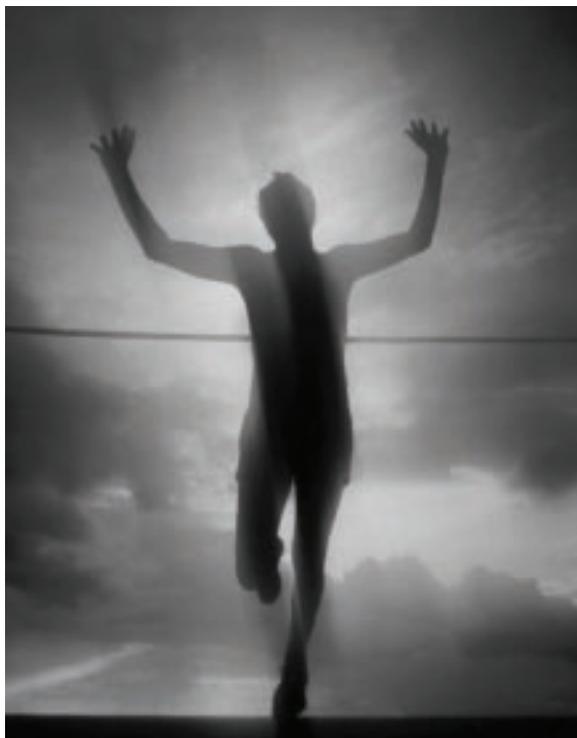
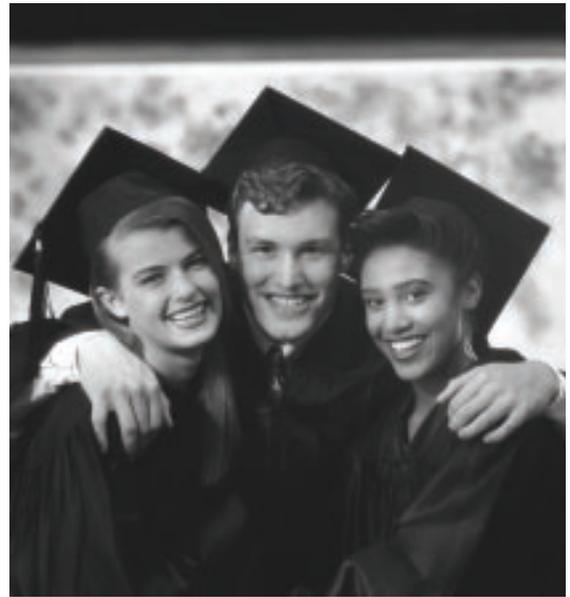


# Athletics & Achievement



The Report of the  
NASBE Commission  
on High School  
Athletics in an Era  
of Reform

**NASBE**

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
STATE BOARDS OF EDUCATION

# The NASBE Commission on High School Athletics in an Era of Reform

## Members of the Commission

(State Board of Education members)

Edward L. Root, Chairman	Maryland
Kenneth Willard, Vice-Chair	Kansas
Linnea Barney	Utah
Jim Craig	Ohio
Richard Farmer, Jr.	Delaware
Joe Higgins	Nebraska
Greg McClain	Iowa
Kevin McDowell	Indiana
Clair Orr	Colorado
Ron Spencer	West Virginia

## Ex Officio Members

Charlene Burgeson, National Association for Sport and Physical Education

C. J. Caniglia, Maryland – Student board member

Robert Gardner, National Federation of State High School Associations

Cathleen Healy, USA Football

Naomi Housman, National High School Alliance

Sarah Kalil, Virginia – Student athlete

## Commission Staff

Michael Hill

Patty Lee

Marsha McMullin

## Presenters to the Commission

Duke Albanese, *Director, University of Maine Coaching and Sports Education Initiative*

Charlene Burgeson, *Executive Director, National Association for Sport and Physical Education*

Robert Gardner, *Chief Operating Officer, National Federation of State High School Associations*

Paul Green, *Athletic Director, Fort Hill High School, Allegany County, Maryland*

Robert Headen, *Athletic Director, H. D. Woodson High School, Washington, DC*

Jack Kvatz, *Athletic Director, George Washington University*

Michael Lanahan, *Athletic Director, Quince Orchard High School, Montgomery County, Maryland*

Greg McClain, *Member, Iowa State Board of Education*

Kevin McDowell, *General Counsel, Indiana Department of Education*

Paula Mirk, *Vice-President of Education, The Institute for Global Ethics*

John Quinn, *Administrator, Howard County Public Schools, Maryland*



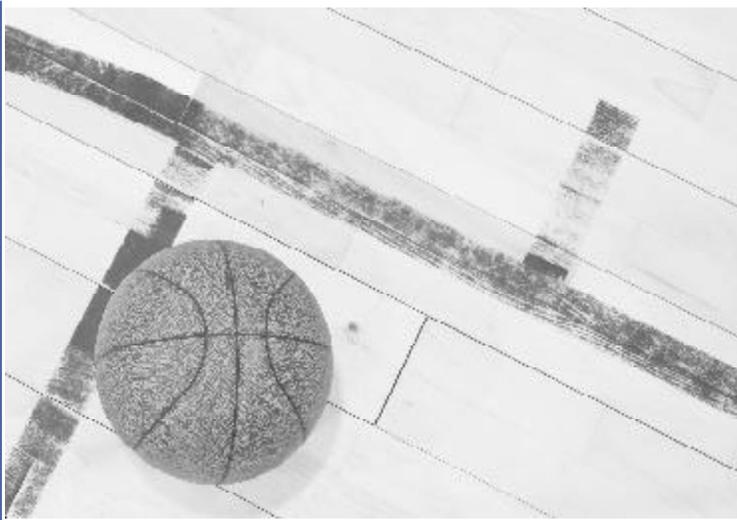
Copyright ©2004  
National Association of State  
Boards of Education  
All rights reserved  
ISBN 1-58434-058-4

Additional copies of this report are available for \$14 each plus 10% for shipping and handling (\$4.50 minimum) from NASBE at 277 South Washington Street, Suite 100, Alexandria, VA 22314. All orders under \$50 must be prepaid. Call 800.220.5183 for more information. Volume discounts available.

# table of contents

Introduction		4
Chapter 1	The Manner in which Athletics Contributes to Academic Success	7
Chapter 2	Athletics and the Whole Student	18
Chapter 3	The Importance of Coaching	23
Chapter 4	Funding for Athletics: Ensuring Equity in Access	25
Chapter 5	State Board of Education Responsibilities	31
Endnotes		33
Appendix A	What Coaches Should Know	35
Appendix B	Rights and Responsibilities of Interscholastic Athletes	37
Appendix C	Rules Governing Participation on Athletic Teams and Extracurricular Activities	39
Appendix D	Sample Codes of Conduct	41
Appendix E	State Board of Education Checklist of Recommendations	43

# Introduction



In January 2004, the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) convened a blue-ribbon commission of national, state, and local education policymakers and committed stakeholders. The Commission set out to assess the state of high school athletics and recommend policies for adoption by states, districts, and schools advocating that athletic programs support, rather than undermine, student academic achievement. It should be noted that in focusing their attention on the relationship between interscholastic athletics and classroom success, Commission members were aware that a number of other critical areas, such as the state of Title IX or the current role of physical

education in the school curriculum, must be left for another day.

## Background

One of the fundamental duties of state boards of education is to ensure uniformly high academic standards and to establish objective measures of student academic performance. Yet few state boards have taken action to guarantee that interscholastic athletics do not take precedence over student academic performance. Given their statewide responsibilities for K–12 education, state boards play a critical role in ensuring that athletics does not compromise the high academic standards

and rigorous academic accountability measures that apply to all schools.

Athletics is one of the largest nonacademic school programs in which students participate. As more and more money enters the picture through scholarships and revenue, and as the importance of a solid academic education grows, the stakes have never been higher for both

mine the public's confidence in the education system. While colleges have taken steps to address these issues over the past two decades, there has been little discussion or even acknowledgment among state education policymakers of the increasingly troubling situation.

The Commission began by affirming the following basic assumptions:



### Mission Statement of the NASBE Commission on High School Athletics in an Era of Reform

*The purpose of high school athletics is to enhance the whole school experience for all students. Academic achievement must always be considered the priority. The privilege of participating in athletics should be recognized as contributing to a student's civic, physical, and social development.*

students and schools. Historically state boards have not exercised their authority in this realm, particularly in determining the academic eligibility criteria for student athletes. There is an urgent need to address this issue as professional sports increasingly encroach upon academics. Indeed, the problems that have plagued college athletics—such as unscrupulous agents, mercenary coaches, questionable recruiting practices, and extravagant benefits bestowed upon players—are now becoming more frequent at the high school and, in some instances, the middle school level.

These practices compromise the school's educational mission and under-

1. All students can learn;
2. All students must be held to high expectations;
3. Academic achievement has precedence over extracurricular activities;
4. Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege that must be earned, not a right that is conferred;
5. Involvement in extracurricular activities adds to the education of the *whole* student; and
6. Athletics provides *every* student with the opportunity to benefit from, and contribute to, the school environment.

Based on these assumptions, the members proceeded to discuss and deliberate the goals of the Commission and jointly adopted the following five charges:

**Charge 1** – The Commission will review the state of interscholastic athletics.

**Charge 2** – The Commission will examine the role interscholastic athletics plays in a quality and well-rounded education.

**Charge 3** – The Commission will seek to determine the state board of education’s proper responsibility in overseeing these activities.

**Charge 4** – The Commission will recommend policies for adoption by states, districts, and schools.

**Charge 5** – The Commission will assess the role and responsibilities of high school coaches.

This report is structured into five sections with each emphasizing an area of central concern.

