

MASSACHUSETTS

SECONDARY

SCHOOLS

ATHLETIC

DIRECTORS

ASSOCIATION

**BEING THE BEST YOU
CAN BE - A TOOL BOX
FOR EFFECTIVE
ATHLETIC
ADMINISTRATION**

AD CONFERENCE - MARCH 18 – 21, 2008

TO: ATHLETIC DIRECTORS

FROM: MSSADA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

DATE: 10/19/2017

**RE: HANDBOOK - BEING THE BEST YOU CAN BE - A TOOL BOX
FOR EFFECTIVE ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATION**

WE GAVE THESE OUT IN 2002 AND AT THE MSSADA CONFERENCE IN 2008. IT WAS DEVELOPED AFTER REQUESTS FROM ATHLETIC DIRECTORS TO SHOW THE IMPORTANCE OF WHAT THEY DO. WE HOPE THIS WILL BE BENEFICIAL TO YOU AND THAT THRU YOU WE WILL REACH OUR PURPOSE AND GOAL AS STATED IN OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

THE PURPOSE OF THIS PUBLICATION IS TO GIVE SCHOOL DISTRICTS, ATHLETIC DIRECTORS, AND OTHERS THE POWER TO ENHANCE SCHOOL SPORTS BY HAVING GREATER KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE SPECIFIC OBLIGATIONS AND ROLES OF EFFECTIVE ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATION. WE ACKNOWLEDGE THAT ALL PEOPLE INVOLVED IN SCHOOL SPORTS SHARE IN PROVIDING EFFECTIVE ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATION.

THE GOAL OF THIS PUBLICATION IS TO ENLIGHTEN THOSE WE SERVE. SCHOOLS WHO PROPERLY EQUIP ATHLETIC DIRECTORS TO RUN SOUND INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC PROGRAMS CAN HAVE A PROFOUND AND POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE.

**PLEASE DIRECT ANY FEEDBACK TO DICK BAKER, MSSADA PUBLIC RELATIONS
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THE PROCESS

The MSSADA Executive Committee were given copies of the MIAAA (Michigan Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association) "THE ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATION" and thought that it would be a good tool to develop for Athletic Directors in Massachusetts. A sub-committee was formed and this committee agreed to review the Michigan Model and to use it as the base for our own model. Ken Semelerberger, President of the Michigan Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association, has given us permission to use the Michigan Model. We want to give thanks to all who participated in the development of the Michigan Model and to congratulate them on a job well done. We agreed unanimously that the information from the Michigan Model was outstanding and consistent with our needs in Massachusetts. We have made minimal changes to be consistent with our state and want to emphasize that credit for this booklet belongs to the Michigan Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association.

The NIAAA Code of Ethics used in this handbook was taken directly from the NIAAA Handbook and copied verbatim. We included it here so all athletic directors would have ready access to it.

Success for an individual, a school, a sports program, or a team is based on hard work and constantly examining all that is available. Reinventing the wheel is only good if you have never been in a wagon. We hope you enjoy this tool and that it helps you in your endeavor to be the best you can be!

INTRODUCTION

Participation in interscholastic athletics provides students with positive learning opportunities. Mastering physical skills, exhibiting sportsmanship, developing strategy, collaborating with teammates, creating positive attitudes, exhibiting full effort, making positive choices, handling winning and losing, and focusing on academic success all are valuable and obtainable educational outcomes of participation. Athletic preparation for contests provides numerous teachable moments for students, as coaches assume the teaching responsibility of positive role models. Because effective athletic directors shape the learning environment, the MSSADA Executive Committee has developed this tool box for effective athletic administration.

INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS HAVE CHANGED GREATLY OVER THE LAST THREE DECADES.

