

March 2004



Rhode Island
Interscholastic League

Member of the
National Federation
of High Schools



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Rhode Island Interscholastic League

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**FROM THE DESK OF...
THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

As you know, all sports are being realigned for the next two (2) years. Sport committees are meeting to develop proposals based on the criteria approved by the Principals' Committee on Athletics. Following these meetings, surveys will be sent out to seek your input on the proposals. Please give your full attention to the survey(s) and return them to the League office within the designated time frame. Your cooperation, as always, is appreciated.

A reminder to all schools to submit their ***Declaration of Intent Form*** to the League office as soon as possible, if you haven't already done so. Also, please send ***graduation dates***.

I wish you all a very successful spring sport season. Please keep in mind and emphasize to all student-athletes and coaches that good sportsmanship and citizenship are a very important part of high school athletics.

→NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR←

The Rhode Island Interscholastic League [RIIL] Principals' Committee on Athletics, has appointed **Thomas A. Mezzanotte** as Executive Director of the League to replace Dick Lynch who has announced his retirement from the League effective July 31, 2004. Tom will begin serving as Executive Director on August 1, 2004.

Tom brings a wealth of experience to his new position. During his thirty years in education, Tom has been a teacher, coach, middle school principal of Classical High School and Executive Director of Student Support Services for the Providence School Department. He presently serves as the principal of Holy Name of Jesus Elementary Middle School in Providence.

Tom was also very active in the RIIL. Previously, he served as a member of the Principals' Committee on Athletics and is a former chairperson of the Committee. During his tenure on the Committee, he was the director of football. He also was a member of the Executive Board of the Rhode Island Principals' Association.

Tom's leadership ability, expertise and communication skills will be a great asset as he assumes the leadership of the RIIL.

....Richard B. Lynch

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"A Pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty."

.. Winston Churchill

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LACROSSE PARTICIPATION

Participation in lacrosse is growing throughout the nation. State associations are beginning to receive inquiries from schools regarding what is needed to start a lacrosse program. US Lacrosse has a startup kit available to schools interested in starting a

program. There is no charge for the kit that includes a CD, a video tape, brochures, stickers, a copy of Lacrosse Magazine, a license plate frame and a clipboard. It is available upon request to:

US Lacrosse
113 West University Parkway
Baltimore, MD 21210
Phone – 410-235-6882
Fax – 410-366-6735
www.lacrosse.org



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It strikes me that civility is becoming a lost art. Whether at home, the mall, on our highways, in schools or at sporting events, more and more people have lost the duty to treat others with respect.

My dictionary defines civility as "politeness, courtesy; an act or utterance." It seems like such a simple concept. Be nice. Treat others as you would like to be treated. If you don't have something nice to say, don't say anything at all. All are tried and true statements we heard from our parents, teacher and principals.

What's gone wrong? It's easy to blame it on society—MTV, movies, professional athletes. But that's a copout. We are all responsible for ourselves and to a certain degree for those we influence.

As parents and educators, it's all about setting both an example as well as expectations. If adults aren't civil, we can't expect students to be. As educators, civility needs to be addressed in the classroom, on the playground and at sporting events.

In February, a sportswriter for a Maine newspaper wrote a column admonishing school administrators for "taking the fun out of the high school game" and suggesting that attendance "numbers are way down due to overlegislation of behavior." I say kudos to those administrators!

As you might suspect, I have a strong belief in the value of interscholastic sports and activities! There is an electricity and a passion around such events that is difficult to duplicate elsewhere. Electricity, in this case, doesn't have to carry a negative charge. Those "electrons" who attend events should be asked to change their behavior or leave—only "protons" wanted, thank you!

Too many adults and students have adopted the attitude that the only way to succeed is by tearing others down. Celebrating success at someone else's expense is hollow victory.

....Dick Durost, Executive Director
from *The Maine Apprise*

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"Somewhere there is something incredible waiting to be known."