**CHAPTER ONE** discusses the manner in which athletics contribute to academic success through balanced academic-athletic programs and highlights information on the relationship between a student’s participation in sports and their academic achievement.

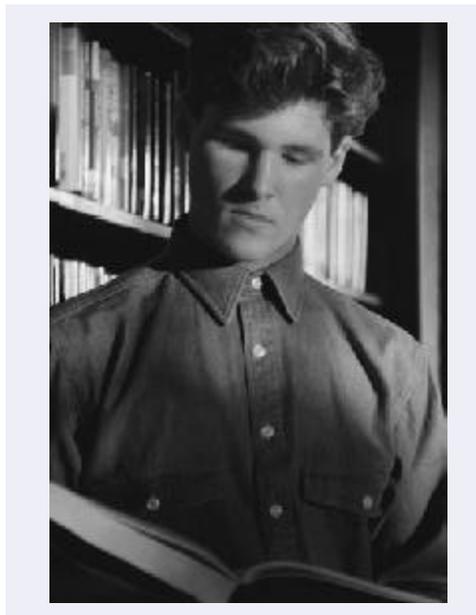
**CHAPTER TWO** focuses on the student-athlete as a *whole* student. Social and health-related topics, such as short- and long-term health benefits, and the impact

of performance enhancing drugs are discussed along with the impact of sports specialization on school programs and its effects on student-athletes.

**CHAPTER THREE** discusses the critical role of coaches and their impact on the student-athlete. Coaching certification, professional development, and the impact on the ethical development of student-athletes is examined in determining the role of high school coaches.

**CHAPTER FOUR** examines the role of the state in funding extracurricular activities and in considering policy implications for the participation of students identified under IDEA and Section 504; students attending publicly-funded charter schools; and cyber and home-schooled students.

**CHAPTER FIVE** brings attention to the often-limited role of state boards of education in overseeing high school athletics and stresses the benefits of developing stronger working relationships with state high school activities associations to address overlapping areas of concern.



# Chapter One.

## The Manner in Which Athletics Contributes to Academic Success

According to the National Federation of State High School Associations, more than 6.7 million high school students participate in high school sports (2001).<sup>1</sup> In 2001, 82% of middle schools and 98% of high schools sponsored interscholastic sports programs. In the same year, 66% of males and 56% of females in middle school participated in sports, and 57% of 10<sup>th</sup> grade males and 38% of females were actively involved at the high school level.

*They are stronger and more skilled, but year-round commitment to a single sport and far-flung travel for more and better competition are isolating our best young athletes from their communities and changing the all-around athletic experience that has been at the heart of American sports for generations.*

Alexander Wolff. "Special Report: The High School Athlete," *Sports Illustrated* (Nov. 13, 2002).

As noted, sports participation is quite high across the nation. In a nationally

representative sample of 14,221 U.S. high school students, 70% of male students and 53% of female students reported participating in at least one sports team according to the September 2000 issue of the *Archives of Pediatric & Adolescent Medicine*.<sup>2</sup>

Among other findings, the study showed that:

- Younger students (65.6%) were more likely than older students (58.1%) to participate in sports;
- White students (65.4%) were more likely than African-American students (55.2%) or Hispanic students (52.5%) to participate in sports; and
- Male students (69.9%) were more likely than female students (53.4%) to participate in sports, and this pattern was consistent across all

three racial/ethnic groups (white, African-American, and Hispanic).

These statistics alone make it important for state boards of education to critically examine the impact of athletic participation. However, participation alone is not the critical factor.

Across the country, more people are asking questions about what is happening to our youth. Newspaper headlines and

*Some of the problems we now have in high school sports mirror the problems they have at the professional and college level. Winning is becoming the most important thing.*

Patrik Jonsson. "High School Athletics Under A **Microscope**," *The Christian Science Monitor* (April 1, 2003).

magazine articles describing the current state of high school athletics have highlighted some of the negative consequences of the evolving nature of interscholastic sports. Through recent trends such as the greater number of students specializing in just one sport and the growth of youth leagues such as the Ama-

*A school is about preparing students academically. Schools cannot be about preparing students athletically for the next level. That's not the mission of a school.*

Julie Mikuta, District of Columbia School Board member as quoted in "Navigating in Unchartered Waters," *The Washington Post* (February 1, 2004).

teur Athletic Union (AAU), the increasing level of athletic talent among high school athletes has raised the bar for skill levels in

both the college and professional leagues. In turn, the desire to recruit and sign elite young athletes in order to maintain a competitive edge has resulted in colleges and universities vying for athletes without regard for NCAA rules. The degree of sports specialization is notably demonstrated in the 2004 National Basketball Association (NBA) draft, where eight high school basketball players, an unprecedented number, were selected as first round picks.

*There is now "an elaborate system (largely driven by the shoe companies) to identify the country's best players as early as middle school and develop them into bankable professionals. Players as young as 10 become blind to college and see the NBA, with a maximum of 450 jobs available at any time, as their primary goal."*

David Noonan and N'Gai Croal. "Fast Break to the Big Time," *Newsweek* (June 28, 2004).

With the influences of youth leagues, college sports programs, and professional teams, the purpose of high school athletics has evolved from one of recreational and community benefit to a profit-making venture for those who reach elite status. To address the changing role of athletics in high schools, the Commission placed its focus on identifying what is known about athletics and academic achievement and began identifying factors that indicate a balanced program.

## ***Athletics and Student Achievement***

A review of the available research on athletics and achievement is striking in terms of the lack of clear information. The two central questions (i.e., Who participates? and How does participation impact academics?) have received some attention. That limited research attention, however, has not delivered clear answers.

Research conducted in the early 1960s exploring a negative relationship between athletics and achievement was inconclusive. This work, however, did launch further studies later in the decade that contradicted this assumption. Studies showed that student-athletes consistently outperformed non-athletes academically, with the gap widening the more athletes participated. Furthermore, studies showed that more athletes anticipated enrollment in a four-year college program as compared to their non-athlete counterparts.<sup>3</sup>

Similarly, research in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s demonstrated greater scholastic success and higher aspirations for college attendance among student-athletes. Research from the 1980s and 1990s documented additional benefits from athletic participation, including higher academic self-esteem, lower dropout rates, and positive social effects, particularly for women.<sup>4</sup>

Results from a United States Department of Education Center for Educational Statistics study of 18,500 students found that those who participated in athletics generally had higher grade point averages than those who did not.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, a 1996 study concluded that student-athletes had fewer discipline problems, were less likely to drop out, were better prepared for post secondary education, and had a higher sense of self-worth than non-athletes.<sup>6</sup>

Unfortunately, most of the studies conducted to date have significant limita-



tion in terms of scope and scientific rigor, making it difficult to draw conclusions. For example, many of the studies were conducted without making a distinction among those who are strongly committed to athletic participation, those who have participated at least once in their high school career, and those who have never

ria: grade point average (GPA); attendance rate; discipline referrals; dropout rate; and graduation rate for the 1994–1995 school year. While initially focused on one school year, additional survey information was obtained for the school years 1993–1994 and 1995–1996.<sup>7</sup> These results are as follows:

<b>TABLE 1. NORTH CAROLINA STUDENT DATA</b>		
<b>DATA</b>	<b>NON-ATHLETE</b>	<b>ATHLETE</b>
<b>GPA (1994–1995)</b>	1.96	2.86
<b>GPA (1994/95–1995/96)</b>	2.01	2.83
<b>Attendance</b> (mean number of days missed out of 180 days; no difference between years)	12.57 days	6.52 days
<b>Discipline Referrals</b>	40.29 %	30.51%
<b>Dropout Rate</b>	8.98 %	0.7%
<b>Graduation Rate (1994/95–1995/96)</b>	94.66%	99.56%
North Carolina High School Athletic Association, <i>High School Athletes Outperform Nonathletes By Wide Margins in Massive Three-Year Academic Study</i> . Available online at <a href="http://www.nchsaa.unc.edu/case/whitley.html">www.nchsaa.unc.edu/case/whitley.html</a> .		

participated in interscholastic sports. Further, bigger sample sizes are needed from each student population in order to draw conclusive results from the data.

One of the more rigorous studies reviewed by the Commission was completed in collaboration with the North Carolina High School Athletic Association. Dr. Roger Whitley, while a doctoral student at East Carolina University, surveyed athletes and non-athletes under five crite-

As can be seen from Table 1, student athletes consistently earned higher GPAs, attended school more regularly, had fewer discipline referrals, were less likely to drop out of school, and graduated at a higher rate than non-athletes.

While the North Carolina study does provide us with some insight into the academic performance of student athletes, it also has significant limitations. Most importantly, the voluntary study utilized

self-selected participants, making it difficult to draw causal inferences of whether student-athletes perform better academically because of athletics or because they are naturally higher performers.

Similar to the results of the North Carolina study, a Commission member presented data from Waterloo, Iowa for

**tion decision makers obtain more data and information on the impact of athletics on student achievement.** This research, data, and analysis should focus on:

- Causal information necessary to differentiate athlete and non-athlete performance for four consecutive years in high school;

TABLE 2. WATERLOO, IOWA STUDENT DATA		
DATA	NON-ATHLETE	ATHLETE
GPA (2003–2004)	2.467	2.943
Courtesy of the Iowa State Board of Education		

the 2003–2004 school year that reinforced the notion that student athletes achieve higher GPAs than non-athletes.

