

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

As I reflect back on the Fall and Winter seasons, I am happy to say that I observed many student-athletes participating in various sports, performing to their ability with some over-achieving, playing the game as it should be played, and exhibiting good sportsmanship.

The discouraging part of what I witnessed was the lack of good sportsmanship on the part of many student-athletes and, in particular, the spectators. All showed an inability to play by the rules, to take a loss or defeat without complaint or victory without gloating, and to treat opponents with respect and a caring attitude.

The number of ejections for unsportsmanlike behavior toward opponents and the game officials reminds me that we still have a lot more work to do on the important issue of sportsmanship.

I fully understand that the values learned by these young adults begin at home - with their parents. Far too often, we see that *"the apple doesn't fall far from the tree"*. We see parents and adults exhibiting unsportsmanlike conduct and who try to rationalize why their son/daughter behaves [in an athletic contest] like they do. Too often we hear adults/parents blame the referee, the coach, and/or the opponent for causing their son/daughter to act the way they do.

Despite the negatives, a vast majority of our student-athletes and coaches perform in a manner that their parents, school, and community can be proud of.

However, we must continue to emphasize and demand that all RIIL contests be played according to the rules and the intended purpose *that good sportsmanship is exhibited at all times* by players, coaches, cheerleaders, and spectators.

School administrators must **demand** that their athletic programs adhere to the highest standards of sportsmanship, fair play, and respect for others.

Coaches must set the example and must neither tolerate *nor teach* unsportsmanlike conduct, disrespect, and overall lack of concern for others. Coaches must be leaders. Players must be made to sit on the bench if they cannot play the game by the rules.

If we work together - the League, administrators, and coaches - we can make athletics a better experience for all.

WE MUST CONTINUE TO WORK TOGETHER TOWARD THAT END. WE MUST NEVER STOP TRYING.

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***"Attitude is a little thing
that makes a big difference."***

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LEADERSHIP-SPORTSMANSHIP CONFERENCE

The Rhode Island Interscholastic League will be conducting its annual Spring conference on Wednesday, May 17, 2000, from 8:00 am – 2:00 pm. This year's conference will address the topics of "Diversity, Conflict Resolution, and Leadership/Commitment."

The RIIL is all about student-athletes. The RIIL believes that part of its mission is to instill the values of citizenship that are realized through sportsmanship and ethical play in athletics. We hope to generate a sports culture that supports those values necessary to teach and learn self-respect, respect for others, tolerance and what it means to be a leader. Obvious to all of us, there is a noted and worrisome decline in sportsmanship and ethical conduct in athletics. This deterioration permeates sports competition from youth leagues to the professional leagues. The breakdown in sportsmanship extends way beyond playing fields.

High school sports provide our student-athletes with opportunities to learn respect for self and respect for others by placing participants in a unique context – competition – which ideally should promote the values necessary to develop this sense of respect for self and others. Tolerance for ethnic diversity, the promotion of ethical conduct, and the resolution of conflict utilizing non-violent strategies will be address and explored at this conference. All member schools should take advantage of this unique opportunity.

The conference is designed to generate and support thinking about the following three areas:

- ◆ Diversity
- ◆ Conflict Resolution/Problem Solving
- ◆ Leadership/Commitment

This will be a working conference for a school of nine members as follows:

- Six students [3 boys and 3 girls] **no seniors accepted for participation in workshops
- Three adults; i.e., AD, Administrator, Coach
- Two students [1 boy & 1 girl] and one adult from each school will attend one of the three sessions.

There is no cost for participation in this conference. Deadline for registration is Wednesday, April 12th. Registration forms have been mailed to all member schools. In addition, a registration form may be found at the back of this bulletin.

For more information, contact Dick Magarian at the RIIL office, 272-9844

RENAISSANCE GAMES 2000

In the Spring 1999, the Rhode Island Interscholastic League, in partnership with the Institute of International Sport, began the **Renaissance Games**. **Renaissance Education** was developed as a response and alternative to the emphasis of specialization permeating sports and education in the United States. **Renaissance Education** exposes students to the foundations of a total education and, thereby, honors the whole person. The program affords students who possess varied interests an opportunity to contribute to a total team effort, enabling them to derive the benefits of team participation.

The inaugural program consisted of eight Rhode Island Interscholastic League member schools and met with a great deal of enthusiasm from all the participants.

