**NFHS**

**January CE Newsletter**

**News You Can Use**

**Happy New Year from NFHSLearn!**

We’d like to wish you and yours a healthy, happy and safe 2019!

**8 Million Courses Delivered**

It seems like just yesterday that we announced 7 million courses delivered, but we’re pleased to announce that we surpassed **8 million** over the holidays! We’d like to thank all of the state association personnel, coaches, administrators and partners who have made hitting this milestone such an enjoyable experience.

**New to NFHS Learn**

[**Band Safety**](https://nfhslearn.com/courses/61165/band-safety)

In order to provide a safe environment for students in band and other outdoor performing arts programs, the NFHS has partnered with Music for all, Bands of America, WGI Sport of the Arts, Drum Corps International, and Varsity Athletic Bands to produce a new course: Band Safety. The course addresses heat and other weather concerns, proper hydration, rest and sleep, hearing protection, and other safety considerations. This course is designed for all aspects of the marching arts, including marching band, winter guard, indoor drumline and drum corps.

[**ACL Injury Prevention**](https://nfhslearn.com/courses/61163/acl-injury-prevention)

To help reduce the risk of ACL injuries for student-athletes, the NFHS has partnered with the Hospital for Special Surgery to educate all those involved with sports on prevention, identification and care for ACL injuries. This course will offer an extensive overview of neurodynamic warmup activities that can be used to help promote safer motor skills in practice and competition.

**Coming soon to NFHS Learn**

**Coaching Football**(Revision)

Coaching Football provides a student-centered curriculum in essential football coaching techniques and methods for teacher/coaches at the interscholastic level. This course provides demonstration and teaching tips for both offense and defense and shares practical methods for increasing participation through effective feedback and stress reduction.

**Course of the Month**

**Teaching and Modeling Behavior**

Revised for 2019, this course helps coaches learn how inappropriate behavior affects how they and their teams are perceived by students, fans, opposing teams, and officials. This course highlights the benefits of a proactive approach in teaching and modeling behavior, as well as specific approaches for rehearsing appropriate behavior and sportsmanship.

This is currently being sent to our list of “Education Liaisons” as well as individuals who have served on the Education Committee. Should someone else receive this newsletter? Do you want to spread the news about NFHSLearn? Contact us and we’ll add them to the list!

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Preventing Burn-out

By

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As we start the middle third of our Winter Sports Season, which is traditionally the most grueling month for our Athletic Program, it is important that we maintain our focus on our health and overall well-being. The Winter Sports Season normally last longer and consumes more personal time than the Fall and Spring seasons. This is due, in part, to the increase in scheduled evening contests, long weekend tournaments and the number of off-site sport facilities e.g., ice hockey rinks, swimming pools and bowling alleys.

Over the next several weeks it is common for Athletic Directors to approach their job in a robotic state. Our energy level begins to diminish after weeks of covering on and off site evening contests. Add, to the fact, that this is normally the time of year to finalize our budgets, complete teachers’ and coaches’ evaluations and schedule and attend a sundry of meetings. As a result, even for the most veteran athletic directors, the most mundane office tasks often seem arduous and, at times, paralyzing. The workload is ceaseless and routine to the point of tedium and almost half of our profession will begin to experience some degree of burnout at this time of year.

One-way Athletic Directors can help to combat tedium and burnout is to recruit some assistance. I recommend that AD’s present a proposal to their building Principal or immediate supervisor. The proposal should include; 1.) A log of the numbers of hours spent on the job each week, 2.) A formal request to add a Site Director for occasional coverage of game management responsibilities, 3.) The estimated cost to the district over the course of the season. The additional professional in the department will allow for delegation and lessen your daily work-load. This, in turn, will make the operation of the department more efficient and ultimately more effective.

Personally speaking, I waited much too long to make this request to my Building Principal. Over the years, I found myself absent from nearly every family function; an absentee parent will benefit no one. Therefore, rather than feeling guilty for missing important events throughout the winter months, the addition of a site director allowed me to attend those important family celebrations on a more regular basis. An occasional break from the routine actually helped to prevent burnout and ultimately allowed me to balance my work/home obligations.