In a more gender- and race-specific study, the Women’s Sports Foundation found that there was significant association between athletic participation and higher grades for rural Latina athletes. These results were inconclusive for African-American and white females in all geographic locations. Dropout rates were significantly lower for rural Latina and white female athletes, but again, these results were inconclusive for female athletes living in urban areas or for African-American athletes in any geographic area.<sup>8</sup>

### **Recommendation #1**

**The Commission recommends that state boards of education and other educa-**

- Differential school performance in- and out-of-season for student-athletes and for all categories of sports;
- Post-high school performance for those who play sports at the post-high school level and those who do not;
- The impact on social and developmental growth from playing sports;
- Participation of high school athletes in community events and community organizations; and
- Disaggregated information of student participation in athletics and achievement according to gender, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and categorical status.

## Characteristics of a Balanced Program

In addressing the proper place of athletics in the high school experience, the Commission clearly emphasized the role of the high school in preparing students for the myriad of opportunities found in today's society. As highlighted in the Commission's mission statement of the purpose of high school athletics, athletics are considered a portion of this preparation for post-high school opportunities and a part of the entire school experience.

A balanced program, therefore, addresses the role of athletics within the context of academics. For most students, the high school experience sets in place the foundation for academic competencies necessary for post-high school pursuits. Since the majority of students participating in high school athletics will never play at either the college or professional level (see Table 5), it is clear that academic preparation must be paramount. In order to promote this emphasis, the Commission makes the following recommendations:

**Recommendation #2:**  
**Athletic programs need to support and monitor athletes' academic progress throughout the student's high school career.**

Clearly, individual high school athletes and athletic programs in general make significant contributions to the vitality of life in the local high school and its surrounding community. This goes beyond "school spirit," as significant financial rewards are present in high school athletics through gate receipts, vending ma-

chine contracts, and playoff stipends for excellent teams. For the larger community, significant segments of the neighboring population identify with the high school almost exclusively via the athletic program, particularly football.

It is the Commission's position that this contribution made by athletes carries with it a responsibility on the part of the high school institution to ensure that academic progress is made throughout the student athlete's career. *It is simply not enough to focus on maintaining grades during the individual sports season.* It is the responsibility of the school district and state to ensure that all athletes receive adequate support and monitoring throughout the school year.

**Recommendation #3:**  
**Athletic eligibility should be dependent on the student's progress towards the successful completion of high school education as defined by the state.**

Eligibility rules for participation in high school sports vary considerably from state to state. Indeed, many states allow school districts to set their own standards. Within this wide-open framework, however, there are three general approaches to eligibility. Each of the following examples is taken directly from published rules available from state athletic associations.

Approach One:  
Maintaining a set grade point average

Examples:

- Florida** – 2.0 cumulative GPA.
- Louisiana** – 1.5 GPA (cumulative) in all subjects taken.
- California** – 2.0 GPA.

**TABLE 3. CHANGE IN PARTICIPATION IN SELECTED HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS, 1980**

<b>SPORTS</b>	<b>1980-1981</b>	<b>2000-2001</b>	<b>CHANGE %</b>
Boys' Baseball	422,310	451,674	1.0
Boys' Basketball	553,702	540,597	-2.4
Girls' Basketball	423,568	456,169	7.8
Boys' Cross-Country	172,270	190,993	10.9
Girls' Cross-Country	90,224	160,178	77.5
Girls' Field Hockey	55,656	60,737	9.1
Boys' Football	937,901	1,023,712	9.1
Boys' Golf	118,390	163,299	37.9
Girls' Golf	32,828	59,901	82.5
Girls' Gymnastics	64,815	21,034	-67.6
Boys' Ice Hockey	25,925	34,652	33.7
Girls' Ice Hockey	56	6,442	11,402.5
Boys' Soccer	149,376	339,101	127.0
Girls' Soccer	41,119	295,265	96.6
Girls' Softball	206,351	373,214	67.3
Boys' Tennis	130,047	139,483	7.3
Girls' Tennis	118,889	160,114	34.7
Boys' Track (outdoor)	507,791	494,022	-2.7
Girls' Track (outdoor)	377,995	415,667	10.0
Girls' Volleyball	297,786	395,124	32.7
Boys' Wrestling	245,029	244,637	-0.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,972,028</b>	<b>6,026,015</b>	
Courtesy of The National Federation of High School Activity Associations (2002)			

Approach Two:Passing a certain number of classes

## Examples:

**Connecticut** – receiving credit at the close of the school year preceding the contest in at least four (4) Carnegie Units of work or its equivalent for which he or she has not previously received credit.

**Indiana** – passing grades in at least 70% of the maximum number of full credit subjects a student can take.

**Massachusetts** – passing grades and full credit in the equivalent of 4 traditional year-long English courses.

Approach Three:Making progress toward a high school diploma

## Examples:

**Georgia** – passing five (5) Carnegie units that count toward graduation.

**Illinois** – passing and receiving 20 credit hours toward graduation.

**Kentucky** – being enrolled and on schedule to graduate.

**Minnesota** – making satisfactory progress toward graduation.

There are additional states (Alabama, Nevada, and Wyoming) that combine

**TABLE 4. WHO SETS THE STANDARDS?**

**34** states set standards by action of the governing board of the state association through action of the membership.

**2** states set standards jointly with the department of education.

**3** states have their standards approved by the state board of education.

**3** states have their standards set by the state department of education.

**4** states have local schools set standards.

**3** states have standards set by the state legislature.

**2** state departments of education set minimum standards; the state activity association sets higher standards.

National Federation of High School Activity Associations

**NCAA Division I Academic Eligibility Requirements:  
13 Core-Course Standard**

If you're entering a Division I college on or after August 1, 1996, in order to be classified a "qualifier," you're required to:

- Graduate from high school;
- Successfully complete a core curriculum of at least 13 academic course units as follows:

<b>English</b>	4 years
<b>Mathematics</b> (2 years of mathematics courses at the level of Algebra I or above)	2 years
<b>Natural or physical science</b> (including at least one laboratory course, if offered by the high school)	2 years
<b>Additional courses</b> in English, mathematics, or natural or physical science	1 year
<b>Additional academic courses</b> [in any of the above areas or foreign language, computer science, philosophy or non-doctrinal religion (e.g., comparative religion) courses]	2 years

- Have a core-course grade point average (based on a maximum of 4.0) and a combined score on the SAT verbal and mathematics sections or a sum score on the ACT based on the qualifier index scale

*Available online at [www1.ncaa.org/eprise/main/parent-prospect/d1\\_standards.pdf](http://www1.ncaa.org/eprise/main/parent-prospect/d1_standards.pdf).*

these approaches into policies that provide more flexibility or offer alternatives to demonstrating eligibility.

It is evident that the focus of the Commission is for high schools to concentrate on academic preparation towards graduation. Therefore, as noted, the Commission recommends that eligibility for participation in high school activities should be tied to an individual's progress toward successful graduation.

As noted earlier, a virtual kaleidoscope of eligibility standards exists for student-athletes. However, there exists in many states a second set of standards having to do with the coursework necessary to

receive a diploma. As noted, these standards may have no relationship to the standards necessary for one to participate in sports at the high school level. Now, a third set of standards has been introduced that relate to those athletes dreaming of playing for a college or university and perhaps receiving a scholarship. It has recently become more difficult to achieve this dream with the upgrading of eligibility standards by the National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA). These standards specify the high school courses and GPA students must have in order to participate as freshmen in college (see box).

Thus, for far too many students, these three—high school athletic eligibility

## ESTIMATED PROBABILITY OF COMPETING IN ATHLETICS BEYOND THE HIGH SCHOOL INTERSCHOLASTIC LEVEL

### Men's Basketball

- Less than one in 35, or approximately 2.9 percent, of high school senior boys playing interscholastic basketball will go on to play men's basketball at a NCAA member institution.
- Less than one in 75, or approximately 1.3 percent, of NCAA male senior basketball players will get drafted by a National Basketball Association (NBA) team.
- Approximately three in 10,000, or approximately 0.03 percent of high school senior boys playing interscholastic basketball will eventually be drafted by an NBA team.

### Women's Basketball

- About 3.1 percent, or approximately three in 100, of high school senior girls interscholastic basketball players will go on to play women's basketball at a NCAA member institution.
- About one in 100, or approximately 1.0 percent, of NCAA female senior basketball players will get drafted by a Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) team.
- Approximately one in 5,000, or approximately 0.02 percent of high school senior girls playing interscholastic basketball will go on to play men's basketball at a NCAA member institution.

### Football

- About 5.8 percent, or approximately one in 17, of all high school senior boys playing interscholastic football will go on to play football at a NCAA member institution.
- About 2.0 percent, or approximately one in 50, of NCAA senior football players will get drafted by a National Football League (NFL) team.
- Approximately nine in 10,000, or approximately 0.09 percent of high school senior boys playing interscholastic football will eventually be drafted by an NFL team.

### Baseball

- Less than three in 50, or about 5.6 percent, of high school senior boys interscholastic baseball players will go on to play men's baseball at a NCAA member institution.
- Less than eleven in 100, or about 10.5 percent, of NCAA senior male baseball players will get drafted by a Major League Baseball (MLB) team.
- Approximately one in 200, or approximately 0.5 percent of high school senior boys playing interscholastic baseball will eventually be drafted by an MLB team.

### Men's Ice Hockey

- Less than 13 in 100, or about 12.9 percent, of high school senior boys interscholastic ice hockey players will go on to play men's ice hockey at a NCAA member institution.
- Less than one in 24, or about 4.1 percent, of NCAA senior male ice hockey players will get drafted by a National Hockey League (NHL) team.
- Approximately one in 250, or approximately 0.4 percent of high school senior boys playing interscholastic ice hockey will eventually be drafted by an NHL team.