The Rhode Island Interscholastic League is pleased to announce that it will once again team up with the Institute of International Sport for **Renaissance 2000**. Due to the popularity and success of last year's program, the number of participating schools has increased to eleven. Last year's champion, Lincoln High School, will host Cumberland High School, North Smithfield High School and Smithfield High School on Saturday, April 29, 2000. Also on Saturday, Portsmouth High School will host Barrington High School and Tiverton High School. On Sunday, April 30, 2000, Moses Brown School will host Central High School, LaSalle Academy, and Mt. Hope High School. The winners of this semi-final round will compete for the championship which will be held at The University of Rhode Island on Sunday, May 7, 2000 at 12:00 noon.

The competing teams will each consist of twelve boys and twelve girls and eight alternates. The program includes the following sports: boys' and girls' basketball and soccer, and co-ed volleyball, track relays, and flag football. Recreational activities, all of which are co-ed, will include board games and skills competition. Academic activities, also all co-ed, will feature Mathletics, Scientific Discovery, Geography, and a Spelling Bee. Cultural activities will consist of Art, Essay, Poetry, Music Instrumental, Music Voice, and Theatre.

In addition, all participating teams and adult leaders will be invited to a dinner hosted by the Institute of International Sport on Friday, May 5, 2000. It is anticipated that Sir Roger Bannister, the first person to break the 4-minute mile, will be the featured speaker.

For more information about **Renaissance Games 2000**, please contact Richard Magarian at the R. I. Interscholastic League, 272-9844.

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"LEST WE FORGET"

Drew Potthoff
Administrative Assistant/Athletic Director
South Beloit CUSD #320, South Beloit, Illinois

I sat, riveted, staring at the unbelievable images flooding at me from my television set and a sick, guilty feeling started to gnaw at the pit of my stomach. I had seen this before, another senseless act, another school shooting, more innocent students killed, and I had forgotten about the others. I had forgotten about Paducah, Kentucky and Jonesboro, Arkansas. I had put these and the others out of my mind, too busy with other things. I had not done anything to prevent what had now happened in Littleton, Colorado. I had forgotten.

Why has the incident at Columbine High School made such an impact on me? Were the scenes that I was seeing more horrible than what I had seen before? Was the sheer ruthlessness of this episode and the efficiency in which the perpetrators carried out their carnage any different than the others? I don't have any answers other than maybe it is my time to say something. Maybe it's my turn to try and make a difference in helping to prevent this from happening again. Littleton, Colorado, is a thousand miles from the small school district where I sit and write these thoughts. But, because I have chosen to be an educator and I have worked all of my professional life to help kids grow up safe and strong, this latest travesty has touched me in a different way.

The only thing I can say that I know for certain is that I will try with all my soul to make some kind of a difference. And I make this promise to the students, the families, the teachers, and the communities of Littleton, Colorado, and the others; ***I will never forget you again.***

How can we prevent this from happening again? This is the question that everyone is trying to answer. I have heard the so-called experts imply that stricter gun control laws is the answer. Keeping guns out of the hands of the children that are killing children is only part of the answer to this complex equation. Schools need to have an effective and tested crisis and disaster plan in effect to prevent this violence, others have said. True, all schools need to have a plan to deal with these situations if they arise and they must be well thought out, planned and practiced. From what the public was allowed to see, I have to say that the law enforcement agencies and the school in Littleton did a marvelous job of handling such a dramatic and intense incident. Unfortunately, the very best of crisis plans cannot prevent this tragedy from happening, but it is another piece to the puzzle. Censor the music our kids listen to, the movies our kids watch and the video games our children play that expose and desensitize them to violence and mayhem

is another theory thrown from the bleachers. Every generation has had its Marilyn Mansons, its Ozzie Osbournes, its Alice Coopers, but is this why the children at the end of the 1990's are using guns to settle their differences? No, but maybe therein lies another part of the answer.

I believe that through education we can help to prevent this type of violence from happening again. Parents need education to recognize the subtle hints and signs that our children give us when they are troubled. Parents also need resources to access when their children are in distress. To help our children deal with their problems before these problems grow and fester into angry and violent outbursts! We must educate our parents in the thought that it is all right for them to expect their children to do what is right. Dr. Gary Fields, Superintendent of Zion-Benton, Illinois School District, firmly believes that parents must "inspect what they expect." If parents expect their children to make the right decisions about drugs, alcohol, racism and violence they must first teach their children these expectations and then support them by inspecting what their children are doing. Whether that means staying up at night and greeting their children at curfew, monitoring what their children are accessing on the internet, or checking their rooms for illegal substances.