- Carl Sagan

**Ten Recommendations
for Preventing
Sexual Harassment in
Schools and
Athletic Programs**

from The Maine Apprise

1. Teachers and athletics personnel should never use sexually explicit language or tell sexually explicit/off color jokes in the presence of students or student-athletes.
2. Teachers and athletics personnel should never display sexually explicit or pornographic pictures/materials on school property and should never show such materials to students or student-athletes under any circumstances.
3. Teachers and athletics personnel should avoid in excessively personal conversations, both in person and on the phone, with students or student-athletes.
4. Teachers and athletics personnel should avoid sending excessively personal letters, cards, e-mails or gifts to students or student-athletes.
5. Teachers and athletics personnel should avoid commenting on the physical appearance including manner of dress and specific physical attributes of students or student-athletes.
6. Teachers and athletics personnel should avoid to the greatest extent possible physical contact with or touching of students or student-athletes.
7. Teachers and athletics personnel should avoid giving students or student-athletes rides home alone or even in groups where eventually one only student will remain in the car alone with the adult.
8. Teachers and athletics personnel should avoid, off-school-property, one-on-one meetings alone with students or student-athlete, especially in the home of the student or the adult.
9. Teachers and athletics personnel should never plan or take unchaperoned overnight school or athletics trips with students or student-athletes and, on properly chaperoned trips, should exercise the highest degree of caution and propriety regarding interaction with students or student-athletes.
10. Teachers and athletics personnel should never date students or student-athletes under any circumstances. Issues of power differential, consent, and credibility make such relationships untenable within any level of educational institution.

- Source: Dr. Lee Green, Baker University Sportslaw Publishing.com/slpnews1.htm, from "Sexual Harassment and Hazing: Your Actions Make A Difference!", National Federation of State High School Associations

QUOTE

"A little integrity is better than any career."

- Ralph Waldo Emerson, (1803-1882)

COACHES CODE OF ETHICS

from National Federation of State High School Associations

The function of a coach is to properly educate students through participation in interscholastic competition. The interscholastic program is designed to enhance academic achievement and never should interfere with opportunities for academic success. Each child should be treated as though he/she were the coaches' own, and the child's welfare shall be uppermost at all times. In recognition of this, the following guidelines for coaches have been adopted by the NFICA Board of Directors:

- **The coach** must be aware that he or she has a tremendous influence, either good or bad, in the education of the student-athlete and, thus, shall never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest desirable ideals of character.
- **The coach** must constantly uphold the honor and dignity of the profession. In all personal contact with the student-athlete, officials, athletic directors, school administrators, the state high school athletic association, the media and the public, the coach shall strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct.
- **The coach** shall take an active role in the prevention of drug, alcohol and tobacco abuse and under no circumstances should authorize their use.
- **The coach** shall avoid the use of tobacco products when in contact with players.
- **The coach** shall promote the entire interscholastic program of the school and direct his or her program in harmony with the total school program.
- **The coach** shall be acquainted thoroughly with the contest rules and is responsible for their interpretation to team members. The spirit and letter of rules should be regarded as mutual agreements. The coach shall not try to seek an advantage by circumvention of the spirit or letter of the rules.
- **Coaches** shall actively use their influence to enhance sportsmanship by their spectators, working closely with cheerleaders, pep club sponsors, booster clubs and administrators.
- **Contest officials** shall have the respect and support of the coach. The coach shall not indulge in conduct which will incite players or spectators against the officials. Public criticism of officials or players is unethical.
- **Before and after contests**, rival coaches should meet and exchange friendly greetings to set the correct tone for the event.
- **A coach** shall not exert pressure on faculty members to give student-athletes special consideration.
- **It is unethical** for coaches to scout opponents by any means other than those adopted by the league and/or state high school athletic association.