### Men's Soccer

- Less than three in 50, or about 5.7 percent, of high school senior boys interscholastic soccer players will go on to play men's soccer at a NCAA member institution.
- Less than one in 50, or about 1.9 percent, of NCAA senior male soccer players will be drafted by a Major League Soccer (MLS) team.
- Approximately one in 1,250, or approximately 0.08 percent of high school senior boys playing interscholastic soccer will eventually be drafted by an MLS team.

Many assumptions and estimations have been made in the process of calculating these figures. Therefore, the reader should not consider these figures to be exact, but instead should view these figures as educated calculations. See endnote for a more detailed discussion of the calculation process.<sup>9</sup>

*This document was re-printed from the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). Available online at [www.ncaa.org/research/prob\\_of\\_competing/probability\\_of\\_competing2.html](http://www.ncaa.org/research/prob_of_competing/probability_of_competing2.html).*

standards, NCAA eligibility standards, and state/district graduation requirements—represent competing standards. It is incumbent upon state board members to understand the differential requirements and consider their impact on the balancing of athletics and academics.

**Recommendation #4:**  
**Communities need to examine the relationship between secondary athletic programs and community athletic programs that exist beyond the halls of the high school.**

Historically, parents of European, Asian, and South Pacific countries enrolled their children into organized, community-based, state-funded sports programs to gain experience in fair competition, teamwork, and achievement motivation. The United States, and later Canada and Japan, however, brought sports into high schools and colleges, building a bridge between community activities and the local school.<sup>10</sup> This bridge has allowed sports to become an integral part of the school community. However, the Commission has universally expressed concern over the eroding relationship between the high school and any community teams, with the influences of “club” sports and the recent push towards sports specialization.

The most prevalent of these “club” sports is the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU). With over 500,000 participants in a variety of sport programs, AAU has established itself as a force in athletics.

The Commission acknowledges a lack of oversight authority. It also acknowledges that a “return to the good ol’ days”

before club sports is not feasible. However, the impact of club sports and the concomitant push toward sports specialization has a direct impact on the high school experience of many students. The Commission, therefore, acknowledges that local communities, school districts, and states need to expressly determine their response to these activities.

The Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) is one of the largest, non-profit, volunteer, sports organizations in the United States. A multisport organization, the AAU is dedicated exclusively to the promotion and development of amateur sports and physical fitness programs. The AAU was founded in 1888 to establish standards and uniformity in amateur sport. During its early years the AAU served as a leader in international sport representing the U.S. in the international sports federations. The AAU worked closely with the Olympic movement to prepare athletes for the Olympic games. After the Amateur Sports Act of 1978, the AAU has focused its efforts into providing sports programs for all participants of all ages beginning at the grass roots level. The philosophy of “Sports for All, Forever,” is shared by nearly 500,000 participants and over 50,000 volunteers. The AAU is divided into 57 distinct Associations. These Associations annually sanction more than 34 sports programs, 250 national championships, and over 10,000 local events.

Available online at [www.aausports.org/default.asp?a=pg\\_about\\_aau.htm](http://www.aausports.org/default.asp?a=pg_about_aau.htm).

## Chapter Two.

# Athletics and the Whole Student

Apart from the primary concern of academic performance by students participating in interscholastic sports, the Commission focused on a number of other issues relating to high school athletes. One of these issues is understanding the role of athletics in terms of the development of the whole student. That is, educators must remember that high school athletes are members of the larger student body, and as such they face the same pressures, rites of passage, and other aspects of growing up as do other adolescents—as well as experiencing pressures and benefits unique to their status as athletes. In considering the athlete as a “whole” student, the Commission focused on the following:

### ***Social Benefits***

Participation in athletics has the potential to build skills and attributes that enhance academic discipline and achievement in a school setting. Engaging in daily practices instills in players qualities of discipline, teamwork, physical fitness, and

organization.<sup>11</sup> Competing in games and events instills the qualities of self-confidence, hard work, and ambition. In addition to building inner qualities, athletic participation also contributes to students feeling more connected to the school, gaining peer recognition, consuming the free time that may otherwise be used in less productive activities, and engaging with parents through their involvement and support.<sup>12</sup>

Although there are many social benefits to participating in athletics, it is important to note that not all students are able to maximize these benefits. Vocational education students in particular are often left out of the athletic equation, either due to lower academic performance in schools, or attendance at an alternate facility that hinders access to after-school activities.<sup>13</sup> Equitable participation by all students, including those in vocational education, special education, and other historically underserved groups, to the degree possible, should be a goal for all schools that provide and encourage athletic participation.

## Health Benefits

Some health benefits of sports participation, such as increased fitness, coordination, and strength, are fairly obvious. As a means of slowing the skyrocketing number of obese children in the United States, athletic participation is in line with the surgeon general's suggestion of children engaging in moderate physical activity for a minimum of 60 minutes a day. Long-term effects of obesity on children include heart disease, Type II diabetes, high blood pressure, and cancer. As a preventive measure, athletic participation should be encouraged to replace the time children spend in front of the television or computer playing video games or surfing the web.

But in a less obvious way, sports participation is also associated with a number of other positive health behaviors. According to a study published in the September (2000) issue of the *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*, female sports partici-

pants were more likely than non-participants to report eating vegetables the previous day and less likely to report smoking cigarettes, using marijuana or cocaine, having sexual intercourse in the past three months, or contemplating or attempting suicide. Male sports participants were less likely to report cigarette smoking, illegal drug use, carrying a weapon, trying to lose weight, or contemplating suicide. They were also more likely to report eating fruits and vegetables the previous day. The same study also reported several negative health behaviors associated with sports participation; however, the percentages of affected students were insignificant.<sup>14</sup>

## Performance-Enhancing Drugs

It is clear that the pressure to succeed has created a crisis in the professional sports community related to the growing prevalence of performance-enhancing drug use in all areas of professional sports.



This pressure has made its way to the college and university level, with the NCAA making a considerable effort to curb the use of such drugs.

*High schools nationwide are struggling with rising steroid use, not just among football players battling for college scholarships, but also among non-athletes who think bigger biceps will make them more popular. But most schools can't afford the costly tests for detecting the illegal bodybuilding drugs. Even those that test for marijuana and cocaine don't check for steroids, which are potentially more destructive.*

Rob Gloster. "High Schools Struggling With Rising Steroid Use," *Associated Press* (March 26, 2004).

Unfortunately, the epidemic has trickled down to the high school level: 3.5 percent of high school seniors now report using steroids—a number that does not include over-the-counter supplements. Steroid use appears to be found much more frequently among males than females, and among white students than African-American students.<sup>15</sup>

## Sports and Minorities

One disconcerting trend appears to be a tendency among some groups of high school athletes to view sports as an "end" rather than a "means to an end." According to W. McMullen, choices for African-American males in particular have to do with a definition of what is acceptable by the immediate peer group. This may place these adolescents in the position of seeing sports as the only acceptable opportunity, negating identification with academic

pursuits. More research is necessary to determine the extent of this tendency and its prevalence in other student populations.

## Sports Specialization

Sports specialization, defined as athletes limiting athletic participation to one sport that is practiced, trained for, and competed throughout the year,<sup>16</sup> has become a growing trend since the mid-1980s with the emergence of travel-team soccer in the spring, according to *Sports Illustrated*. Travel team soccer, joined by travel team basketball, carries the year-round approach to sports to an ever-younger audience. This—coupled with pressure from high school coaches, parents, other athletes, and the media to participate in training year-round—has had the unintended effect of pushing male and some female high school athletes to focus on one sport. In the words of one *Sports Illustrated* article, the three-sport athlete has become an endangered species.

*In a report on the first ever 8-year-old-and-under national Amateur Athletic Union tournament, Bobby Dodd, AAU's president, is reported to have said that the strongest arguments for the tournament are that kids learn sportsmanship and get to participate with peers. Those sitting in the stands, however, are reported to have strong feelings about finding the "best" seven and eight-year olds in the country.*

Eric Prisbell. "Basketball Rankings Coming Out Earlier," *Washington Post* (July 2, 2004).

Yet, common sense and history clearly call for allowing high school students access to multiple sports exposure.



Michael Jordan's experience of being cut from his high school basketball team is, perhaps, the best known example of a "late blooming" talent. By only focusing on those deemed to have the skills early, many students are denied the opportunity to gain confidence, exposure, and skills by playing a variety of sports.

Advocates of specialization tout the advantages of enhancing athletic performance, higher probability of winning competitions, building of self-confidence, fewer scheduling conflicts, and potential college scholarships or professional contracts. Contrary to the zealous coaches, parents, and youth leagues, opponents of specialization voice numerous physical, psychological, and social disadvantages, such as overuse of muscles, physical and mental burnout, and conflict of competing schedules.

Despite potential benefits of specializing in one sport, the principles behind specialization conflict with the fundamen-

tal mission of high schools to develop the "whole" student athlete. Advocates of specialization need to recognize this mission without confusing it with that of colleges, where students are expected to choose a narrow direction for their future.<sup>17</sup> In order to compete with the AAU and other club sports, states need to emphasize the benefits and importance of multi-sports athletes by communicating the advantages and expose the disadvantages of specialization.

***Recommendation #5:***

**State boards of education need to carefully consider policies that allow all students, particularly those in vocational education, the opportunity to participate in athletics.**

***Recommendation #6:***

**State boards of education need to consider programs that will encourage all students, no matter their various talents, to engage in daily physical activity.**

**Recommendation #7:**

State boards of education need to consider policies that test and monitor the use of performance-enhancing drugs by high school athletes. This is of critical importance as state boards work with state activities associations.