As parents, it is their duty to monitor the influences that bombard their children and take a stand against the dark ideas of racism, hatred and death. These are tools that all parents need to raise healthy children, but parents are not born with these skills. They have to be learned: parents have to be taught and encouraged and supported in this effort. In the wake of Littleton, Dr. Joe Saban, Superintendent of the Crystal Lake, Illinois School District, issued a statement saying in part, "We must as parents and educators cease to aspire that children be honor students and instead forward the expectation that kids become honorable students. We must deal with our children in a respectful, caring, yet firm manner from infancy."

In the way that we educate our parents, we must also educate our teachers and help them to develop the skills needed to spot the warning signs of the child "at risk". We must help our teachers to understand how important of an influence they are on the students that pass through their classes, sports and activities. When students get to the high school level, their beliefs and personalities are already formed; as educators, we must realize that all children are different and we must take what we get and guide them toward civility and citizenship. We have a responsibility to be a positive role model for our teachers to listen to what our children are telling us, not only with their words, but also with their actions, and reactions to different situations. Just because a

"Children will walk away from trouble if they have a path to walk and someone to walk with them."

child dresses in black and looks different from the other students doesn't mean he or she is planning something sinister. But it may be a sign that something is going on, that they need to talk to someone about. We must take a long hard look at the way our teachers teach their classes and their curriculum and change the way we traditionally have taught our children. We have to integrate teaching about at-risk behaviors in all of our classes across the curriculum, not just in the health class. We must provide our teachers with the support and the resources to refer students when they identify problems when students ask them for help.

Finally, we must educate our children and help them to build the skills they need to tolerate diversity and mediate their differences in healthy and safe ways. We must provide our children with the skills they need to make the right choices about drugs, alcohol, hatred and violence. We must teach our children how to express their emotions and channel the stress of everyday life, in school and at home, in healthy and safe ways. We must teach our kids to communicate with each other in a healthy manner. The use of "put-downs" among our children is all too common. Our children must learn what effect that these "put-downs" and insults have on their peers and the consequences they can bring. We have to teach our children that they cannot and should not try to solve all problems themselves. If they hear things they must go to an adult. They must understand the risks of not doing so. How do our children learn about diversity? How do they learn to communicate? They must see adults acting with respect and compassion to each other. These actions must be taught – not just said.

I remember seeing a quote somewhere that said, "Children will walk away from trouble if they have a path to walk and someone to walk with them." As educators we can help to provide that path and we can help to be the person that walks with them. I am not claiming to be an expert. I'm not saying that these are the answers to the stopping the senseless tragedies. It is my hope that someone will read these thoughts and develop an idea to put with mine, and another will develop an idea to put with that one, and another. Together, perhaps we can figure it out. I don't know for sure. I hope so.

The only thing I can say that I know for certain is that I will try with all my soul to make some kind of a difference. And I make this promise to the students, the families, the teachers, and the communities of Littleton, Colorado, and the others; ***I will never forget you again.***

*Reprinted from Illinois High School Athletic Association News
October 1999*

THE MYTH OF COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

Interscholastic athletics is not intended to be a “farm system” for colleges and universities to groom their athletes. The fact is that less than ½ of 1% of high school athletes receive any athletic financial aid to participate in college athletics.

4 Things most colleges look for in their scouting of high school talent:

1. A good **ACADEMIC** background, including good GPA and SAT scores. “S/he is the kind of student who will always attend classes and strive for his/her degree.
2. A good all-round attitude ranks right behind academic credentials. All colleges are looking for athletes who are receptive to coaching, possess a good work ethic, and have a positive influence on his/her teammates. When you remember that the college coach spends several months with his/her players before, during, and after the season, you can understand why “good attitude” is important. Bad kids wear the coach out and negatively impact the **TEAM**.
3. College coaches are turned off by kids without **CHARACTER**, who are having problems with the law, are untrustworthy, and pose too many risks for the college program.
4. **ABILITY** is very vitally important, of course, but it no longer guarantees admission to a college program.

Athletes also are required to be processed through the NCAA Clearing House if they are interested in playing at a Division I or II college or university. They should contact their school counselor for further information.

*Reprinted from The Charger
H.H. Dow High School, Midland, MI*

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“The greatest value of organized high school sports is that it teaches discipline, loyalty, and teamwork. But of even greater importance to any athlete is the need to get the best possible education that is available. Important as sports are, they are always secondary to the overriding need for a well-rounded education”.

*Lee A. Iacocca
Chairman, Chrysler Corporation*

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HIGH SCHOOL VS PROFESSIONAL SPORTS?

“Thou Shall Not Confuse the Purpose of High School Athletics with the Purpose of Professional Athletics.” There is a hang-up here, and we need to deal with.

The purpose of professional athletics is entertainment. Professional athletes are in the entertainment business. They are entertainers. They have to win, because no wins, no crowds, no money, no jobs.

