL.

Sports has become an integral and prestigious part of our culture. In the competitive, results-oriented world in which we live, much is to be gained by sporting achievements. Sports fame, however fleeting, is often a ticket to wealth and celebrity. Adults, not children, play professional sports, clearly playing to win, and receive the accompanying spoils that go to the victors. Sportsmanship and morality have taken a back seat.

Unfortunately, the obsession with winning at all costs and many of the ugly behaviors associated with professional athletics have filtered down to high school sports.

During the past year, several stories detailing conflicts between high school athletes, coaches, parents and administrators have been published by the World-herald. These incidents, and the issues surrounding them, while not new, seem to be occurring with greater frequency. These problems appear to be universal – regardless of gender, community population, or affluence. Because of the increased importance and relevance of sports in our society, the rising

antagonism and tension points to a burgeoning crisis in interscholastic sports that needs to be examined more closely.

WHY ARE THESE CONFRONTATIONS INCREASING?

I BELIEVE THE ANSWER IS SIMPLE: ADULTS HAVE LOST SIGHT OF WHY INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS TEAMS EXIST AND WHY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN THEM.

Why do adolescents play sports? Sport psychology researchers have asked this question often. Countless studies examining the motivations of young athletes have produced common themes. Teenagers play sports to have fun, learn new or use existing skills, get or stay in shape, complete and make or be with friends. Winning and the pursuit of a scholarship barely crack the Top 10. These motives are far different, and much less egocentric, than those of many of the adults involved in interscholastic sports.

In many high schools, a majority of the students are members of a school-sponsored sports team. Yet these activities are referred to as "extracurricular." When so many students are participating in anything, shouldn't it be considered "curricular"? Participation in sports clearly provides legitimate learning opportunities that cannot be realized within the classroom. Harvard professor Howard Gardner's multiple intelligence theory lends credence to this belief; intelligence can take many forms and be exhibited or enhanced through many educational activities besides reading, writing, and arithmetic. Additionally, sports can promote health and wellness, leadership skills, character development and improved academic performance.

If sports, then are curricular, shouldn't school administrations have clearly defined outcomes (besides winning) = and methods for achieving them – just as they do for math and English programs? Shouldn't coaches be supported with training to achieve these outcomes, just as they are given in-service classroom training? many coaches simply lack training in positive coaching techniques that promote important character traits and augment the learning of student-athletes. Administrators also need to set clear guidelines and expectations for parents to follow. Implicit in this scenario is that administrators should have the means and determination to fully support coaches who achieve positive outcomes – even if their teams are not winning on the field or court.

Some coaches may denounce these suggestions as idealistic and de-emphasizing success. Nothing could be further from the truth. Tom Osborne and Phil Jackson are two notable examples of coaches who have used these principles to guide them – and dominated their opponents. In fact, many coaches may find that they have spent wasteful hours of preparation and practice focusing exclusively on the score. This narrow path often leads a coach to prematurely burn out. Positive coaching training will improve coach-athlete and coach-parent relationships while reducing the turnover rate of high school coaches.

If the positive outcomes of sports are to be achieved, parents may play the most important role of all. The best-intentioned policy and coaching will be undermined unless parents are supportive. Many parents should take a step back and allow their child to live his/her own life rather than attempting to vicariously participate in the exploits of their children.

When parents and coaches can become partners in the sports experience of students, the likelihood of that experience being positive increases. Communication is critical to developing this relationship. If parent-coach conferences such as those between classroom teachers and parents were held, many conflicts could be avoided.

Now is the time for adults involved with interscholastic sports to refocus efforts on producing positive outcomes for all of our children instead of clinging to narrow goals obtainable by only a few.

*Reprinted with permission from
The Omaha World-Herald and Paul Davis*



‘We are stronger together than we are alone.’
Walter Payton



THE CASE FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

At a cost of only one to three percent (or less in many cases) of an overall school’s budget, school activity programs are one of the best bargains around. It is in these vital programs – sports, music, speech, drama, debate – where young people learn lifelong lessons as important as those taught in the classroom.

Unfortunately, there appears to be a creeping indifference toward support for school activity programs by the general public. This neglect undermines the educational mission of our schools and the potential prosperity of our communities.