**Recommendation #8:**

State boards of education need to carefully consider policies and programs designed to educate students, particularly minority students, as to the limitations of viewing athletics as an end without equal consideration of academics.

**Recommendation #9:**

State boards of education need to develop and encourage professional development programs for coaches to communicate the benefits of multi-sports athletics and the disadvantages of sports specialization. Other ways to encourage multi-sports athletics include the following:

- Arranging schedules for seasonal sports so that overlap is minimized between seasons;
- Limiting the use of school facilities and equipment to in-season sports only; and
- Acknowledging and awarding multi-sports athletes, as well as scholar-athletes, at banquets and awards ceremonies.

## Chapter Three.

# The Importance of Coaching

According to the National Federation of State High School Associations, approximately 750,000 men and women participate in coaching at the high school level each school year (2004).<sup>18</sup> It is clear that these individuals exert considerable influence over the athletes in their charge. With multiple roles ranging from surrogate parent to athletic trainer, from role model to disciplinarian, coaches are critical in setting the standard for behavior, effort, and attitude.

While the sheer number of coaches suggests the need for greater oversight, the fact of their influence also makes it important for policymakers to gain an understanding of the role of coaches. It is also critical for state boards of education to work toward setting standards for these individuals.

### *Coaching Standards*

The Commission was in broad agreement that well-prepared coaches are the key ingredient to a quality athletic program, just as good teachers are the key

ingredient to a quality education. Good coaches are, therefore, good teachers. In that vein, coaches need to undergo the same credentialing process as teachers. Some states are considering both certification and professional development for coaches at all levels. In addition, this shift in focus toward the certification of coaches underlies a broad concern that more and more high school coaches are being drawn from outside the teaching ranks. While statistics are not available, the consensus from athletic directors interviewed by the Commission is that a growing percentage of coaches are not current classroom educators and may never have set foot in the classroom as a licensed teacher.

Thus, both certification and professional development are important concerns. A review of existing standards reveals coaching to require a broad range of skills, only part of which are related to sport. These essential “domains” of coaching include:

- Injury prevention, care, and management;

- Risk management;
- Growth, development, and learning;
- Training, conditioning, and nutrition;
- Social-psychological aspects of coaching;
- Skills, tactics, and strategies;
- Teaching and administration; and
- Professional preparation.

*Additional information on these competencies can be found in Appendix B.*

## Ethics

The second area of emphasis for coaching is the impact coaches have on the ethical understanding of students under their tutelage. Student Commission members voiced strong concerns about this area because the ethical decisions made by coaches have a lasting impact on student athletes.

The ethical values that are most important to adolescents are honesty, respect, and responsibility.<sup>19</sup> The issue for coaches, at a minimum, is to conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with these values.

For the student athlete, coaches who consistently display not only an awareness of these values, but a willingness to make decisions based upon them become powerful role models. This is most critical for the periods of time when adolescents face the multiple “gray” areas of decisions. For example, decision-making between “right

versus right,” (such as a player choosing between short-term or long-term goals) and “justice versus mercy,” are among the most difficult ones adolescents face. Yet, it is these real world issues that serve as the crucible for learning about decision-making, and many times the coach of the student athlete sets the standard for these choices.

### Ethical Values

#### Honesty

- Communicate conditions to qualify to play
- Communicate expectations for practice and game actions

#### Respect

- Maintain appropriate conduct with officials
- Use an appropriate tone of voice in communicating with athletes
- Use constructive feedback

#### Responsibility

- “Say what you’ll do; do what you say” approach
- Maintain focus on academic success for the entire year
- Follow-up

Courtesy of Paula Mirk’s presentation to the Commission

**Recommendation #10:**  
**State boards of education should provide for coaching excellence by reviewing certification and professional development requirements and, if absent or insufficient, establish both certification and professional development requirements for all coaches.**

## Chapter Four.

# Funding for Athletics: Ensuring Equity in Access

The Commission determined that funding of high school athletics is not a state obligation but a compelling state interest linked to the state obligation of guaranteeing equitable participation for all students.

### *Funding*

The Commission established, as a starting point, that there does not appear to be a state obligation to fund interscholastic sports. Indeed, for the most part, funding has been provided by local school districts. However, this does not exempt states, and thereby state boards of education, from an obligation to maintain fiscal knowledge of high school athletics in order to ensure *equity* in access.

Dr. Robert Gardner's presentation on behalf of the National Federation of State High School Associations (The Federation) provided a general overview of high school activities funding. The Federation

estimates that between one to three percent of school districts' budgets are earmarked for sports.<sup>20</sup> Data drawn from the National Center on Education Statistics for the years 1997–1999 indicate that total expenditures for education were \$312.7 billion in 1997, \$328.9 billion in 1998, and \$347.3 billion in 1999.<sup>21</sup> Extrapolating from the “one to three percent” figure used by the Federation, sports-related expenditures would appear to be (See graph on page 26):

Given such numbers, one cannot help but recall Illinois Senator Everett Dirksen's (1896 – 1969) famous admonition, “A billion here, a billion there, pretty soon it adds up to real money.” With published budgets of between three and ten billion dollars, high school sports are indeed big business.

However, this is only part of the story, for the reality is that the majority of money spent on high school sports activities is not contained in school, district, or

state budgets. Interviews with athletic directors, former coaches, and administrators unanimously communicated that the majority of their revenue comes from non-school sources. These resources included gate receipts, booster clubs, student participation fees, school store sales, pouring rights contracts, alumni donations, and other fund-raising activities.

**Recommendation #11:**  
**States should conduct extensive research to quantify the revenue and expenses attributable to high school sports. This requires an examination of all sources of revenue, including those typically not revealed in individual school budgets.**

**Recommendation #12:**  
**State boards of education should consider the impact of fiscal inequities due to the capacity of communities to differentially support fund-raising activities.**

### Equitable Participation

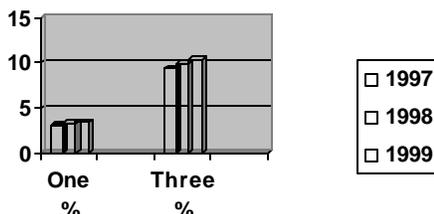
Without a state obligation, there does not appear to be a universal right to interscholastic sports participation (as does exist, on the other hand, in terms of students' right to a sound, basic education). However, once a sports program is set up in a district, all students may seek equitable participation in all activities. In this regard, the state must design a method to assure equitable opportunities for all students. Equity, in the view of the Commission, involves three categories of students.

#### 1. Categorical Denial (Special Education and Equal Rights)

This general category involves students covered under Federal statutes including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with

**Table 5. Estimated sports expenditure for 1997-1999**

Year	1%	3%
1997	3.127 million	9.381 million
1998	3.289 million	9.867 million
1999	3.473 million	10.419 million



\* NCES total expenditure data used  
 \* NFSAA formula used to calculate estimates

Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). In 2000, the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) amended Section 504 to include interscholastic athletics to assist states in clarifying action steps. Under this section, discrimination does not require intent—the mere fact of discrimination is sufficient.

Under both IDEA and Section 504, extracurricular activities are considered a part of Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). Extracurricular activities include athletics under IDEA, and interscholastic athletic competition under Section 504. Under both, athletics are recognized as a means to encourage social adeptness and academic achievement.

State boards should note that there is a distinction between a disability and a qualified person with a disability. If a student is qualified to play, but has a disability, reasonable accommodations must be made. For example, cutting a person from a team because he did not have the requisite skills is not considered discrimination, but cutting an individual based on disability is discrimination.

As noted, if an individual is qualified to play, reasonable accommodations must be made. In general, this test would involve two factors. First, are accommodations reasonable within the context of the activity? For example, enabling a blind wrestler to maintain physical contact with his/her opponent would be considered reasonable within the context of the activity. Within this section, it is critical that state and local boards and schools work with sports officials to increase their understanding of necessary accommodations.

The second, and by far the most extensive test of reasonableness, involves the financial burden on the school system (Section 504 and ADA). ADA is more descriptive and prescriptive, referring to “fundamental alteration in the nature of a service, program, or activity,” as well as “undue financial and administrative burdens” as benchmarks that would excuse accommodation. The general rubric is one of defining “fundamental alteration,” and “undue financial and administrative burden.” Schools would be required to show that implementing the accommodation would be “excessive.” For example, the financial costs of additional training for officials may be considered a reasonable financial burden. On the other hand, paving a cross country track course to accommodate a wheel-chair bound athlete might be considered unreasonable both because of the cost involved and because it would fundamentally alter the nature of the competition.

**Recommendation #13:**  
**States should consider the creation of after-school programs specifically targeted towards special education students.** Such consideration may include:

- More concerted efforts to include students with disabilities in existing programs and services to enable participation in after school extracurricular programs;
- Providing coach and student-specific training on special education needs;
- Training coaches on the mandates of student Individual Education Plans (IEP);
- Involving coaches in the development of students’ IEPs; and



## Pay-to-Play Policies

With school districts under ever-increasing budgetary pressures, more educators are closely scrutinizing the costs associated with their athletic programs and increasingly asking students to pay for the opportunity to participate in these non-academic school activities. Yet the trend toward a requirement that students must “pay to play,” especially for activities that have traditionally been considered an inclusive part of the school experience, raises a host of concerns that have largely been ignored. With the pay-to-play trend showing no signs of abating, some state policymakers are taking a closer look at the broad policy and funding implications of this growing situation.