The purpose of high school athletics is education. High school athletes are in the learning business. They are students. They must try as hard as possible to win, or else they will miss the whole experience. Then they must learn how to handle themselves when they win and when they lose. They are preparing for life after high school.

*Al Burr, High School Principal
Reprinted from the West Virginia H.S. Athletic Association
The Interscholastic December 1999*

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THOUGHT FOR THE DAY ...

Some people dream of success, while others wake up and work hard at it.

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WHY SCHOOL SPORTS ARE WORTH SAVING

Excerpts from Michigan High School Athletic Association Executive Director John E. Roberts’ keynote address Jan. 27, 2000, for the “Crisis in School Sport” colloquium sponsored by the Center for Sport Policy Studies at the University of Toronto.

My view of what schools are for and what is important in education has been shaped by my experiences as a participant in high school athletics, as a high school teacher and coach, as an administrator of educational athletics at the national and state levels, and as a parent of two students who were involved in school sports.

These experiences convince me that the following two points are valid and valuable:

1. For elementary school students, the critical need in their education is reading proficiency. With it, students have the best chance to succeed in school then and later. Teaching reading skills should be our primary educational goal in elementary education, incorporated into all subject areas. Reading teachers, resources and classrooms should be non-expendable, no matter how limited the financial situation.
2. For secondary school students, the critical need in their education is for motivation: not so much for the nuts and bolts of any particular subject, but for the hunger to learn and the motivation to pay the price to succeed. Students who have this motivation succeed then and in later life. Doing all we can to motivate students to stay in school, to like school and to do well in school should be

our primary objective in secondary school education.

And that – **motivating** kids – is the role of interscholastic athletics, which should be considered just a non-expendable in our secondary schools as reading curriculum is in our elementary schools.

No, running and jumping and kicking and throwing and catching are not as important as reading, writing and arithmetic in secondary schools. However, the **motivation** these activities generate for students to stay in school and to like school and to do well in school in reading, writing and arithmetic is every bit as important. It is crucial, and non-expendable, no matter how limited we think funds may be.

We don't know if it's cause and effect, but we do know these are statistical links:

- Participants in school activities generally have higher grade point averages, lower dropout rates, better daily attendance, and fewer discipline problems than do non-participating students.
- Participants in school athletics generally have higher grade point averages and lower rates of tobacco and alcohol use in their seasons of competition than out.
- Students who participate in two sports generally have higher grade point averages than those who participate in one; those who participate in three sports generally have high grade point averages than those who participate in two.
- Participants in school activities feel better about school and about education.

In a word, participants in school activities are **motivated** to stay in school, like school, and do well in school. The programs that do these things for our students should not be cut; they should not be threatened.

Data just made available recently by a Canadian researcher connects participation in school sports to continued participation in sports in adulthood and higher income.

Here's a sampling of statements based on other studies:

Two researchers at East Carolina University published research in the bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School principals (NASSP) in May 1996 and concluded with this statement: "Achieving success in our society requires much more than academic success, so schools must provide for more than just the academic development of adolescents."

Professor Randy Testa at Dartmouth College stated in the Dartmouth Alumni Magazine in March 1999. "The arts – and I'm considering athletics an art – are the place where people synthesize knowledge in new and interesting ways. The arts explore the ways in which we are not just educated, but ways in which we are human."

Professor Herbert Marsh made the following statement in the Sociology of Sport Journal in September 1993 based on data collected in the 1980's from 10,613 randomly selected high school students: "... participation in sports favorably affected ... social concept, academic self-concept, educational aspirations two years after high school, attending university, educational aspirations in the senior year, being in the academic track, school attendance, taking academic courses, taking science courses, time spent on homework, parental involvement, parental involvement, parental educational aspirations, taking math courses, and taking honor courses."

Douglas Heath, an educator from Haverford College, has done some of the best research on this topic and published it in *Fulfilling Lives: Paths to Maturity and Success*. He concludes, "School grades and achievement test scores predict moderately well which students will do well in school the next year, but they do not predict which students of average or above-average grades and test scores will succeed in later life. Extracurricular participation is a school's best predictor of an adult's success."

Taken together, one must conclude that if we care about kids' performance in school and their

happiness and performance after graduation, we will supplement our curriculum with a full program of extracurricular activities, including athletics.

If we decide that high school athletics are expendable and won't be offered, we do at least these two things:

First, we condemn the students to less fulfilling and successful lives than more fortunate students in other places may have.

Second, we condemn the community in which they are educated to becoming less prosperous in the future than it is today. We exacerbate school and community problems. Local real estate suffers; local business declines.