HAZARDS OF SMOKELESS TOBACCO

The use of smokeless tobacco among professional, collegiate and high school athletes has been rising at a dramatic rate. Some believe it is a safe alternative to smoking cigarettes. It is not safe, and it can be very hazardous to an individual's health. Known as "chew" or "snuff," smokeless tobacco also causes bad breath, stained teeth and the need to spit. Some things to consider about smokeless tobacco:

- ◆ Smokeless tobacco in any form contains nicotine.
- ◆ Nicotine is addictive.
- ◆ Some researchers have found evidence that nicotine is more addictive than alcohol or heroin.
- ◆ Smokeless tobacco contains various types of abrasive grit, which are not removed during curing and processing, and sugars are added to improve taste. The grit causes long-term users to experience greater wearing away of teeth surfaces. Damage can occur in as little as 3-4 months of daily use.
- ◆ Large amounts of chemicals, salts and sugars found in smokeless tobacco can cause a loss of sensitivity in taste buds.
- ◆ The tissues in the mouth are easily irritated from the chemicals found in smokeless tobacco.
- ◆ "Snuff" contains much higher amounts of carcinogens than does loose-leaf, plug or twist tobacco.

- Vol. No. 1, Source: CIF Health and Safety Committee

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QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Dignity consists not in possessing honors, but in the consciousness that we deserve them."

....Aristotle, Greek philosopher

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POLE VAULTING – MANAGING YOUR RISKS

One of the most important aspects of pole vaulting is managing and reducing the risks involved so that student-athletes compete in the safest environment possible. This requires a daily assessment made by the coaches and students prior to any actual vaulting. This list should be considered as a basis for the coach and students to begin their assessment. Each individual school site may have additional needs because of their unique environment.

DAILY CHECK LIST FOR COACHES AND STUDENTS

- Are all pads and top cover properly fastened together? Any buckles or straps should not be exposed to the jumper.
- Is the pit in the proper position? Do not allow the pad to "slide back" during practice, and it should remain snug around the planting box.
- If the pit sits on a cement or asphalt base **is the entire cement/asphalt** base covered with proper padding up to 5' from the pit. This includes curbing.
- Are standards fastened to the ground?

- Are the standards covered so that no part of the base is exposed?
- Are the poles in good condition?
- Are the poles visibly marked with maximum weights and maximum hand hold positions?
- Have the coaches reviewed with the jumpers the proper techniques **and** the risk of injuries?
- Are the weather conditions safe for pole vaulting? Rain, sleet, snow and excessive wind are all conditions that can make pole vaulting dangerous.
- Is the runway surface and surrounding area free of holes and debris?

SEASONAL CHECK LIST FOR COACHES AND ATHLETIC DIRECTORS

- Does your vaulting box meet the National Federation standards? Look to the NF rulebook for exact acceptable standards.
- Is your pit large enough considering how high your potential users are going to vault? Remember, the higher they go, the larger the pit. The pad should never be smaller than 16'6 near the base of the unit. Larger is Better!
- Does the shape of your landing pad give protection to the "box" area? If your pit does not cover this area, you should get covering immediately.

SUPERVISION

Pole-vaulting is fun and can be very rewarding for those who participate wisely. The pole vault must NEVER be attempted without **DIRECT SUPERVISION** of the coach. This means that the coach must be present and be directly watching and assisting the athletes. Athletes must be taught the proper techniques and must also be warned on a daily basis the risk of injury when instruction is not followed. Athletes must be taught that they should never attempt to vault without the coach present. Having the students check their environment everyday will help them gain an understanding of the risks involved, however, this does not relieve the coach of their responsibility of checking.

- Vol. No. 1: CIF Health and Safety Committee

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"QUOTE"

"Nothing is politically right which is morally wrong."

- Attributed to Daniel O'Connell, Irish politician and member of the British House of Commons (1775-1847)

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The following is a summary of the February 23, 2004 meeting of the Principals' Committee on Athletics:

The February meeting of the Principals' Committee on Athletics was called to order at 1:40 p.m.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Executive Director's Report from the January 26, 2004 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.