Schools instituting pay-to-play fees typically charge students a flat one-time fee that allows students to participate in as many activities as they want over the course of the school year. However, some schools charge students on a per sport (or extracurricular activity) basis, meaning that a three-sport athlete can incur substantial costs. Indeed, with reported fee amounts of up to \$600 per sport, costs can be prohibitive. Fee amounts are also based on whether schools use the student-generated revenue as a subsidy—to offset some of the program’s expenses—or if they are intended to cover the school’s entire cost. Typically, students eligible for free or reduced price lunches have their fees discounted or waived entirely.

According to a *USA Today* survey, schools in at least 34 states charge some type of extracurricular or athletic fee. However, some states have policies or laws prohibiting such fees. Legal opinions in California, Nebraska, and South Dakota have concluded

that extracurricular costs must be borne by school districts. Indeed, even if the fees are legal, many believe they are an anathema to the country’s ideal of a free public education, particularly when many educators and parents consider extracurricular activities to be integral to academic achievement and a well-rounded education.

Still, pay to play has spread because school administrators are in the difficult position of having to cancel non-academic school offerings to balance their budgets or having to ask parents to pay to keep the programs alive. Critics counter, however, that school user fees are not the Hobbesian choice portrayed by administrators, but are really the path of least resistance. According to this thinking, school officials are reluctant to ask the community at large to properly fund their schools, via increased taxes, and have instead opted to hit up the parents of school children for what amounts to an additional school tax.

For state policymakers, the pay-to-play schemes raise concerns about ensuring equity not only among students but of districts across the state, some of whom may impose fees and some who may not. For students, the primary issue is affordability—and it is not just limited to families in poverty. Families with a multi-sport athlete, multiple school-age children, or experiencing unforeseen economic setbacks can be significantly (and negatively) affected by such fees. As Stephen Jefferson, a faculty member of the Sports Management program at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, notes, “What it comes down to is the haves and the have-nots. Sports are already elite; with fees they become really elite.”

Among school districts, pay-to-play fees can alter already complex state methods for school financing. Are pay-to-play fees considered school revenue? A quasi-local tax? Are such payments factored into state funding calculations? Will districts that do not have pay-to-play fees feel pressure to impose them to stay financially competitive with districts that already utilize them?

At best, pay-to-play fees are about prioritizing student extracurricular interests based on money and family resources. At worst, they

are about limiting student participation in school activities. Fundamentally, the question is whether extracurricular activities are considered a vital part of academic enrichment and the school experience. With all of the well-documented benefits to the emotional, physical, and intellectual well-being of students who participate in inter-scholastic athletics, the Commission believes that school leaders need to take a careful look at whether pay-to-play policies conform to the school's educational mission and not base their decisions solely on financial considerations.

- Informing coaches and officials of the legal obligations under IDEA and Section 504.

## 2. Cyber and Home-Schooled Students

Cyber and home-schooled students are equivalent for the purposes of this consideration. Three issues are relevant.

### **Enrollment rules:**

A review of enrollment rules across the country reveals that the majority of states do not allow cyber and home-schooled students access to extracurricular activities. However, it should be acknowledged that both groups are seeking to gain greater access to school-based programs. In addition, there is a growing awareness on the part of the school and community that the inclusion of these students serves to enhance school-community relationships. For many superintendents, it simply reflects their belief that they will ultimately be responsible for these students at some point in their academic career and

that stronger ties will enhance this responsibility.

### **Attendance areas:**

The home school district appears to be the logical choice for those seeking participation in high school sports activities. However, there are states that mandate open enrollment, making the choice of participation open to the decision of the parent and student.

### **Eligibility standards:**

It is reasonable for the state to expect that cyber and home-schooled students demonstrate achievement standards commensurate with those of enrolled students. The Commission recognized that this may be demonstrated in multiple ways. For example, participation by the student in state assessments may be utilized in lieu of grades or there could be a contractual agreement between a teacher and a school to demonstrate a student's progress toward a specific level of achievement.



**Recommendation #14:**  
**State boards of education should review current state statutes concerning cyber and home-schooled students to clarify access issues.**

**Recommendation #15:**  
**State boards of education should develop guidelines designed to assist those schools and districts that allow cyber and home-schooled student involvement.**

### 3. Charter and Private Schools

Charter and private schools have not, to this point, been a significant issue for the public school system insofar as high school athletics are concerned. However, sports-centric charter schools may become as commonplace as sports-centric private schools in the future. While state charter-school laws may choose to address this issue within the chartering process, private schools operate well beyond the oversight of the state boards of education.

A current issue is access to interscholastic sports leagues for charter schools.

Participation in existing league activity varies with some locales denying all access and others inviting charter schools to participate in school leagues. Some charter schools have also formed their own independent leagues.

*The Commission strongly recommends that the National Association of State Boards of Education conduct research into the issues, challenges, and advantages of a myriad of topics impacting on student participation in inter-scholastic athletics. These may include, but are not limited to:*

- Title IX
- Pay for play
- The causal relationship between athletics and achievement
- The relationship between the major sports (e.g., football, basketball) and the so-called "Olympic" sports (wrestling, gymnastics, track and field, etc.).

**Recommendation #16:**  
**State boards of education should review existing charter school legislation for content specific to high school athletics. This is particularly desirable in view of the benefits of participation in high school athletics.**

# Chapter Five.

## State Board of Education Responsibilities

The Commission members were firm in their belief that a much stronger working relationship between each state's athletics activities association and the state board of education is necessary. Historically, most state boards have operated independently from activities associations, with little crossover. However, given the importance of the academic-athletics integration, a strong relationship is critical in addressing many of the issues raised in this report.

***Recommendation #17:***  
**State boards of education and state activities associations should establish and build a strong relationship to jointly determine critical issues in the following areas of overlap concerning high school athletics:**

- Setting student eligibility standards;
- Monitoring student participation rates at all levels of sports activity;

- Providing for coaching excellence by reviewing certification and professional development requirements;
- Monitoring the effect of non-school sports and sports specialization on high school athletic participation;
- Working with local school boards regarding equitable athletic participation;
- Ensuring equitable access for special needs students;
- Maintaining a positive relationship with state cyber and home-school associations in regard to athletic participation; and
- Monitoring the prevalence and impact of student transfer and recruiting activities.

***Recommendation #18:***  
**State boards of education should issue a call for research into the multiple factors involved in the interface of academics and athletics.**

### What State Boards Need to Know

#### Total Activities Budget

- Total dollars from tax support
- Funds raised outside of school budget, including gate receipts, club fund raising, sales, student fees
- Total expenditures on athletics including coaching; officiating, equipment, insurance

#### Academic performance of general student body versus athletes

- Graduation rates
- GPA
- Percent entering college
- Post-high school graduation rates
- Standardized tests scores
- Athletes versus other extra-curricular activities

#### Behavioral performance of general student body versus athletes

- Percent referred for discipline
- Average daily attendance (both within and outside of season)

As indicated in the box above (“What State Boards Need to Know”), much of the information necessary for effective decision-making is either absent or based on incomplete or limited-scope research. As happens far too often, in the absence of information, decisions are made based upon personal history or past practice. It is apparent that this is no longer sufficient as we begin to fully understand the impact of athletics.

For much of its history, high school athletics have served the dual purposes of engaging the community and developing the student-athlete. For many communities and individuals, these purposes continue to be the driving force behind involvement. Yet it is also true that issues related to finances, external pressures, and

the changing nature of the American society itself have generated concern as to the role of athletics at the high school level. The Commission strongly urges all state boards of education to become actively involved in the multiple issues related to high school athletics.

*Please refer to the Appendix G Check List for a compilation of all the recommendations stated in this report.*

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> National Federation of High School Associations, *Rate of Participation in High School Sports vs. Total Enrollment* (Indianapolis, IN: Author, 2001). Available online at [www.nfhs.org/scriptcontent/VA\\_Custom/SurveyResources/2002\\_2003\\_Participation\\_Summary.pdf](http://www.nfhs.org/scriptcontent/VA_Custom/SurveyResources/2002_2003_Participation_Summary.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Russell R. Pate, Steward G. Trost, Sarah Levin, and Marsha Dowda, "Sports Participation and Health Related Behaviors Among U.S. Youth," *Archives of Pediatric & Adolescent Medicine* (September 2000): 904–911.

<sup>3</sup> Robert Crosnoe, "Academic and Health-Related Trajectories in Adolescence: The Intersection of Gender and Athletics," *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* (September 2002): 317–336.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Mark Stegman and Larry J. Stephens, "Athletics and Academics: Are They Compatible?" *High School Magazine* (February 2000): 36–39.

<sup>6</sup> James S. Pressley and Roger L. Whitley, "Let's Hear It for the 'Dumb Jock:' What Athletics Contributes to the Academic Program," *National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin* (May 1996): 74.

<sup>7</sup> North Carolina High School Athletic Association, *High School Athletes Outperform Nonathletes By Wide Margins In Massive Three-Year Academic Study* (Chapel Hill, NC: Author, n.d.). Available online at [www.nchsaa.unc.edu/case/whitley.html](http://www.nchsaa.unc.edu/case/whitley.html).

<sup>8</sup> Women's Sports Foundation, *Minorities in Sports* (East Meadow, NY: Author, 1989).

<sup>9</sup> The following methodology used in calculating probability of "Athletic Competition

Beyond High School." To calculate the estimated probability of competing in athletics beyond the high school interscholastic level, data from several sources were combined. First, the estimated number of high school student-athletes participating interscholastically in the sports having a major professional league in the United States was obtained from the National Federation of State High School Associations. To calculate the number of high school seniors participating interscholastically in those sports, the total number of high school student-athletes participating was divided by 3.5. This figure was used because some high schools are three-year high schools while others are four-year high schools.