If I was moving to a community and had the opportunity to select one school district with a full program of school sports and another with an incomplete program or no program at all, I would

"School grades and achievement test scores predict moderately well which students will do well in school the next year, but they do not predict which students of average or above-average grades and test scores will succeed in later life. Extracurricular participation is a school's best predictor of an adult's success."

choose what most people would choose, and the other communities would suffer.

Some will argue that sports are a luxury for schools to sponsor. They will say, "Let the communities run the programs. It's too expensive for schools."

If we leave sports to the community, then we lose sports as a tool of education. We lose sports as a way to reach and motivate young people.

There is a difference between school and non-school programs. Throughout history, school sports have distinguished itself in the areas of scholarship, sportsmanship, safety and the scope of our programs. We have put academics before athletics, we have required high standards of behavior, we have protected the health of participants, and we have set sane limits on the number of games and the length of travel.

Much of the value of school sports results from the standards we have set for school sports. Many of the benefits of school sports result from the requirements we have made.

If we lower the standards, if we reduce the requirements, if we transfer responsibility to non-school groups, sports will be much less capable of doing good things for kids and they will have no potential of doing good things for schools.

In the summer of 1992, Thomas Boswell, the highly respected writer for the *Washington Post*, wrote a nationally syndicated column entitled, "Save Now, Pay Later." He wrote: "Shakespeare is great. But if you want to run a public school that works, there's no better place to spend your money than on a strong athletics program that involves as many students as possible in as many sports as possible."

And let's leave the final word to Canada. Samuel Freedman, former Chief Justice of Manitoba, has stated this: "A commitment toward intellectual excellence is a good thing. But a commitment toward intellectual and physical excellence is even better. It is in the realization of the latter objective that participation in athletics can lay such a valuable role." ♦

*Reprinted from the Michigan H.S. Athletic Association
March 2000 Bulletin*

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Guest Editorial

High school athletics are considered an integral part of the secondary school educational program. If an athletic program is to be at all

worthwhile, the principal, athletic director, and the coaching staff must accept the responsibility for making certain that the athletes, the student body, and the local community understand exactly what objectives the school is trying to attain. I believe it is imperative that schools establish statements of the general aims of an athletic program. What is the yardstick by which a school determines whether it is "winning or producing winners?" Most certainly, the final score of any given game and/or possession of a championship plaque are indicators of winning. However, these indicators by themselves are quite isolated and tend to produce tunnel-vision when looking at the total program. Unfortunately, all too often the yardstick for winning stops at this point. Certainly a school that produces an athlete who has difficulty adjusting to society may not be a "winner" in the larger scheme of things.

I feel that the two primary things that must be done in building a comprehensive yardstick to measure winning are (1) to determine what is of value in secondary athletics, and (2) to teach a perspective on how athletes fit into the total program. I am convinced that every athletic program should be working toward developing the athlete to behave both as an individual and as a member of a group, improving their motor skills, instilling the desire to succeed and excel, creating an atmosphere that promotes self-discipline, emotional maturity, respect for the rights of others, respect for authority, and, most importantly, the value of maintaining high ideals of fairness in dealing in human relationships.

If secondary athletics are to achieve their potential for making positive contributions at the secondary school level, it is necessary that schools make every attempt to help the athlete clearly understand what the expectations are, and by carefully directing the athlete in appropriate, well-planned learning situations, he or she will master such aims.

*James W. Desmarais
Executive Director*

New Hampshire Interscholastic Athletic Association

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If you had to identify, in one word, the reason why the human race has not achieved, and never will achieve, its full potential, that word would be "meeting."

Dave Barry

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Summary of Meeting

The following is a summary of the Principals' Committee on Athletics March 9, 2000 meeting:

The March meeting of the Principals' Committee on Athletics was called to order at 1:40 pm.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Executive Director's Report was approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer's report was approved. Ms. Hale reported that one (1) member school has not yet paid its 1999-2000 dues and fees. Mr. Lynch stated that he has communicated with a representative from the respective school department and a check is due in the League office on Friday, March 10, 2000.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Lynch referred to several letters and publications which had been placed in each member's folder or filed in the League office.

APPOINTMENT OF NEW MEMBER

The Principals' Committee on Athletics unanimously approved the appointment of Mrs. Denise Boule, Principal, Exeter/West Greenwich High School, to the Principals' Committee on Athletics in the capacity of Director of Girls' Tennis.