And finally, it is always important for Athletic Directors to communicate the purpose and value of education-based athletics with all stakeholders. It seems that our purpose is challenged more frequently during the Winter than any other time during the year. Gaining an appreciation of this philosophical concept is key for our coaches and athletes, parents and fans to understand the important role sports play in a school district and the enormous benefits that students can gain through participation in an education-based athletic program.

**MADISON HIGH SCHOOL - “*HOME OF THE DODGERS*”**

**170 Ridgedale Ave • Madison, NJ 07940 • (973) 593-3125 • Fax (973) 593-3162**

**2018 NIAAA/NFHS Annual Athletic Director Conference**

The 49th National Athletic Directors Conference represents two conferences in one. It consists of the National Federation, (the governing body of HS sports) workshops and general sessions, and the NIAAA (National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association) four-hour Leadership Training Institute Courses. In attendance were 3,500 athletic administrators represented by every state in the union, Puerto Rico, and Canada. In speaking with ADs from around the country, you quickly realize that New Jersey is highly regarded in rules, regulations and state tournament offerings. What other states are just implementing or thinking of implementing, New Jersey has established guidelines for the policies that were being discussed.

The conference was held December 14-18, at the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center in San Antonio, Texas. San Antonio is a beautiful city highlighted by the Alamo and the River Walk.

The conference consisted of 40 one hour workshop sessions divided into five workshop blocks with eight workshops offered during each block. Two general sessions were offered. The first general session featured Dr. Rick Rigsby, President and CEO of Rick Rigsby Communications, and former award winning journalist. Mr. Rigsby shared a number of funny stories pertaining to his life as a sports parent; he also shared a number of moving stories regarding his time as a journalist. Dr. Rigsby had some thought provoking statements such as “It is far more important for today’s leaders to look good than to be good”. Your goal, every single day, is to impact student lives. Make sure we are the best as we can be so we are able to serve our students. Execute the basics every day; Don’t judge; Be Early; Be Kind; Be a Servant, Strive for Excellence.

The second general session featured Tamika Catchings, a former Indiana Fever player, WNBA MVP and 4-time Olympic gold medalist. She overcame childhood hearing impairment to excel in life. Ms. Catchings spoke on the Pursuit of Excellence.

1. **Passion** assists success
2. **Obstacles** – How you push your athletes to overcome them is what matters.
3. **Relationships** matter. Meet your athletes where they are now, not where you want them to be.

When you truly want to be excellent you have to bring it every day. You don’t inspire people by revealing your super powers, you inspire people by revealing theirs. Afterwards, Ms. Catchings was gracious enough to send my daughter a good luck video before her 1st basketball game that night. Very cool.

In addition, the NIAAA offered 36 four hour LTI classes. The conference featured two Award Programs; the NFHS Luncheon, which recognized eight athletic administrators with NFHS Citations and the NIAAA Awards Banquet, which recognized 22 athletic directors for excellence in the field of athletic administration.

The camaraderie of our profession is second to none. Hospitality rooms provided the opportunity to continue discussions, talk shop and make new friends. New Jersey once again hosted the Section I Hospitality Room. Our suite received a visit from New Jersey’s own Franco Harris, which was really awesome. Section I consists of the following states: New Hampshire, Vermont, Maine, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York and New Jersey. In all, eight NIAAA sections comprise the United States.

**USA Football Session – Re-imagining the Game**

In this session, USA FB gave an excellent presentation on the American Development Model ADM that has been so successful with USA Hockey and Lacrosse. Skill development must be the focus over games. There are 5 principals to the conceptual framework for the ADM:

1. Universal access to create opportunity for all athletes
2. Emphasize motor and fundamental skills
3. Multi-sport participation
4. Fun, engaging, & progressively challenging
5. Quality coaching

“Make it a game before it is a sport”

An interesting analogy was “other sports don’t make children play like adults”. Here they should a video of children playing on a full soccer field, ice rink, & tennis court. The ADM model emphasizes that games should be modified. Games should be athlete centered, age appropriate & fun. Vermont has modified Middle School FB to full pads with flag FB. Essentially, Vermont has taken the tackling out of the game but left every other aspect in. Other states have gone to 8-man Fb for sub varsity levels to continue to “save” the sport.