- * Athletic programs have grown in quantity and quality. In most schools the number of teams and student participation has increased two, three, and even four-fold from the 80's.
- * Regulations on transfers, tournament participation, summer involvement of teams, in and out-of-season limitations, eligibility, equipment, playing courts, fields, rinks, and pools have become more complex.
- * Title IX has mandated additional opportunities for female students along with program balance and equity considerations.
- * Differing expectations for programs among outside groups, parents, coaches, students and administration have emerged.
- * Behavior models (both positive & negative) have become more visible and influential.
- * Conflict, controversy, and even litigation have been connected with school programs. More coaches have become necessary, and these coaches, both in the system and outside, now require more formal training and evaluation.

- * Effective Athletic Directors enlist the involvement of students, parents, coaches, officials, teachers, administrators, and community members in articulating a vision for the interscholastic athletic program consistent with the educational mission of the school and their league affiliation. The Athletic Director provides leadership for these efforts and subsequently establishes procedures to implement this vision and its values.

- * The goal of the MSSADA is to provide a tool for effective athletic administration that contributes to educational purpose. **BEING THE BEST YOU CAN BE - A TOOL BOX FOR EFFECTIVE ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATION** is intended to provide the leadership, support, and education to make positive student-athlete experiences possible and rewarding.

MISSION STATEMENT

The student-athlete experience should complement the education mission of schools. Interscholastic team membership and competition should be extensions of the classroom for positive learning opportunities.

A positive educational environment provides students with opportunities to grow intellectually, physically, and emotionally. Coaches, as the teachers, are role models to enhance the learning climate of interscholastic athletics. Parents, fans, and students should be partners with coaches and student-athletes in the pursuit of appropriate learning goals.

The purpose of this publication is to give school districts, athletic directors and others the power to enhance school sports by having greater knowledge and understanding of the specific obligations and roles of effective athletic administration. We acknowledge that all people involved in school sports share in providing effective athletic administration.

The goal of this publication is to enlighten those we serve. Schools who properly equip Athletic Directors to run sound interscholastic athletic programs can have a profound and positive impact on the education of young people.

LEADERSHIP

1. Philosophy

- * The Athletic Director should be the primary advocate for the interscholastic athletic program in the school community.
- * The Athletic Director should promote a safe, clean, healthy, and educational interscholastic environment.
- * The Athletic Director should promote equal athletic opportunities for all students, giving full consideration to gender and ethnic equity.
- * The Athletic Director should value professional involvement in national, state, and league affiliations.
- * The Athletic Director should adhere to the standards of the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association's Code of Ethics:

NIAAA CODE OF ETHICS

The Interscholastic Athletic Administrator:

1. Develops and maintains a comprehensive athletic program which seeks the highest development of all participants, and which respects the individual dignity of every athlete.
2. Considers the well-being of the entire student body as fundamental in all decisions and actions.
3. Supports the principle of due process and protects the civil and human rights of all individuals.
4. Organizes, directs and promotes an interscholastic athletic program that is an integral part of the total educational program.
5. Cooperates with the staff and school administration in establishing, implementing and supporting school policies.
6. Acts impartially in the execution of basic policies and in the enforcement of the conference, league, and state high school association rules and regulations.
7. Fulfills professional responsibilities with honesty and integrity.
8. Upholds the honor of the profession in all relations with students, colleagues, coaches, administrators and the general public.
9. Improves the professional status and effectiveness of the interscholastic athletic administrator through participation in local, state, and national in-service programs.
10. Promotes high standards of ethics, sportsmanship and personal conduct by encouraging administration, coaches, staff, student-athletes and community to commit to these high standards.

2. Interpersonal Skills

- * Effective communication and listening skills with staff, students, and community are essential.
- * The foundational character traits of kindness, caring, honesty, and courage should be modeled in all levels of the athletic program.
- * Effective leadership promotes self respect, as well as respect for others and for the diversity of all people.