There is no better time than today to assert “The Case for School Activities.” Education and community leaders across the nation must be made aware of the facts. From interscholastic sports to music, drama and debate, activities enrich a student’s school experience, and the programs must be kept alive.

Sports and fine arts activities promote citizenship and sportsmanship. They instill a sense of pride in community, teach lifelong lessons of teamwork and self-discipline, and facilitate the physical and emotional development of

Benefits of Activities

- ♦ **Activities support the Academic Mission of Schools.** They are not a diversion but rather an extension of a good educational program. Students who participate in activity programs tend to have higher grades, better attendance records, lower dropout rates, and fewer discipline problems than students generally.
- ♦ **Activities are Inherently Educational.** Activity programs provide valuable lessons for practical situations – teamwork, sportsmanship, winning and losing, and hard work. Through participation in activity programs, students learn self-discipline, build self-confidence, and develop skills to handle competitive situations. These are qualities the public expects schools to produce in students so that they become responsible adults and productive citizens.
- ♦ **Activities Foster Success in Later Life.** Participants in school activities is often a predictor of later success – in college, a career, and becoming a contributing member of society.
- ♦ Of the 60 students listed in the May 14, 1998, USA Today’s All-USA High School Academic First, Second, and Third Teams and the 51 who earned honorable mention, 75% were involved in sports, speech, music, or debate.
- ♦ A study of nearly 22,000 students conducted by a University of Colorado professor for the Colorado High School Activities Association, which was released in the fall of 1999, indicates students who participate in some form of interscholastic activities have “significantly higher” grade-point averages than students who do not. Data obtained from the spring of 1997 study by Dr. Kevin J. McCarthy revealed student participants in Jefferson County high schools had an overall grade-point average of 3.093 on a 4.0 scale, while the GPA for non-participants was 2.444. Jefferson County School District, the state’s largest school district, has matched the academic success of its students with success on the playing field. The 16 district schools have won a combined 39 state championships in the 2990s in sports, while its music programs consistently bring home “superior” ratings.
- ♦ Admission officers at Harvard, Yale, and 70% of the nation’s other major universities have stated that achievement in the arts are significant considerations for admission to their institutions. This finding was from *Can Colleges Help School Fine Arts Programs?* in a 1992 article in Connecticut Music Educators Association News.
- ♦ Results of a 1987 survey of individuals at the executive vice-president level or above in 75 Fortune 500 companies indicated that 95 percent of those corporate executives participated in sports during high school. In addition, 54% were involved in student government; 43% in the National Honor Society; 37% in music; 35% in scouts; and 18% in the school’s publication. ■

- Adapted from the National Federation of State High School Associations’ website at www.nfhs.org.

- Another source is “Research Link: Extracurricular Activities and Student Motivation,” *Educational Leadership*, September 2002, pp. 80-81

SUMMARY OF MEETING

The following is a summary of the November 18, 2002 meeting of the Principals' Committee on Athletics.

The November meeting of the Principals' Committee on Athletics was called to order at 1:50 pm.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Executive Director's Report from the October 21, 2002 meeting was approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer's Report was approved.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Lynch referred to several letters, memoranda and publications that were placed in each member's folder or filed in the League office.

FALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

• BOYS CROSS COUNTRY

Dual Meet League Championships

Northern	Cumberland High School
Southern	North Kingstown High School
Metropolitan	Barrington High School
Suburban	Bishop Hendricken High School

Class Meets

Class A	Bishop Hendricken High School
Class B	Barrington High School
Class C	Portsmouth High School

State Meets

Bishop Hendricken High School

Individual Championship

Class A	Steven Walsh – 15:44.1 Bishop Hendricken High School
Class B	Tom Webb – 16:13.5 Barrington High School
Class C	Tom Barek – 17:20.0 Portsmouth High School

State Meet

David Murphy – 16:22.5
Bishop Hendricken High School

• GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY

Dual Meet League Championships

Northern	Cumberland High School
Southern	North Kingstown High School
Metropolitan	Barrington High School
Suburban	Toll Gate High School

Class Meets

Class A	North Kingstown High School
Class B	Westerly High School
Class C	Ponaganset High School

State Meets

North Kingstown High School

Individual Championship

Class A	Hilary Dionne – 18:39.9 Cumberland High School
Class B	Liz Carlson – 18:22.0 Lincoln High School
Class C	Nicole Millette – 17:56.6 East Greenwich High School

On a motion made and seconded, the Principals' Committee on Athletics unanimously approved the 2002-2003 Boys and Girls Cross Country Championships.