The estimated number of NCAA student-athletes competing in the sports with major professional leagues in the United States was obtained from the NCAA's 1982–99 Participation Statistics Report. To estimate the number of NCAA roster positions in these sports available to an incoming freshmen class, the total number of NCAA student-athletes participating was divided by 3.5. This figure was used because current player attrition will leave more roster positions open than would be expected due to normal graduation. To estimate the number of NCAA senior student athletes participating in those sports, the total number of NCAA student athletes participating was divided by 4.5. This figure was used because student-athletes participating in these sports often red shirt and therefore are on the team for five years. The number of college student-athletes drafted by the major professional sports leagues in the United States was calculated using the most recent draft data for each league.

To calculate the probability of a high school senior going on to participate for a NCAA institution in these sports, the estimated number of open NCAA roster positions was divided by the estimated number of high school seniors participating

interscholastically in these sports. To calculate the probability of a NCAA senior student-athlete being drafted by a professional team in these sports, the number of NCAA student-athletes drafted into these professional leagues was divided by the estimated number of NCAA senior student-athletes participating in these sports. To calculate the probability of a high school senior student-athlete eventually being drafted by a professional team in these sports, the number of NCAA senior student-athletes drafted by a United States professional league in these sports was divided by the estimated number of high school seniors participating interscholastically in these sports. All probabilities were multiplied by 100 to convert them to percentages.

<sup>10</sup> Lorraine Basinger, "High School Athletics and Academics: Exploring the Path From Participation to Achievement." (diss., University of Miami, 2002).

<sup>11</sup> Stegman and Stephens, "Athletics and Academics: Are They Compatible?": 36–39.

<sup>12</sup> Crosnoe, "Academic and Health-Related Trajectories in Adolescence: The Intersection of Gender and Athletics."

<sup>13</sup> Ralph B. McNeal, "Extracurricular Activities and High School Dropouts," *Sociology of Education* (January 1995): 62.

<sup>14</sup> Pate, et. al., "Sports Participation and Health Related Behaviors Among U.S. Youth," : 904–911.

<sup>15</sup> Rob Gloster, "High Schools Struggling with Rising Steroid Use." Associated Press, March 26, 2004.

<sup>16</sup> Jay Watts, "Perspectives on Sport Specialization," *Journal of Physical Education & Dance* (October 2002): 32-39.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Robert Gardner, "The Role of High School Athletics" (National Federation of State School Associations presentation to the Commission, Alexandria, VA, 2004).

<sup>19</sup> Paula Mirk, "The Role of Interscholastic Athletics: Play in a Quality and Well-Rounded Education" (Institute for Global Ethics presentation to the Commission, Alexandria, VA, 2004).

<sup>20</sup> National Federation of State High School Associations, *Coaching Education in American: A White Paper* Indianapolis, IN: Author, 2002). Available online at [www.nfhs.org/staticcontent/PDFs/cep/cep\\_whitepaper.pdf](http://www.nfhs.org/staticcontent/PDFs/cep/cep_whitepaper.pdf).

<sup>21</sup> National Center for Education Statistics, *Revenues and Expenditures for Public Elementary and Secondary Education, 1997–1999* (Washington, DC, Author). Available online at [http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/pub\\_rev\\_exp.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/pub_rev_exp.asp).

### Additional Resources

Maternal and Child Health Library. 2000. *Sports Participation Among U.S. Youth Associated With Health-related Behaviors*. Available online at [www.mchlibrary.info/alert/alert091800.htm#3](http://www.mchlibrary.info/alert/alert091800.htm#3).

National Association for Sports and Physical Education Coaches Council. 2002. *Rights and Responsibilities of Interscholastic Athletes*. Available online at [www.aahperd.org/naspe/pdf\\_files/pos\\_papers/RightandResponsibilities.pdf](http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/pdf_files/pos_papers/RightandResponsibilities.pdf).

U.S. Health & Human Services. *The Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent and Decrease Overweight and Obesity*. Available online at [www.surgeongeneral.gov/topics/obesity/calltoaction/fact\\_adolescents.htm](http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/topics/obesity/calltoaction/fact_adolescents.htm).

Will McMullen, Ph.D. *Social and Cultural Factors Influencing Career Choices for African-American Males* (Cambridge College). Available online at [www.iaaec.com/projects/secw3.html](http://www.iaaec.com/projects/secw3.html).

# Appendix A. What Coaches Should Know

## **8 DOMAINS OF COACHING COMPETENCIES** *from Coaching Education: Designing Quality Programs*

### **Injury Prevention, Care, and Management**

The welfare and safety of players is the first priority of all coaches. Everyone wants sports participation to be an injury-free experience, and properly trained coaches can reduce the occurrence of injury and minimize the consequences of those that may occur. Good coaches create safe environments for practices and competitive activities, and are able to provide for appropriate emergency care when needed.

### **Risk Management**

Risk management is the role coaches play in minimizing the potential risks inherent in sports participation. Coaches can prepare for their role by knowing the scope of their responsibilities, understanding how parents and players can provide informed consent, and conveying the need for appropriate insurance.

### **Growth, Development, and Learning**

One of the most challenging aspects of coaching is dealing with the varying individual and developmental differences of young players. Players of the same chronological age can have widely different maturity levels. Knowledge about the typical course of physical, mental, and psychosocial development is critically important to the coach's job, and therefore a key component in coaching education.

### **Training, Conditioning, and Nutrition**

The heart of successful athletic performance and athlete safety is proper fitness and sports conditioning. Therefore, coaches need to understand body systems and the science of conditioning for proper training of their players. One goal of sports participation is to benefit the overall health of the individual, in and out of sports. A coach's proper understanding of training, conditioning, and nutrition can help players realize that benefit.

### **Social-Psychological Aspects of Coaching**

A unique aspect of sports is how it highlights the strong tie between the social, emotional, and physical factors of human potential. Coaches play an important role in creating the right environment for nurturing both the human spirit and the spirit of competition. Good coaches understand the role of sports activities in developing a positive and confident person. They recognize the individual differences and needs of players and provide positive encouragement to maximize development of both athletic skills and

sports character. Coaching education programs help coaches develop a positive coaching philosophy by identifying and encouraging leadership behaviors that will support players and the development of life skills for personal and social responsibility.

### **Skills, Tactics, and Strategies**

Many studies show that most of us, especially young people, are motivated to participate in sports because it involves doing something that is fun. A large part of what makes sports fun is the player's ability to participate and experience feelings of competence and mastery of the skills involved. Thus, coaches must know the tactics and strategies of their particular sports in order to teach players the basic skills and give them a functional understanding of how the sports should be played. Winning is not nearly as important to players as being able to participate with a chance of success.

### **Teaching and Administration**

Young people will not continue to play a sport if they cannot achieve a minimal level of success or show skill improvement. Coaches who appreciate the success of their players and help them to recognize their improvements instill a joy of participation and a positive attitude toward sports and physical activity.

### **Professional Preparation and Development**

Continuing education opportunities for coaches may include networking with other coaches, clinics, workshops, professional organizations, college courses, and regular review of websites, periodicals, and related literature. Coaching education should increase awareness of the need for continued professional development and recommend resources for coaching, safety, sports science, and sports-specific information.

*Courtesy of the National Association for Sports and Physical Education. Available online at [www.aahperd.org/naspe/template.cfm?template=coaching.html](http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/template.cfm?template=coaching.html).*

# Appendix B. Rights and Responsibilities of Interscholastic Athletes

## A position paper from the National Association for Sports and Physical Education

### Introduction

Interscholastic sports participation is a developmental, socialization opportunity that helps participants develop sports, self-discipline, and teamwork skills. In addition, participants gain an understanding for responsibilities, positive competition, conflict resolution, and fair play. All athletes should have equal access to these benefits by having full access to involvement in school sports.

Athletes must also accept the responsibilities related to sports involvement. The following rights and responsibilities provide the basis for positive developmental experiences for all athletes as well as successful team experiences.

### Rights of Participants

Interscholastic athletes shall have the right to:

- Make a time commitment to a sport that does not preclude the athlete from participating in other family, school, and community activities that make for a well-rounded life; participation in sports should allow involvement in other activities;
- Adequate time to study and complete assignments for school;
- Safe playing conditions (e.g., equipment, playing surfaces and facilities, environmental conditions) for physical conditioning sessions, practices, and competition;
- Access athletic training services provided by a certified athletic trainer at all functions, including practices, games, and rehabilitation/treatment;
- Expect qualified coaches who have been appropriately prepared in a quality coach education program and are certified at the minimum level required by the state and/or school district;
- Get psychological support, respect, and fairness from coaches;
- Receive information on proper conditioning and nutrition; and
- Participate based on the philosophy of the team/league as well as the right to know the rules of the program before enrolling.

### Responsibilities of Participants

Interscholastic athletes shall take responsibility for:

- Developing skills, camaraderie, fitness, and fun;
- Respecting his or herself, coaching staff, opponents, teammates, officials, school, and spectators at all times;
- Representing his or her school and self in a manner that reflects self-control and is nonviolent and respectful;
- Complying with all school and team rules and policies regarding participation and academic eligibility;
- Avoiding illegal substances, performance-enhancing supplements (legal and illegal), and recreational drugs;
- Attending all practices, team meetings, and competitions or communicating in advance with coaches when conflicts occur;
- Arranging his or her schedule in a way that fulfills both academic and sports commitments;
- Reporting to appropriate adults (i.e., coach, athletic trainer) any injury or aggravating condition that occurs in or out of the sports setting;
- Following all prescribed medical treatment protocols and the rehabilitation schedule when sick or injured;
- Accepting partial responsibility for the team success and failure;
- Engaging in his or her actions on and off the field; and
- Pursuing personal goals in the context of commitment to the overall team goals.