3. Written Department Policies

- * A mission statement for educational athletics should be developed.
- * Written expectations/responsibilities should be developed for administrators, coaches, student-athletes, and parents.
- * Policies and procedures for risk management, including health, safety, and injury prevention and care should be developed and communicated.
- * Policies for purchasing supplies and equipment, for transportation, and for facility usage should be implemented.
- * Guidelines should be developed regarding team selection, award criteria, appeal, and resolution procedures.

(All of the above should be incorporated into a handbook that is distributed to administrators, coaches, students, parents, & fans)

4. Community Relations

- * The Athletic Director should be considered the official representative of the athletic program in the school community. Ongoing interaction and communication with groups such as Booster Clubs, Friends of Specific Sports, Community Service Organizations, and the media (print, radio, TV) are essential.
- * Public opportunities (pre-season meetings, banquets, etc...) are critical in communicating the function and goals of educational athletics.
- * Enhancing the image of athletics in the school and community is a continuing function.

5. Funding

- * It is essential that the school district financially support the athletic program to help ensure the safe and equitable treatment of students and to comply with all applicable rules.
- * Procedures should be established for appropriate use of athletic funds, including those from local, state, and MIAA sources.
- * Regulations and procedures for individual fundraisers, booster clubs, and corporate sponsorship should be in place.

6. League/State Meeting Attendance and Involvement

- * Professional development necessitates that the Athletic Director and coaches attend required league and state meetings.
- * Involvement in state and national professional associations helps keep staffs updated and allows schools to be represented.
- * Involvement in the MIAA Coaches Education Program, the MSSADA Workshops & State Convention, and athletic director in-services and workshops provides continuing educational opportunities.

7. Reviewing and Enhancing Existing Programs

- * A mechanism should be developed for adjusting the sports offered, which includes a survey of student interests.
- * Equity, financial and facility considerations, as well as coordination with other school and community programs, should be factored into the process.

ADMINISTRATION

1. Education Purpose and Focus

- * The purpose of the athletic program should be to further the education of young people in alliance with the school district's educational mission statement.
- * The focus of the athletic program should be on developing character and skills that prepare young people for life.
- * As instructional leaders for health and physical education, athletic directors promote activity programs that serve the needs of students now and in future years.

2. Student Athlete Academic Eligibility and Performance

- * The student athlete experience should complement the academic mission of schools. School-wide policies and procedures with regard to academic eligibility should be in place and appropriate for the enrollment and participation levels of the school. Academic requirements that supplement the MIAA regulations may be adopted, which could include minimum grade point, a period of ineligibility, a monitoring process, and an opportunity for student improvement.
- * Special efforts should be made to identify "at risk" student athletes and to provide academic assistance.
- * A program that recognizes student academic achievement is important and should be in place with the state, school, and league.
- * Faculty members and athletic department personnel should communicate regularly to support student progress.
- * Faculty members should be welcome and encouraged to become involved in athletics as coaches, spectators, or support personnel.

3. Sportsmanship and Citizenship

- * All aspects of the athletic program should be infused with a view toward the essential components of educational athletics: sportsmanship & citizenship.
- * Effective athletic administration involves defining, promoting, teaching, and modeling sportsmanship and citizenship among coaches, athletes, students, and spectators.

4. Budget

- * An appropriate percentage of the general fund budget should be allocated to athletics. Preplanned money should be designated for essential expenditures such as, game operation, staff salaries, transportation, uniforms, supplies, equipment, maintenance and facility needs.
- * The financial process should include a system for properly dispersing funds, a balanced budget, accountability, documentation, equity and long range planning.

5. Personnel

- * The handling of personnel matters should always follow school district policies and procedures.
- * When hiring staff, an established process, respecting legal considerations, should include recruiting candidates, posting vacancies, identifying job expectations, developing a screening committee, interviewing and making the selection.
- * An effective tool for the evaluation of coaches should be implemented and include a description of the evaluation process, frequency of evaluation, a written improvement plan, and provisions for ongoing professional development.
- * Termination of a staff member should respect the rights of the individual to due process.