• FIELD HOCKEY

Division Championships

Division I	North Kingstown High School
Division II	South Kingstown High School

State Championships

Division I	North Kingstown High School
Runner Up	Wheeler School

Division II	Classical High School
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Runner Up	South Kingstown High School
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On a motion made and seconded, the Principals' Committee on Athletics unanimously approved the 2002-2003 Field Hockey Championships.

• GIRLS' TENNIS

Class Championships

Class A North	Mount St. Charles Academy
Class A South	Barrington High School
Class B North	Lincoln School
Class B South	South Kingstown High School
Class C North	Tolman High School
Class C South	Westerly High School

State Championships

Class A	Mount St. Charles Academy
Class B	South Kingstown High School
Class C	Westerly High School

Singles Championship Ruth Furman – Lincoln School

Doubles Championship

Sara Marsh, Christa Shunney - Cumberland High School

On a motion made and seconded, the Principals' Committee on Athletics unanimously approved the 2002-2003 Girls' Tennis Championships.

• BOYS' VOLLEYBALL

Division Championships

Division I	South Kingstown High School
Division II North	Mount St. Charles Academy
Division II South	Westerly High School

State Championships

Division I	South Kingstown High School
Division II	Mount St. Charles Academy

On a motion made and seconded, the Principals' Committee on Athletics unanimously approved the 2002-2003 Boys' Volleyball Championships.

On behalf of the administration and staff of the RIIL, Mr. Lynch extended his gratitude and appreciation to all the fall sport directors for their time, commitment and dedication to providing quality programs for the student-athletes served by the RIIL.

FASTPITCH SOFTBALL

Mrs. Betty Marquis

Mrs. Marquis submitted a proposed adjustment to the fastpitch softball alignment, necessitated by several new schools joining the RIIL fastpitch league. She emphasized that the proposed alignment is for this year only. Because of new schools expressing their intent to join the RIIL fastpitch softball league next year, Mrs. Marquis requested that she be permitted to again align fastpitch softball next year for a four-year period.

On a motion made and seconded, the Principals' Committee on Athletics unanimously approved the proposed fastpitch softball alignment for the 2002-2003 school year.

On a subsequent motion made and seconded, the Principals' Committee on Athletics also approved Mrs. Marquis' request to realign next year for a 4-year period if two (or more) teams come into the RIIL fastpitch softball league next year as indicated.

VOLLEYBALL

The 2002-03 boys' volleyball championships were submitted as outlined earlier in this report. The topic of switching the boys' volleyball season from Fall to Spring was tabled to the next meeting of the Principals' Committee on Athletics.

FALL SPORTS

- **Girls' Tennis**

East Greenwich H.S. and Lincoln School have submitted requests to move up in divisions for the 2003-04 school year. The requests were referred to the Tennis Committee for review and consideration.

WINTER SPORTS

- **Hockey**

Mr. Sheehan reported that the schedule is in the process of being finalized. Several changes have become necessary because rinks have changed their availability dates, thus decreasing the amount of ice time available for RIIL high school hockey.

ARTICLE 7, SECTION 7D

COACHING OUT-OF-SEASON (50% RULE)

Insofar as the school involved in this alleged violation is Mt. Hope High School and Chairperson Crowley is Principal of Mt. Hope High School, she recused herself and Mr. Murano assumed the role of Chairperson for this discussion.

Discussion ensued regarding an alleged violation of Article 7, Section 7D by Mt. Hope High School. It was reported that more than 50% of prospective team members participated on a Pelé team in the Town of Bristol in the Spring of 2002.

On a motion made and seconded, the Principals' Committee on Athletics voted 9-0, with 1 abstention, to place the Mt. Hope High School boys soccer team on probation for one (1) year. If any further violations occur during the probationary period, the Mt. Hope High School boys soccer team will be suspended from post-season play for the 2003-2004 school year.

Discussion continued regarding Article 7, Section 7C – Non-School Competition. An Ad Hoc Committee has been formed and will meet to discuss the ramifications of this rule and its impact on high school varsity student-athletes.