FOOTBALL

**Mr. Thomas Mezzanotte
Mr. James Murano**

Mr. Mezzanotte reported that the Football Alignment Committee has met and developed a four-year alignment which was sent to all participating schools in the form of a survey. Serving on the committee were representatives from the following associations: Superintendents; Principals; Athletic Directors; Coaches; Football Officials; and the administration of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League.

Criteria for the realignment process were enrollment [as of 10/1/99], geography, placement in the last four (4) years, and survey results. Of the forty (40) schools participating in football, thirty-seven (37) agreed with the proposed alignment, and three (3) disagreed. Of the three (3) schools that disagreed, Coventry High School and Cranston High School West expressed their desire to appear before the Principals' Committee on Athletics to appeal their placement in the proposed alignment. [A summary of the hearings is outlined later in this report].

In other business, Mr. Mezzanotte reported that the Football Coaches' Interpretation meeting for the 2000-2001 season will be held on Monday, June 5, 2000 at the League office. Further, the first day of authorized practice **for football only** for the 2000-

2001 season will be August 14, 2000 [17 days prior to the Injury Fund games].

SOCCKER

**Mrs. Kathryn Crowley
Mr. Victor Mercurio**

Mrs. Crowley reported that a proposed girls' soccer alignment survey has been sent to all participating schools. The Soccer Girls' Soccer Realignment Committee will review the results at its next scheduled meeting on March 16, 2000. Mrs. Crowley will report the findings to the Principals' Committee on Athletics at its April meeting.

Mr. Mercurio distributed copies of the proposed boy's soccer realignment. He stated that all members of the Soccer Realignment Committee, as well as all participating schools, are in agreement with the alignment.

On a motion made and seconded, the Principals' Committee on Athletics voted 13-1 to approve the proposed alignment in boys' soccer.

In other business, Mr. Lynch reported on a program being sponsored by the National Federation of State High School Associations. The program, entitled "Train the Trainer" is being provided for soccer officials [boys and girls]. Mr. Lynch requested that the Rhode Island Interscholastic League be permitted to pay the \$150.00 registration fee [per official] for one representative from each of the boys' and girls' soccer officials' associations to attend this seminar. The officials have agreed to absorb all other expenses; i.e., air fare, lodging, meals, etc.

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

HOCKEY

Mr. Daniel Sheehan

Mr. Sheehan stated that the playoffs are underway. The semifinal round is scheduled for March 10-11, 2000. If a third game is necessary in any of the divisions, it will be played on Monday, March 13, 2000. The championships are scheduled for March 17-19, 2000 at Providence College [Schneider Arena].

Mr. Sheehan reported that the Hockey Realignment Committee will be meeting in the near future and he will report the findings to the Principals' Committee on Athletics at a later meeting.

In other business, Mr. Sheehan reported on an incident which took place earlier in the season in which a student-athlete was assessed a penalty by the [on-ice] official for leaving the blue line before the completion of the National Anthem. Mr. Sheehan will bring this incident to the Hockey Committee for their review. Further, The Principals' Committee on Athletics will review this issue for all sports.

WRESTLING**Mr. Edmond Lemoi**

Mr. Lemoi submitted the following 1999-2000 Wrestling Championships for approval:

Class Championships

Class A-1	Warwick Veterans High School
Class A-2	Cranston High School East
Class B-1	Burrillville High School
Class B-2	North Kingstown High School
Class C-1	Ponaganset High School
Class C-2	Mt. Pleasant High School

Sectional Tournament Championships

Class B	North Kingstown High School
Class C	Ponaganset High School

State Championships

State Championship	Warwick Veterans H.S.
State Runner-Up	Bishop Hendricken H.S.

On a motion made and seconded, the Principals' Committee on Athletics unanimously approved the 1999-2000 Wrestling Championships.

In other business, Mr. Lemoi reported that the Wrestling Realignment Committee has developed and unanimously approved a proposed realignment consisting of six (6) leagues. A proposed realignment survey will be sent to all participating schools. Mr. Lemoi will report the results to the Principals' Committee on Athletics at a later date.

GYMNASTICS**Mr. Richard R. Magarian**

Mr. Magarian submitted the following 1999-2000 Gymnastics Championships for approval:

State Team Championship:	Mt. Hope High School
State Individual Champion:	Ashley O'Blenis Mt. Hope High School

On a motion made and seconded, the Principals' Committee on Athletics unanimously approved the 1999-2000 Gymnastics Championships.