UPDATE ON EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SCREENING COMMITTEE

Chairperson Gray updated the Committee as to the number of inquiries for the vacancy for the executive director position. To date, the League has had 26 inquiries. On February 9th, the Screening Committee had its first meeting. They discussed dates for interviews and coming up with questions for the candidates. On February 15th, the Committee had its second meeting. They received six applications to date. Chairperson Gray reminded the Principals' Committee on Athletics that the deadline for accepting applications is February 27, 2004. Again, the Screening Committee would like to start conducting interviews with the candidates the first two weeks of March. On March 15, 2004 the Principals' Committee on Athletics will conduct interviews with the candidates recommended by the Screening Committee. The meeting will be a closed meeting of voting members only. Following the interviews, the Committee will make the appointment of a new executive director at that meeting.

WINTER CHAMPIONSHIPS

GYMNASTICS

Division Championships

Division A LaSalle Academy
Division B Mt. Saint Charles Academy

State Championships

Division A LaSalle Academy
Division B West Warwick High School

State Individual Championships

Balance Beam – Kayla Rounds, Barrington High School
Vault – Kayla Rounds, Barrington High School
Uneven Bars – Amanda Fogarty, LaSalle Academy
Floor Exercise – Amanda Fogarty, LaSalle Academy

All Round – Amanda Fogarty, LaSalle Academy

On a motion made and seconded, the Principals' Committee on Athletics unanimously approved the 2003-2004 Gymnastics Championships.

SWIM

Boys Division Championships

Northern Cumberland High School
Central Bishop Hendricken H.S. (repeat champions)
Eastern Barrington High School

Western South Kingstown H.S. (repeat champions)

Boys Class Championships

Class A Bishop Hendricken H.S. (repeat champions)
Class B South Kingstown H. S. (repeat champions)
Class C Mount Saint Charles (repeat champions)

Boys State Championship

Bishop Hendricken High School (repeat champions)

Girls Division Championships

Northern Cumberland High School
Central LaSalle Academy
Eastern Barrington High School (repeat champions)
Western East Greenwich High School

Girls Class Championships

Class A St. Mary Academy Bay View
Class B South Kingstown High School
Class C The Prout School

Girls State Championship

St. Mary Academy Bay View

On a motion made and seconded, the Principals' Committee on Athletics unanimously approved the 2003-2004 Swim Championships.

FRESHMAN BOYS & GIRLS BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

BOYS

North North Providence High School
South LaSalle Academy
East Rogers High School
West East Providence High School
State Champion North Providence High School

GIRLS

East Barrington High School
West North Providence High School
State Champion Barrington High School

On a motion made and seconded, the Principals' Committee on Athletics unanimously approved the 2003-2004 Freshman Boys and Girls Basketball Championships.

REQUEST FOR A REFUND OF DUES AND FEES PAID TO THE RIIL

Mr. Lynch reported on a letter submitted by Masters Regional Academy to receive a full refund in the amount of \$875.00 for the dues and fees they paid to the RIIL this year. They stated that because of low enrollment it has become impossible to find enough student-athletes to enter a team in the league. Also, they did not have any student-athletes who desired to compete as an individual.

After much discussion, on a motion made and seconded, the Principals' Committee on Athletics unanimously voted to deny the request for a full refund in the amount of \$875.00 for Masters Regional Academy. They stressed the importance of commitment and the RIIL making plans based on the intentions of schools.

FALL SPORTS

There were no Fall Sports issues reported and/or discussed at this meeting.

WINTER SPORTS

Mr. Lynch referred to a letter submitted by Mt. Hope High School in which the principal self-reported that a student-athlete participated as an ineligible athlete in a wrestling match against Narragansett High School.