# Appendix C. Rules Governing Participation on Athletic Teams and Extracurricular Activities

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. **Purpose:** Participation in an extracurricular activity in \_\_\_\_\_ is a privilege not a right. The participant must act as a representative of the school and be a positive role model in the community at all times.
2. **Rules of Conduct:** Rules of conduct apply at all times during the school year, on or off school premises, under and not under school supervision. Violations may include but are not restricted to:
  - A. Use/possession of alcohol.
  - B. Use/possession of drugs or controlled dangerous substances. (Except by physician's prescription and notification of coach or advisor)
  - C. Use/possession of tobacco.
  - D. Insubordination or use of profanity to any faculty member, school administrator, coach, advisor, or game official.
  - E. Misconduct and misbehavior in school.
  - F. Misconduct and misbehavior in the community.
  - G. Absences from school, or tardiness to school, announced meetings, activities, practices, etc. in accordance with school and/or individual team rules.
  - H. Academic ineligibility as determined by board of education policy.
  - I. These rules shall be read in conjunction with, all other rules, directives, or policies of this school and the board of education.
3. **Disciplinary Actions:** Violations of the rules governing participation on athletic teams and extracurricular activities will result in disciplinary action ranging from a conference, to suspension, to dismissal from the team or organization.
4. **Appeal Procedure:** Unless otherwise required in the best interest of the student and school, disciplinary action will be enforced only after the participant has had an opportunity to answer charges of violations, including the right to bring his/her own witnesses before the activity sponsor and/or principal. Appeals may be made to the principal of the high school with a further appeal to the superintendent of schools or his/her designee. In the event the disciplinary action has been made effective prior to the completion of the appeal procedures, the appeal procedures shall be completed as soon as practically possible. These rules shall not be construed as granting a right to participate, as the parties agree that participation in any extracurricular activity at this school is a privilege, and as so any participation is at the discretion of the activity sponsor, the principal, the superintendent of schools, or the board of education. These rules shall be broadly interpreted so as to affect the purpose of requiring all participants to act as a representative of the school and be a positive role model in the school and community at all times.
5. **Notice:** Each student participating in extracurricular activities shall deliver a copy of these rules to their parent and such parent shall sign a contract with the school system recognizing their agreement to abide by these rules. Failure to execute the contract and agree to these rules may result in participation being denied to the student.

I have read and understand the above rules governing participation in all extracurricular activities in the \_\_\_\_\_ Public School System for the \_\_\_\_\_ school year.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Courtesy of Allegany County Maryland Public Schools*

## Appendix D. Sample Codes of Conduct

### Indiana High School Association

#### **Rule 8 - Conduct, Character, Discipline**

##### **C-8-1**

Contestants' conduct, in and out of school, shall be such as (1) not to reflect discredit upon their school or the Association, or (2) not to create a disruptive influence on the discipline, good order, moral, or educational environmental in the school. NOTE: It is recognized that principals, by the administrative authority vested in them by their school corporation, may exclude such contestants from representing their school.

##### **C-8-2**

The member school principal is responsible for initiating appropriate disciplinary measures against coaches for improper and unethical practices. A report of such must be forwarded to the executive committee through the commissioner.

##### **C-8-3**

Any contestant or coach ejected from a contest for an unsportsmanlike act shall be suspended from the next interschool contest at that level of competition and all other interschool contests at any level in the interim, in addition to any other penalties assessed.

*Available online at [www.ihsaa.org/about\\_ihsaa/by\\_laws/0304articles.pdf](http://www.ihsaa.org/about_ihsaa/by_laws/0304articles.pdf).*

### Ohio High School Athletic Association

#### **Athletes Fair Play Code**

1. I will participate because I want to, not just because my parents or coaches want me to.
2. I will play by the rules and in the spirit of the game.
3. I will control my temper since fighting and disrespect can spoil the activity for everyone.
4. I will respect my opponents.
5. I will do my best to try to be a true team player.
6. I will remember that winning isn't everything. Having fun, improving my skills, friends and doing my best are also important.
7. I will acknowledge all good plays or performances by both my teammates and my opponents.

8. I will remember that coaches and officials are there to help me. I will accept their decisions, show them respect and understand they have given their time to be with me.

### **Coaches Fair Play Code**

1. I will be reasonable when scheduling games and practices, remembering that young people have other interests and obligations.
2. I will teach my athletes to play fairly and to respect the rules, officials, and opponents.
3. I will ensure that all athletes get equal instruction, support, and opportunities.
4. I will not ridicule my athletes for making mistakes or performing poorly. I will remember that young people play to have fun and must be encouraged to have confidence in themselves.
5. I will remember that young people need a coach they can respect. I will be generous with praise and set a good example.
6. I will make sure that equipment and facilities are safe and match the athletes' ages and abilities.
7. I will obtain proper training and continue to upgrade my coaching skills.

### **Fans Fair Play Code**

1. I will remember that young people play sports for THEIR enjoyment, not to entertain me.
2. I will not have unrealistic expectations and will understand that doing one's best is as important as winning. I understand that ridiculing an athlete for making a mistake is not acceptable behavior.
3. I will respect the official's decisions and will encourage all participants to do the same.
4. I will respect and show appreciation for the coaches and understand that they have given their time to provide sports activities for young people.
5. I will encourage athletes and coaches to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
6. I will show respect for my team's opponents because I realize there would be no game without them.
7. I will not use bad language and will not harass athletes, coaches, officials, or other spectators.
8. I will always show good sportsmanship since young people learn best by example.

*Available online at [www.ohsaa.org/sptsmnshp/default.asp](http://www.ohsaa.org/sptsmnshp/default.asp).*

# Appendix E. State Board of Education Checklist of Recommendations

*The following is a compilation of all the recommendations included in this report. State boards should consider each of the issues and discuss the consequences of each.*

## **CHAPTER 1 – The Manner in Which Athletics Contributes to Academic Success**

### ***Recommendation #1:***

The Commission recommends that state boards of education obtain more data and information than is currently available on athletics and student achievement. The Commission also recommends extensive research, data collection, and analysis to be conducted on the impact of athletics on student achievement. The research should focus on:

- Causal information necessary to differentiate athlete and non-athlete performance for four consecutive years in high school;
- Differential school performance in and-out-of-season for student-athletes and for all categories of sports;
- Post-high school performance for those who play sports at the post-high school level and those who do not;
- The impact on social and developmental growth of playing sports;
- Participation of high school athletes in community events and community organizations; and
- Disaggregated information of student participation in athletics and achievement according to gender, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and categorical status.

### ***Recommendation #2:***

Athletic programs need to support and monitor academic progress throughout the student's high school career.

### ***Recommendation #3:***

Athletic eligibility should be dependent on the student's progress towards the successful completion of high school education as defined by the state.

### ***Recommendation #4:***

Communities need to examine the relationship between secondary athletic programs and community athletic programs beyond the halls of the high school.

## **CHAPTER 2 – Athletics and the Whole Student**

### ***Recommendation #5:***

State boards of education need to carefully consider policies that allow all students, particularly those in vocational education, the opportunity to participate in athletics.

### ***Recommendation #6:***

State boards of education need to consider programs that will encourage all students, no matter their various talents, to engage in daily physical activity.

### ***Recommendation #7:***

State boards of education need to consider policies that test and monitor the use of performance-enhancing drugs by high school athletes.

### ***Recommendation #8:***

State boards of education need to carefully consider policies and programs designed to educate students, particularly minority students, as to the limitations of viewing athletics as an end without equal consideration of academics.

### ***Recommendation #9:***

State boards of education need to develop and encourage professional development programs for coaches to communicate the benefits of multi-sports athletics and the disadvantages of sports specialization.

## **CHAPTER 3 – The Importance of Coaching**

### ***Recommendation #10:***

State boards of education should provide for coaching excellence by reviewing certification and professional development requirements and, if absent, establish certification and professional development requirements for all coaches.

## **CHAPTER 4 – Funding for Athletics: Ensuring Equity in Access**

### ***Recommendation #11:***

States should conduct extensive research to quantify the revenue and expenses attributable to high school sports. This requires an examination of all sources of revenue, including those typically not revealed in individual school budgets.

### ***Recommendation #12:***

State boards of education should consider the impact of fiscal inequities due to the capacity of communities to differentially support fund-raising activities.

**Recommendation #13:**

States should consider the creation of after-school programs specifically targeted towards special education students.

**Recommendation #14:**

State boards of education should review current state statutes concerning cyber and home-schooled students to clarify access issues.

**Recommendation #15:**

State boards of education should develop guidelines designed to assist those schools and districts that allow cyber and home-schooled student involvement.

**Recommendation #16:**

State boards of education should review existing charter school legislation for content specific to high school athletics.

**CHAPTER 5 – State Board of Education Responsibilities****Recommendation #17:**

State boards of education and state activities associations should establish and build a strong relationship to jointly determine critical issues in the following areas of overlap concerning high school athletics:

- Setting student eligibility standards;
- Monitoring student participation rates at all levels of sports activity;
- Providing for coaching excellence by reviewing certification and professional development requirements;
- Monitoring the effect of non-school sports and sports specialization on high school athletic participation;
- Working with local school boards regarding equitable athletic participation;
- Ensuring equitable access for special needs students;
- Maintaining a positive relationship with state cyber and home-school associations in regard to athletic participation; and
- Monitoring the prevalence and impact of student transfer and recruiting activities.

**Recommendation #18:**

State boards of education should issue a call for research into the multiple factors involved in the interface of academics and athletics.