SWIMMING**Mr. Kenneth Reall**

Mr. Reall submitted the following 1999-2000 Swimming Championships for approval:

Class A Champion:	Bishop Hendricken H.S.
Class B-1 Champion:	Lincoln High School
Class B-2 Champion:	Classical High School
Class Champion [open]:	Lincoln High School
State Boys Champion:	Bishop Hendricken H.S.
State Girls' Champion:	Barrington High School

On a motion made and seconded, the Principals' Committee on Athletics unanimously approved the 1999-2000 Swimming Championships.

In other business, Mr. Reall reported that a proposed swimming alignment survey has been sent to all participating schools. He will report the findings to

the Principals' Committee on Athletics at its April meeting.

BASKETBALL**Ms. Cindy Neal
Mr. Gerald Foley
Mr. David Light**

Mr. Foley reported that the Boys' and Girls' Basketball Realignment Committees have met and developed a proposed realignment. The results have been tabulated and a second proposal has been sent out for boys' basketball. He will report the findings to the Principals' Committee on Athletics at its April meeting.

In other business, Mr. Magarian submitted the following 1999-2000 Freshman Basketball Championships for approval:

Boys Freshman State Champion	Cranston High School West
Girls Freshman State Champion	Westerly High School

On a motion made and seconded, the Principals' Committee on Athletics unanimously approved the 1999-2000 Boys' and Girls' Freshman Basketball Championships.

INDOOR TRACK**Mr. Richard R. Magarian**

Mr. Magarian submitted the following 1999-2000 Girls' Indoor Track Championships for approval:

Division Championships

Dwyer Division	Toll Gate High School
Hird Division	East Greenwich High School
Morris Division	St. Mary -Bay View
Sullivan Division	South Kingstown H.S.

Class Championships

Large Schools	South Kingstown H.S.
Small Schools	East Greenwich High School

State Championship Runner-Up	South Kingstown H.S. East Greenwich High School
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On a motion made and seconded, the Principals' Committee on Athletics unanimously approved the 1999-2000 Girls' Indoor Track Championships.

TENNIS**Mrs. Kathryn Crowley
Mr. John Lyle**

Mr. Lyle reported that he received a request [in the off-season] from Ponaganset High School to move up and from Cumberland High School to move down. He stressed that this is the last year of the present four-year alignment and this move is *not* a new alignment.

On a motion made and seconded, the Principals' Committee unanimously approved the requested change for one year only [for the last year of the present alignment].

Mr. Lyle submitted the 2000 boys' tennis schedule for approval. During the discussion, Mr. Murano stated that Exeter/West Greenwich High School has indicated their intent to join the boy's tennis league. However, Exeter/West Greenwich High School is not included in the present 2000 schedule.

During the proceedings, a letter was faxed to the League office from Mrs. Denise Boule, Principal, Exeter/West Greenwich High School, declaring EWG's intent to participate in boys' tennis for the 2000 season.

On a motion made and seconded, the Principals' Committee on Athletics unanimously approved the 2000 boys' tennis schedule on the contingency of Exeter/West Greenwich High School joining the boys' tennis League. Further, the Committee authorized the placement of Exeter/West Greenwich High School in a division at the discretion of Mr. Lyle.

In other business, Mrs. Crowley reported that a girls' tennis alignment survey has been sent to all participating schools. Based on the responses, Mrs. Crowley submitted a proposed realignment and the 2000-2001 Girls Tennis Schedule.

On a motion made and seconded, the Principals' Committee on Athletics unanimously approved the proposed Girls' Tennis alignment and the 2000-2001 Girls' Tennis schedule.

Mrs. Crowley further reported that the Girls' Tennis Coaches' Interpretation meeting for the 2000-2001 season will be held on Thursday, June 15, 2000 at the League office.

VOLLEYBALL

**Ms. Elaine Botelho
Mrs. Patricia Pitocchi**

Ms. Botelho reported that a proposed [boys' and girls] volleyball alignment survey has been sent to all participating schools. The responses are due in the League office on Friday, March 17, 2000. She further reported that a second survey will be sent to all participating schools regarding changing the girls' volleyball season from spring to fall.

In other business, the Principals' Committee on Athletics unanimously approved requests for two (2) annual volleyball tournaments: the R. I. Volleyball Coaches Association and Koch Eye Tournament and The Community College of Rhode Island Volleyball Tournament. Both tournaments will involve only Rhode Island high school teams.

OUTDOOR TRACK

Mr. Robert Littlefield

Mr. Littlefield reported that the 2000-2001 boys' and girls' outdoor track schedules have been sent to all participating schools. Both boys' and girls' coaches prefer competing on Mondays, which is reflected in the schedules.