After much discussion, the Principals' Committee on Athletic on a motion made and seconded, unanimously voted the following:

1. To deduct all points (from the teams total score) earned by the (ineligible) student-athlete in the match against Narragansett High School.
2. To impose on Mt. Hope High School a fine of \$100.00 for each (wrestling) event that the student-athlete participated in. In this case, it is \$100.00 total for the Narragansett High School match.

In another matter, Mr. Lynch reported that a 17 year old student-athlete from Johnston High School participated as an ineligible athlete in freshman wrestling. According to the Rules and Regulations of the RIIL "*participants cannot be sixteen (16) years of age prior to September 1st*".

On a motion made and seconded, the Principals' Committee on Athletics voted unanimously to:

1. Deduct all points earned by the (ineligible) student-athlete in all matches he participated in.
2. Impose on Johnston High School a fine of \$100.00 for having an ineligible player participate in wrestling.

Also, Mr. Lynch reported on a letter submitted by Narragansett High School requesting to be added to Boys Hockey for the 2004-2005 school year. In addition to Narragansett High School's request, Mr. Lynch reported that South Kingstown High School and The Prout School have both expressed interest in joining Hockey for the 2004-2005 school year. Therefore, there could possibly be three (3) new hockey teams for the 2004-2005 school year. The Committee expressed concern as to whether the League should allow new teams to start participating in the League right away or maybe start at the J.V. level and/or club level first.

SPRING SPORTS

Mr. Lynch reported on a letter submitted by Chairperson Gray, in which he rendered his resignation as Director of Golf. Mr. Lynch praised Chairperson Gray for the great job he has done as Director of Golf. The program ran very smoothly and was very successful because of his leadership.

On a motion made and seconded, the Principals' Committee on Athletics accepted Chairperson Gray's resignation with deep regret.

In another matter, Mr. Lynch reported on a waiver request to move the start of the league tennis matches from April 1, 2004 to March 30, 2004.

On a motion made and seconded, the Principals' Committee on Athletics unanimously voted to approve the request to move the start of the league tennis matches to March 30, 2004.

On a lacrosse matter that was tabled from last month's meeting, Mr. George Finn, Director of Boys and Girls Lacrosse, revisited the lacrosse proposal. He confirmed that Middletown High School is joining the League this year in Boys and Girls Lacrosse, bringing the total teams in both boys and girls lacrosse to nine (9). Mr. Finn proposed two (2) divisions in both the boys and girls league. The East Division will play each other in their divisions twice and crossover once. The West Division will play each other in their division twice and crossover once. In addition, the West Division will play one additional division opponent. All nine (9) teams (boys & girls) will make the playoffs. The 9th and 8th seeded teams will "play-in" to the quarterfinal round(s).

On a motion made and seconded, the Principals' Committee on Athletics unanimously voted to approve the lacrosse alignment for the 2003-2004 school year.

FUTURE DIRECTION OF THE RIIL

Much discussion took place as to the future direction of the RIIL. Chairperson Gray suggested working on a Strategic Plan in the near future. It was also suggested to hire an outside facilitator/contractor to come in and work with the Strategic Planning Committee on the future of the RIIL, looking at governance, financing, the rules and regulation, etc. It was suggested that the Strategic Planning Committee include members of the Principals' Committee on Athletics, principals, assistant principals, athletic directors, coaches, parents and student-athletes. It was also suggested that the Strategic Plan take place in the summer of 2005. This would allow the new executive director to have one year experience in the position. Chairperson Gray and Mr. Lynch will discuss the formation of a Strategic Planning Committee.

In addition, there was discussion in regards to the appointment of sport directors in the future and the criteria used to appoint them. More discussion will follow in the future.

On a motion made and seconded, the Principals' Committee on Athletics unanimously voted to formulate a plan to begin the process of conducting a Strategic Plan for the summer of 2005 and to identify a person to serve as a facilitator.

The Committee then adopted the following Closing Motion:

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

The February meeting of the Principals' Committee on Athletics was adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

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its Corporate Sponsors*

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United States Army

United States Marine Corp

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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