DISCUSSION

Mr. Lynch reported that the League office receives numerous inquiries regarding a student-athletes eligibility to try out for a winter and/or spring sport while still participating in a sport in the previous season. The Committee expressed concern about student-athletes suffering injuries during practice in one sport while still participating in playoffs for the [previous season] sport. Members of the Committee are also concerned that sport seasons may be too long and that student-athletes are not receiving adequate rest between sport seasons.

It was recommended that the League office send a memorandum to all sport directors to review the number of games in their respective sports in order to better prepare for next year's alignments.

POLE VAULT RULE CHANGE

Mr. Lynch reported that the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) has implemented an immediate change in the rule regarding pole vault landing pads and pits.. This change was spurred by three deaths nationwide – high school and college. Consequently, landing pads must be wider and deeper and landing pit covers must cover all pieces.

Mr. Littlefield, Director of Boys and Girls Outdoor Track, reported that this change represents a potential cost to schools of \$2,000-\$4,000. He stated that he has spoken to representatives from other states and all seem to be doing the best they can.

Mr. Littlefield proposed that the following waiver be considered: If a school cannot host the pole vault event, no penalty shall be assessed to the host school and the event shall not be contested. ***This waiver shall be for pole vault events only and for the 2003 season only.***

On a motion made and seconded, the Principals' Committee on Athletics unanimously approved the proposal.

Mr. Littlefield further reported that the Track Committee will survey member schools to ascertain which schools can/cannot host the pole vault event. He will report his findings back to the Principals' Committee on Athletics at its' December meeting.

HEARINGS

3:40 pm

Cassandra Malec – Ponaganset H.S.
Article 3, Section 5 – The Transfer Rule

Background: This is an appeal of a decision by the Waiver Request Hearing Committee on November 4, 2002 to deny a request for a waiver of Article 3, Section 5 - the Transfer Rule to participate in girls basketball at Ponaganset High School.

Present for this hearing were Allen Huestis, Director of Athletics, Ponaganset High School; Mark Kepple, attorney and family friend; Caz Malec, student's father; and Cassandra Malec, student-athlete.

On a motion made and seconded, the Committee voted 7-4 to deny the appeal.

4:05 pm

Ralph Wright – East Providence H.S.

Background: This is an appeal of a decision by the Waiver Request Hearing Committee on November 12, 2002 to deny a request for a waiver of Article 3, Section 4a, the Age Rule, and Section 4E, the 8-Semester Rule to participate in basketball at East Providence High School.

Present for this hearing were Philip Ricci, Director of Athletics, East Providence High School; Mary Wilson, student's grandmother and guardian; and Ralph Wright, student-athlete.

On a motion made and seconded, the Principals' Committee on Athletics voted 7-4 to grant the appeal.

The Committee then adopted the following Closing Motion:

THAT ANY AND ALL MOTIONS, AMENDMENTS AND ACTIONS BY THE COMMITTEE ON ATHLETICS AND THE EXECUTIVE OFFICERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON ATHLETICS TO THIS DATE BE REAFFIRMED AND RATIFIED.

The November meeting of the Principals' Committee on Athletics was adjourned at 5:00 pm



***Seasons
Greetings***

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MISSION STATEMENT

*The Mission of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League
is to provide educational opportunities
for students through interscholastic athletics
and to provide governance and leadership
for its member schools
in the implementation of athletic programs.*

NATIONAL AFFILIATION

The Rhode Island Interscholastic League is a member of the National Federation of State High School Associations, which consists of the state high school associations of all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Guam, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and all provinces of Canada are affiliate members.

The objectives of the National Federation of State High School Associations are to:

- serve, protect, and enhance the interstate activity interests of the high schools belonging to the state associations;
- assist in those activities of the state associations which can best be operated on a nationwide scale;
- sponsor meetings, publications, and activities which will permit each state association to profit by the experience of all other member associations;
- coordinate the work so duplication will be minimized;
- formulate, copyright, and publish rules of play or event conduct pertaining to interscholastic activities;
- preserve interscholastic athletic records, and the tradition and heritage of interscholastic sports;
- provide programs, services, material and assistance to state associations, high schools and individual professionals involved in the conduct and administration of interscholastic activities;
- study in general all phases of interscholastic activities and serve as a national resource for information pertaining thereto;
- identify needs and problems related to interscholastic activities and where practical provide solutions thereto; and
- promote the educational values of interscholastic activities to the nation's public.



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