



NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION

PO Box 690, Indianapolis, IN 46206

317-972-6900, FAX 317.822.5700/www.niaaa.org

Survey provides new information on high school athletics

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Bruce Whitehead

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (October 16, 2006) — Figures from a recent survey of high school athletic directors conducted by the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA) provide new information regarding high school athletics participation and sports program funding.

Based on information provided by NIAAA members, about 47 percent of all high school students are involved in athletics. These numbers are consistent with the 2005-06 High School Athletics Participation Survey recently conducted by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS).

The NIAAA survey, based on participation data from the 2003-04 school year, also indicated that schools are offering an equal number of opportunities for girls to compete in high school sports. The average number of sports per school was 10.58 for boys and 10.19 for girls. This number has predominantly remained the same for boys the past five years and primarily increased for girls, despite severe budget cuts that many school districts have experienced.

The survey confirmed that more than 82 percent of schools are experiencing athletic budget pressures, primarily related to the lack of support from school district funds. More than 83 percent of the responding schools reported that their athletic department budgets comprise two percent or less of the total school district budget. Amazingly, 40 percent of the schools said that their athletic budgets are less than one percent of their total school district budget, excluding salaries.

“We have always said that athletic department budgets comprise only about one to three percent of an average school’s district budget, and the results of the survey substantiated our previous estimates,” said Bruce Whitehead, NIAAA executive director. “It is unfortunate that school districts do not allocate more funds for athletics, and it is very distressing when athletic programs are among the first to be reduced when schools are forced to make financial cuts.”

Although many schools have experienced budget reductions, 20 percent of the responding schools reported no change to their athletic budgets while 11 percent reported increases. Of the schools experiencing budget decreases, nearly 30 percent were forced to reduce the amount of money spent on playing supplies and equipment, and 21 percent had to cut back spending on uniforms. Almost 70 percent of the athletic directors indicated that their schools operated with an athletic budget of less than \$150,000, excluding salaries and new facilities.

Thirty-six percent of the schools responding to the NIAAA survey experienced a decrease in the amount of funding received from the school board, while 21 percent experienced increased funding and 32 percent had no change. In order to make up for that decreased funding, increases in other forms of funding were common. Topping the list was an increase in booster club funding (55 percent of schools) and revenue from

student activities, sports tickets and gate receipts (50 percent of schools). Other increases were reported in supplemental fund-raising revenue (44 percent of schools), corporate/business sponsorships (33 percent of schools) and revenue from participation fees (26 percent of schools).

School board funds remained the top source of athletic budget dollars, accounting for more than 46 percent of the budget. Revenue generated from student activity and sports tickets and gate receipts make up about 32 percent of the average athletic budget, followed by booster club activities (almost 10 percent) and supplemental fund-raising (about seven percent). While many schools have increasingly resorted to athletic participation fees, "pay-to-play" dollars make up only about six percent of the average athletic budget.

In addition, the survey indicated that approximately 65 percent of schools do not require students to pay any fees to participate in athletic programs. Of the schools that do require participation fees, 80 percent charge less than \$100. Furthermore, in those schools that have implemented participation fees, participation has decreased in only approximately 10 percent of those schools, while participation has either remained the same or increased in 90 percent of those schools.

The NIAAA Athletic Director Survey also determined that gender barriers are being crossed in high school athletics. More than 25 percent of boys swimming and diving head coaches are female, followed by about 14 percent of volleyball coaches. Nearly 14 percent of boys tennis head coaches are female and approximately 13 percent of boys cross country teams have female head coaches. Among girls sports, 14 percent of basketball head coaches are male, while roughly 12 percent of track head coaches and cross country head coaches are male. Approximately 11 percent of girls soccer coaches are male.

The NIAAA currently has approximately 6,000 members. The survey was sent to all members with valid e-mail addresses and had a response rate of about 10 percent.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION (NIAAA): The NIAAA is the largest national organization for high school athletic administrators with more than 6,000 individual members. The NIAAA consists of athletic directors organizations in the 50 states plus the District of Columbia and provides an efficient system for exchange of ideas between the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and state athletic administrators organizations as well as individual athletic administrators. The NIAAA, located in Indianapolis, Indiana, strives to preserve the educational nature of interscholastic athletics and the place of these programs in the curricula of schools. The NIAAA is a full and equal partner with the NFHS.

Amanda Personett, a fall semester intern in the NFHS Publications/Communications Department and a senior at Franklin (Indiana) College, contributed to this article.

MEDIA CONTACTS: Bruce Howard or John Gillis, 317-972-6900
National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)
PO Box 690, Indianapolis, Indiana 46206
bhoward@nfhs.org or jgillis@nfhs.org

###