It was anticipated that all meets would be held at the new track at North Kingstown High School. However, the facility will not be ready until April 24th. Therefore, it will be necessary to reschedule two (2) boys' meets and one (1) girls' meet. One boys' meet will be rescheduled to Coventry High School and the other will be moved to the end of the season. The girls' meet will be rescheduled to Westerly High School.

In other business, Mr. Lynch reported that he received two (2) letters from Tom Kenwood, Head Boys' Indoor Track Coach at Cumberland High School. In his letters, Mr. Kenwood conveyed the request of Jerry Bonner, a student-athlete at Cumberland High School, to make an automatic external defibrillator at all playoff competitions. Jerry Bonner is a member of the Cumberland High School boys' indoor track team who was recently diagnosed with heart arrhythmia and will require an internal defibrillator implant to start his heart if it stops. As a result, Jerry will never again be able to compete in athletics.

Mr. Lynch will address this issue with the Sports Medicine Advisory Committee.

OTHER SPORTS / ISSUES

✓ **Athletic Director's Association Report – Michael Murphy, President**

Mr. Murphy conveyed concerns of the Athletic Director's Association regarding more involvement in the Interscholastic League, particularly in the realignment process. The athletic directors would like more flexibility in making general comments about the overall alignment and not just about their individual schools. Further, as part of the realignment process, the athletic directors would like to see more consideration given to the number of sports in any given season and the number of students a school can draw from. This issue was taken under advisement.

In other business, Mr. Murphy reported that the Annual Athletic Directors' Conference will be held on Thursday, May 11, 2000 at the Holiday Inn, Providence. This year's conference will include representatives from all Section I states.

✓ **iHigh.com – Craig Blanchard**

At the January 2000 meeting of the Principals' Committee on Athletics, the Committee authorized Mr. Lynch to negotiate a contract with iHigh.com, a company affiliated with and endorsed by the National Federation which provides a website for nationwide high school athletics. Mr. Lynch reported that a contract has been negotiated with iHigh.com. Paul Ward, legal counsel for the league, oversaw the negotiations to insure that the league's rights were protected.

Craig Blanchard, the RIIL webmaster and a representative of iHigh.com distributed information and provided background on how the relationship with iHigh.com evolved. The site is for students, about students, and by students. A state director [employed by iHigh.com] will be assigned to each state association entering into a contract with iHigh.com. The state director will be responsible for compiling information and construction of the site. The iHigh.com site will link to the RIIL site and vice versa.

✓ **Winter Sports Starting Date**

The starting date for winter sports is presently November 20th. However, the Athletic Directors' Association has requested that the starting date for winter sports be changed to the Monday after Thanksgiving. The association believes that there should be more time off between seasons, and the winter season is too long.

A discussion ensued regarding this issue. Inasmuch as representatives of the Athletic Directors' Association serve on the winter sports committees, this matter will be addressed within each committee.

✓ **Sports Medicine Advisory Committee**

Mr. Lynch reported on the following actions of the Sports Medicine Advisory Committee:

- Developing a Sports Medicine Manual
- Conducting an injury study in Field Hockey
- Recommend that mouthpieces be worn for games and practices in Field Hockey
- Recommend that the existing practice/conditioning limitations remain as is

✓ **Coaches Education Program**

Mr. Lynch reported that it was the intent of the RIIL to implement the Coaches' Education Program as offered by ASEP. However, The Community College of Rhode Island has indicated that they are able to provide a three-credit course with the curriculum developed by Drake University. In addition, CCRI will develop a seven-hour program with the content mandated by the RIIL. CCRI would be responsible for advertisement and registration for the course. The CCRI program has been unanimously approved by the Coaches' Education Committee.

On a motion made and seconded, the Principals' Committee on Athletics unanimously approved the coaches' education program as offered by The Community College of Rhode Island.

The March meeting of the Principals' Committee on Athletics was adjourned at 6:40 pm.

→ **FOR YOUR PLANNING** ←

MONDAY, APRIL 3, 2000

Waiver Hearing Committee

(if necessary)

FRIDAY, APRIL 7, 2000

Girls' Basketball Officials' Banquet

6:00 pm

West Valley Inn

MONDAY, APRIL 10, 2000

Football Committee Meeting

6:00 pm

Classical High School

MONDAY, APRIL 17 – FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 2000

Spring Vacation

MONDAY, APRIL 17, 2000

Waiver Hearing Committee

(if necessary)

THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 2000

Passover Begins

FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 2000

Good Friday

RIIL Office Closed

SUNDAY, APRIL 23, 2000

Easter Sunday

MONDAY, APRIL 24, 2000

Principals' Committee on Athletics

1:30 pm

RIIL Office

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26, 2000

Professional Secretaries Day