6. Administrative Duties Outside of Athletics

- * Based on the school's number of sport teams, staff members, enrollment, Facilities, and evening and weekend responsibilities, athletic directors should be assigned limited additional administrative duties.
- * Supplemental athletic department staff may be necessary when additional non-athletic administrative duties are assigned to the athletic director.

MANAGEMENT

1. MIAA - Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association

- * As members of the MIAA, all schools must abide by the rules and regulations as set forth in the **MIAA Handbook**.
- * Communicating MIAA regulations is essential in educational athletics.
- * The Athletic Director should comply with MIAA requirements, such as tournament entry blanks, eligibility, forms, and survey requests.
- * MIAA programs and initiatives that promote coaches education, good sportsmanship, scholarship, health, safety, and the proper scope of athletics should be supported.
- * Hosting MIAA tournament competitions is a responsibility of all member schools having adequate facilities.

2. Team Communication

- * The Athletic Director should ensure that a good flow of program information exists between the coaching staff, parents and athletes.
- * The Athletic Director should review significant publications such as team rules and written parental communication, prior to a coach's announcing or releasing them.
- * The Athletic Director should update school and district administration on any matters of significance.

3. Contest Management and Supervision

- * Contest management and supervision requires substantial advance organization.
- * Additional staff able to supervise and administer a contest should be provided for multiple-event nights.
- * The role and responsibility of the Athletic Director should be reviewed periodically considering the scope, demands and frequency, of contest management. It is important to note the number of consecutive events (day after day) that the athletic director is responsible for.
- * Financial accountability of expenses, gate receipts, and payment of workers and officials should comply with school district policies.

4. Risk Management

- * An effective risk management plan should be implemented and include components such as insurance, event medical personnel coverage, equipment, and facility inspections, as well as other areas of compliance.
- * Proactive safety information for coaches, parents, and student athletes is part of an effective risk management program.
- * Pre-participation physical examination requirements should comply with MIAA regulations.
- * A Parental Permission Form should comply with school district policies.
- * An emergency response and injury care plan should be communicated to coaches and athletes.

5. Maintenance & Facilities

- * Effective communication with maintenance staff, custodians, coaches, community groups, and administration is essential.
- * The Athletic Director should be included in decisions regarding athletic facility maintenance and planning.

- * The use of athletic facilities by the community is an important consideration and should follow school district policies.
- * Facility and practice schedules should be assigned fairly and clearly communicated to staff, students, parents, and others.

6. Transportation

- * There should be a commitment from the school district to provide safe and appropriate transportation.
- * Communication between the athletic and transportation departments should be timely and efficient.
- * Written policies for transportation should be developed and communicated to all concerned - coaches, athletes, & parents. Policy should cover bus management, behavior, riding and not riding, including process for parents to follow if athlete(s) not going on the bus.

SECRETARY, OFFICE & SUPPORT STAFF

1. Office Philosophy and Policies

- * The athletic office is a communication center serving numerous individuals both inside and outside the school district.
- * Written office philosophy and policies should be developed and in practice.

2. Department Secretary

- * Support for secretarial services should be based on the number of sports, participants, staff, facilities and the duties of the Athletic Director within the school system.
- * Written job descriptions should exist with duties assigned for secretarial assistance to the athletic department.

- * Office staff members should be properly trained within the realm of the job description, based on a wide range of skills and functions.
- * Informal periodic and formal annual evaluation of support staff should occur and be based on a written job description with the athletic director as supervisor.
- * The Athletic Director should be involved in the selection of staff.

3. Office Location and Configuration

- * The Athletic Director's office should be in proximity to athletic facilities and furnished for efficiency. Consideration should be given to work, reception, storage, and meeting areas.
- * The athletic secretary's office should be in proximity to the Athletic Director and to athletic facilities.
- * Confidential information stored within the athletic office requires a secure area.
- * Funds should be allocated for proper operation of the athletic office, including upgrades for computer technology, hardware, and software.

