

Student Leadership



Every action taken by a student-athlete, for better or worse, has an impact upon their peers, families and communities. Student-athletes are looked up to for their athletic talents, and share an incredible power of influence as visible figures in and out of the school setting. Therefore, athletics and related school activities provide an excellent opportunity to set positive standards and examples of leadership for other participants, friends, families and fans.

Providing leadership training and ongoing support to help student activities participants be positive influences for others is imperative and the MIAA has embraced this challenge. Young people often find



themselves in leadership positions because of how they are viewed by others. Leaders are often selected because of their seniority, skills

and/or their popularity. Great expectations come hand-in-hand with being selected as a leader. Yet, in most situations, these expectations are not directly communicated and cannot be presumed.

How the MIAA Can Help

Student leadership workshops and conferences can help captains and other group leaders explore and develop their leadership skills including, but not limited to, handling situations involving tobacco, alcohol and other drug use. Encouraging leaders to obtain specialized training is not in and of itself a new strategy. Athletes and other school activity participants are often encouraged to attend programs to develop their skills in a particular sport or activity. Attending student leadership training functions may be as beneficial to a leader as further developing his/her athletic or fine arts skills. The skills that students develop through such programs may be used in many areas outside of athletics and other school activities.

“There are little eyes upon you, and they’re watching night and day. There are little ears that quickly take in every word you say. There are little hands all eager to do anything you do. And a little boy who’s dreaming of the day he’ll be like you.”

-Anonymous

The power of influence that these student leaders have demonstrated, with proper guidance and training, has led them to become positive mentors to peers, as well as elementary and middle school students in their communities.

Beginning in the summer of 2001, the MIAA established a **Student Advisory Committee** made up of students from member schools across the state. Recognizing the incredible power of influence that these students shared, they attended the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) First Annual Student Leadership Conference in Indianapolis. Upon their return, they met on a regular basis with the MIAA Board of Directors and Wellness Advisory Committee to communicate their goals and ideas. One major goal of the committee was to focus on their experience at the national conference and share it with other

students in Massachusetts by creating their own statewide Student Leadership Conference.

The MIAA seeks to serve student-athletes at the local, league, district and state levels. Captain's Leadership Workshops and Pre-Season Meetings have been held in conjunction with eight athletic districts, over 40 athletic leagues and the 358 member secondary institutions that make up the MIAA. These workshops have been led by administrators, coaches and Leadership Training participants

to realize the potential for student leaders to have a positive influence in their schools, communities and families.