In Talking and Trading Issues, I sat with a group discussion on “Trademark v Copyright Laws” facilitated by Dr. Lee Green. A trademark must be renewed every 10 years while a copyright is the life of an individual artist + 70 years. Collegiate licensing often may enforce their trademarks. Some high schools across the country have received “cease & desist” letters in regards to a HS logo. This could cost a district $1000’s. While these letters have been received, no litigation has been brought forward. The biggest reason for Trademark litigation is “tarnishment” – the diminishing of the brand. The NFHS & NJSIAA protects and covers all NJ high schools in regards to local stores/chains (Walmart/Target/etc) from using your school’s logo or name.

**WORKSHOPS**

**Proactive Approaches to minimizing Negative Interactions between Fans & Officials**

Jeff Atkins (Corydon Central HS) & Jeff Callahan (Bedford No. Lawrence HS) presented an excellent presentation on managing the interactions between officials and fans at our games. It started off with a discussion on why officials leave the profession. Our pool of officials is getting older. Younger officials are not entering the profession. There needs to be a more proactive approach on the sidelines. One youth soccer league has “Silent Sidelines” where parents/fans are not allowed to say anything, positive or negative. One HS had their student section not allowed to talk for one whole quarter. We all agree that behaviors by adults have an impact on students. Signs are a good deterrent for poor sportsmanship:

STOP – Stop Tormenting Officials Permanently

Sportsmanship has a Face- YOURS!

Be an MVP: Most Valuable Parent

The use of social media can be helpful when promoting sportsmanship. Catch them doing something good. One school hands out Pins when they catch someone displaying good sportsmanship. Another school has their site manager hand out t-shirts when they catch good sportsmanship.

**Best Practices for After School Safety**

This workshop was presented by Jay Hammes – Sport Safe Zone & Gary Stevens – Thorton Academy, Maine. The biggest thing I got from this workshop is that every school is unique. Violence does not discriminate size or demographic of schools.

With event management:

* Try to have a single point of entry where all visitors can be checked.
* Have a no-bag policy or a clear bag policy.
* Have your crowd control people “work the event, not watch the event”
* Perform crowd scans for angry behavior
* Position themselves near the spectators
* A great suggestion for the AD/Site Manager is to carry a wireless mic if you have a sound system that can accommodate it.
* When addressing a rowdy/unsportsmanlike fan – Approach calmly and in a low voice ask “How can I help you today?”
	+ “I’m sorry Sir, Can I assist you?
	+ It’s up to you if you want to stay and watch.

In the event of a shooting – Run – Hide – Fight

Let’s keep our athletic events safe and more enjoyable! Athletic facilities are soft targets. 5 of our 14 legal duties (LTI 504) for an event: Plan, Supervise; Safe Playing

Provide medical assistance; Emergency response are the AD’s responsibility. NCS4.com is a good resource for a best practices guide.

Who is on your team? Custodians/PA Announcer/ATC/Tkt Takers/Police

Best Practices

1. Secure the perimeter
	1. Site walk with maintenance
2. Entrance point – Train your personnel
3. Pre-Game conference with supervisors
4. PA – Have a wireless mic/Scripts
5. Have an evacuation drill during a school assembly/pep rally
6. Prepare for worst case scenario

**Coaches Understanding Their Role as Role Models**

This presentation was very good. There was a lot of info packed into the presentation.

Parent phone call: “Please don’t tell my child that I am calling you, he would kill me if he found out.”

AD: “Mam/Sir, I am going to hang up now because I don’t want you to die & I do not want your son/daughter to go to prison”

Leadership Questions for coaches

Why are you doing this?

Why do you coach the way you do?

How does it feel to be coaches by you?

Do I want my kid playing for this coach?

Will this coach “ride for the brand”?

Our coaches are the face of the franchise

As an Athletic Administrator, you lead the 2nd largest program on campus. Great programs require great leadership.