4. Student and Adult Volunteers

- * Properly trained volunteers with specific limited responsibilities may be utilized in the areas of game management details, such as greeting teams, officials and guests, and with event set up and take down.
- * Volunteers should receive proper orientation and training with special attention to applicable school, league, and state policies.
- * Selection of volunteers should be approved by the athletic director.
- * Students with strong office and people skills should be sought for assisting in the athletic program.
- * A workspace should be made available for student volunteers.
- * A recognition program acknowledging the assistance of volunteers is recommended.

EDUCATION & PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

1. Educational Background

- * The Athletic Director should possess a Bachelor's Degree; a Master's Degree is preferred, as well as the CAA (Certified Athletic Administrator).
- * The Athletic Director should possess a teacher's certificate or equivalent experience in education.
- * The Athletic Director should possess relevant experience in the areas of coaching, physical education, sports medicine or athletic administration.

2. Professional Membership & Involvement

- * There should be district and community support for membership, leadership, and service in professional organizations and in committee assignments. Organizations currently providing opportunities for professional growth are:
 - Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA)
 - Massachusetts Secondary Schools Athletic Directors Association (MSSADA)
 - National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA)
 - American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, & Dance (AAHPERD)
 - Leagues or Conferences
 - Other professional, administrative, & educational associations

3. Professional Certification & Continuing Education

- * There should be local school district expectations, support, and recognition for the pursuit of professional growth and continuing education in the field of athletic administration.
- * Obtaining an advanced degree in athletic or educational administration, Certified Athletic Administrator (CAA) endorsement, or training in other leadership programs is worthy of support and is of long term benefit to the school district.
- * School districts should encourage attendance at local, league/conference, state, and national Athletic Director's conferences/workshops.

OFFICE TECHNOLOGY & COMMUNICATION

1. Purpose

- * The Athletic Office is a communication center that serves students, staff, parents, the general public, other schools and the media on a daily basis. Due to the high visibility and numerous events, it is essential that information be communicated in a timely, accurate, and efficient manner.
- * Athletic Office technology should be included in district-wide technology funding goals and updates.

2. Direct Communication

- * Athletic Office telephone services should include a direct line or extension, "after hours" access, voice mail or an answering machine, and a dedicated line for public information services.
- * Delivery and pick up of mail, both within the school system and from the U.S. Postal Service, must be timely and efficient.

3. Emergency & Event Management Communication

- * Telephone services must be available for emergency needs at all competition and practice sites and their location should be designated in emergency response plans.
- * Off-site or remote practice or competition locations may require mobile cellular phones, pagers, or walkie-talkies.
- * Supervision of large or multiple events may necessitate the use of two-way radios for event coordination.

4. Printed Communication

- * An up-to-date office computer and printer are necessary for schedules, contracts, rosters, eligibility lists, and correspondence.
- * Access to and use of student data is needed for eligibility, honors, and monitoring class work. Information should be entered only once in the school data base and extracted as needed.

- * E-Mail & Fax machines expedite the ongoing communication between schools. Time sensitive required information includes items such as rosters, eligibility updates, schedules, contracts, and meeting agendas.
- * Convenient access to a photocopier machine is essential for duplicating schedules, directions, rosters, eligibility, and memos to coaches, teams, and parents.
- * Typewriters, calculators and other less sophisticated office equipment remain necessary for completion of many tasks.

5. Internet Access and E-Mail

- * MIAA forms, entries, schedules, and other documents are on the Internet. Information may be exchanged through computers and e-mail.
(MIAA E-Mail address: miaa@miaa.net & Web-site: www.miaa.net)
- * MSSADA E-Mail address: www.mssada.org
- * An athletic department web site with directions, schedules, and other information can enhance communication within the school community. All schools should also make sure to update school information (coaches directory, school directions, & school standings in all varsity sports) on the MIAA web-site.