“The man at the top of the mountain didn’t fall there” – Lombardi

“If we don’t teach it, we can’t coach it”

“We over coach and under teach” – Wooden

Ideas that work

* Alumni Games
* Super Saturday
* Coaches write letters to alumni – News letter
* Faculty Appreciation Card Week
* Faculty Jersey Week – Student athlete shares jersey with teacher

Vision, Character, Culture – Your Steps towards Program Success & Excellence by Proactive Coaching

This general presentation was excellent.

Is your culture intentional? Have no regrets. Stay together afterwards. Greatness is never an accident. Can a person see your culture? It must be intentional.

If someone were to watch your practice, what words would you want them to say?

What do you want your teams to look like when the win/lose?

Great teams share a common vision:

* Consistent standards & values that can be articulated
* Collective responsibility for abiding by standards
* Values we agree to all the time & hold each other accountable
* Consistently compete & try to get better
* Are committed 🡪 “to what” Define one’s commitment

There were some great activities for both coaches and athletes in terms of Performance Standards & Relationship Commitments.

8-team Bracket Activity – Reach out for more info

Place Values on a big white sheet of paper & have everyone sign it

We want teams that: Follow & Lead; are Passionate; Love the Moment – “Be where your feet are”; Work as a team; are Energized & Focused

Coaches need to be “Master Teachers”. Feedback must be the norm in this process.

Good, Great, Legacy Teams: Everyone buys in. Your athletes will carry over these covenants for the rest of their lives.

**Sports Law in Review**

This is always an outstanding workshop conducted by Dr. Lee Green, lawyer and professor at Baker University which is located in Kansas. Lee spoke on the following topics: liability with sports injuries, concussion management protocols, Title IX compliance, hazing, free speech rights, social media issues, sexual harassment in sports programs, student-athlete freedom of expression, freedom of religion issues in athletic programs, student-athlete privacy rights, equal protection issues, rights of transgender students, disability laws as they apply to sports programs and federal and state legislation impacting athletic programs and sports governing bodies.

Coaches need to be aware of the legal duties imposed on them by courts related to supervision, technique instruction, warnings, safe playing environment, safe equipment, evaluation of injuries, return to action protocols, immediate medical response, emergency medical response planning, safe transportation, and other responsibilities intended to protect the safety and well-being of student-athletes.

Specific cases discussed which resulted in monetary settlements:

-Student driving an ATV vehicle on campus which was used to move water coolers following football practice struck and killed a fellow football teammate.

-Lack of supervision in a natatorium in which a student drowned during a physical education class. He could not swim and he climbed down the ladder in the deep end.

-Football locker room fight in which no coaches were present.

-Schools are responsible for providing safe transportation to and from athletic venues.

-Student injured in a dodgeball game in physical education class which had too many students and too many rubber balls in a small location.

-Failure of a school district to pay attention to lightning warning which resulted in injuries.

-HS football player returned during the same contest that he received a head injury.

-HS soccer game in which a player returned to action after suffering a head injury.

-Disproportionate number of male sports to female sports based on an equal number of students.

-Asking students for usernames and passwords.

Courts continue to struggle with Freedom of Speech and Expression and Social Media issues regarding schools and students.

Also discussed were topics on genetic history (Sickle Cell), invasion of privacy, equal protection during pregnancy, failure to report child abuse, sexual harassment and hazing, new position statements from the Athletic Trainers Association on Exertion and Heat Index and from FIFA regarding youth soccer, head balls and the number of concussions.

**The following are other workshops that I did not attend but were shared with me by fellow athletic administrator colleagues:**

**Mentoring Coaches for Their Personal Growth**

This was the first workshop of the conference and the presenters were Mike Ellison and Greg Scott. Mr. Elison is the Athletic Director of Christ Presbyterian Academy in Nashville Tennessee, Mr. Scott is a Principal and Director of Athletics at Milan High School also in Tennessee. The presentation was entertaining and informative Mr. Ellison began by describing the different types of coaches. This included the intense more assertive coach, the laid back more observatory coach, the veteran coach that sets an example, the new coach that needs mentoring, the popular coach and the at risk coach. Mr. Scott talked about ways to help the veteran coaches get better and how to help an inexperienced coach grow into his/her position. Both presenters fed off of each other and were very captivating. They discussed the importance of communication a vision and expectations as well as professional development. Both outside of the district and in house PD as well. What I found refreshing is that neither presenter discussed wins and losses as a measuring stick. In fact to the opposite, they claimed that as a coach grows their success will grow with them.

The presentation was a step-by-step guide to being a positive, influential coach that will help the overall development of the entire student athlete. He was well prepared and well versed, and it was a great way to start the conference.

**Creating an Effective Corrective Action Plan for Coaches**

I was present at this workshop in 2017. Joe Piro (Nutley HS, NJ) presented with a Mr. Denny Squibb, an Athletic Director in Fruita Colorado. This was the second year in a row that Denny and Joe presented on this topic and they did an excellent job. They spoke in front of approximately 200 people and the topic was well received. Joe was able to give the attendees some insight on how we operate at NHS and introduce them to our coaching framework. Joe provided examples of the correction action plans that I have used. Mr. Squibb’s personality is different than Joe’s. His laid back dry approach was a great compliment to our presentation.

**Creating Character Based Team Culture**

This was a very informative workshop taught by Rick Lilly from Highland Springs High School and Joe Kimling from Maderia High School. Each speaker spoke for approximately 20 minutes and presented the group of 200 or so AD’s with a number of different programs, ideas and game plans for developing character based team culture. I pleasantly surprised that most of the presentation focused on things that we already have in place or are working to put in place at NHS. I was also happy to see that the goal of presentation was to make these programs student driven. I believe the presenters and I share the same vision that student centered and student led character programs can be and should be applied in an athletic setting as well as an academic setting.

**Increasing Student Participation and Retention**

This session focused on communication, education, and implementation. In order to increase participation numbers and retention presenter Robert Zayas, the Executive Director of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association claims and I believe he is right, that is it important to focus on quelling the myths that have plagued high school sports.

The downfall of high school athletics will be sports programs (clubs) that are not educationally based, club teams are feeding the parents the Kool Aid and parents are buying into it. The earlier you specialize, the earlier you will peak. The earlier you peak, the sooner you drop out. Over 50 % of injuries in middle and high school are overuse injuries. Too much of one sport….eat your favorite meal for six months….you’ll enjoy it at first but soon you’ll hate the experience. What can we do? HS coaches can work together to coordinate summer workouts. Create a weight room environment so all athletes can work out. Provide an award for senior athletes who participate in three sports, these are just a few of the examples that Mr. Zayas focused on.

His presentation tied in with several of the presentations that I observed. Strengthen the idea that good coach, character/education based athletics, positive team culture as well as keeping the “bad things” away from your programs and communicating a consisted, united vision and message, will inevitably strengthen numbers

**Providing a Blueprint for Enhancing Student Team Leadership**

This was a very informative workshop taught by Jim Paddock, Director of Athletics of Minnechaug Regional High School in Massachusetts, and Sister Lynn Winsor, Vice Principal and Director of Athletics Xavier College and Preparatory school in Phoenix, Arizona. Most coaches do not realize that when captains are picked, regardless of how, you also have to provide expectations and guidelines to enable captains to lead and be successful. Coaches have to have ownership in the development of captains.

The suggestion was made for the AD to meet with all head coaches and establish criteria for picking captains. Once this criterion is established, this list should be shared with all captains regarding expectations. Furthermore, captains should establish a list of criteria of what they should expect of head coaches. This list should be shared with all head coaches. In order for success to be achieved, both groups must buy into what is being suggested.

The AD should meet with all captains. This is much easier if your school has a common lunch period. Taking athletes out of class, although valuable, will meet with faculty resistance. Other options include meeting with captains before school or right after school. Regardless of when you meet, refreshments should be served.

Another term to consider is a Student Leadership Council. In this case, if a head coach has not selected captains, a coach can pick two or three players to represent his or her team on the Student Leadership Council. Topics that can and should be discussed are: leadership, hazing, bullying, code of conduct, sportsmanship, conflict resolution, nutrition and training techniques.

During the first meeting, you must define leadership and ask each individual why he or she was selected to serve on this council. It’s important to get the athletes talking. During the second meeting, it was suggested to watch the NIAAA DVD on hazing. Consider ordering Captain Council T-shirts to provide ownership.