



ILLINOIS ATHLETIC DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION

A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION



Continuous collaboration with the



CONTINUING EDUCATION

Stay current in the ever-changing landscape of education-based athletics through targeted learning and leadership development.



NETWORKING STATE WIDE AND NATIONALLY

Connect and engage with athletic directors across Illinois and throughout the nation, building a strong support system at every level of our profession.

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Foster a culture of positive, professional collaboration with peers who understand the unique challenges of our role.

IADA Membership Benefits

Monthly Webinars

Engaging, relevant sessions designed to support growth and success as an athletic administrator.

Annual State Conference

Held in East Peoria, this event offers unmatched opportunities for professional development, networking, and fellowship with the best ADs in Illinois.

Dual Membership with the NIAAA

IADA membership includes automatic enrollment in the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA) — giving ADs access to national-level resources and benefits.

Continuing Education & Certification

Opportunities to earn LTI credit, pursue certification (RAA, CAA, CMAA), and further develop your leadership and management skills.



For more information, visit our website: <https://www.illinoisad.org/>





ILLINOIS ATHLETIC DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION



Why should Illinois Athletic Directors become a member of the IADA/NIAAA?

The **Illinois Athletic Directors Association (IADA)** values your expertise and invites you to join our mission to advocate for school athletic programs across the state. As an organization committed to educational-based athletics, the IADA empowers athletic administrators by offering leadership development, mentorship opportunities, and extensive resources for personal and professional growth.

By joining the IADA, you are also enrolled in the **National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA)**. As a **dual membership state**, Illinois now offers its athletic directors expanded access to national-level networking, professional development, and certification opportunities. This dual membership ensures you are equipped with the tools, training, and community to thrive in your role and help shape the future of high school athletics.

1. Educational Leadership Opportunities

- The IADA is a professional organization **created by Athletic Directors for Athletic Directors**.
- Members receive **peer-nominated recognition** through a variety of award programs.
- Opportunities to **serve on IADA boards and committees**, contributing to the direction of the association.
- **Mentorship programs** connect new ADs with experienced leaders across the state.
- **First-year ADs** who attend the New AD Workshop during the Summer Retreat receive **a free one-year IADA membership**.
- Gain access to a network of **active and retired ADs** with decades of experience and insight to share.

2. Professional Development

- The Illinois Athletic Directors Association (IADA) is recognized by ISBE as an approved provider of professional development. We offer a range of opportunities to support the growth and advancement of our members, including:
 - **Administrator Academies** held throughout the state.
 - **CPDUs** awarded for attendance at annual meetings, webinars, and conferences.
 - **CPDUs** granted for serving as a presenter.
 - **IADA District and Division Fall Meetings** to discuss upcoming IHSA by-law proposals, amendments, and statewide concerns.
 - **Monthly Professional Development Series** on the first Thursday of each month at 1 p.m.
 - **Monthly IADA/IHSA Joint Information Webinars** on the third Wednesday of each month at 1 p.m.
- The IADA offers a **Certification Cohort** designed to support members pursuing the next level of NIAAA certification. Participants are paired with a mentor who provides guidance throughout the certification process. Both mentors and mentees earn professional development hours for their involvement.

3. NIAAA Certification

- Members have access to the accredited Leadership Training Courses through the NIAAA certification program. Courses are available in various formats to accommodate different needs, including:
 - Classes taught at the **annual state conference** and **summer retreat**.
 - Classes offered at **remote locations** throughout the year.
- IADA provides support and assistance for members pursuing certification at multiple levels, including:
 - Registered Athletic Administrator (RAA)
 - Registered Middle School Administrator (RMSA)
 - Certified Athletic Administrator (CAA)
 - Certified Master Athletic Administrator (CMAA)

4. Annual State Conference

- The IADA Annual State Conference takes place in March. This event offers a valuable opportunity for professional growth and connection, featuring:

- Leadership Training Courses.
- Mini sessions on current topics, available for attendance or presentation.
- Awards and recognition ceremonies.
- Networking opportunities with athletic directors from across the state.

5. Annual Summer Retreat

- The IADA Annual Summer Retreat is held each July in Bloomington and offers an excellent setting for professional development and networking, including:
 - Leadership Training Courses.
 - Networking opportunities with athletic directors from across the state.
 - A special Day One meeting with the IHSA and IADA exclusively for new athletic directors.
 - A golf outing and social event featuring a guest speaker on the first day of the retreat.

6. Connection with the IHSA

- The IADA maintains a strong and collaborative relationship with the Illinois High School Association (IHSA), ensuring that the voice of athletic directors is heard at the state level. Key points of connection include:
 - Monthly virtual meetings between IADA and IHSA leadership.
 - IHSA officials attend IADA Division meetings to provide updates and gather feedback.
 - IHSA representatives participate in IADA Board meetings.
 - IHSA-led presentations at the Annual State Conference.
 - Co-hosting the **New Athletic Director Workshop** each summer.
- The strength of our organization lies in its membership. **The more members we have, the stronger our collective voice. There is power in numbers.**

7. Personal Benefits of Joining the IADA

- Membership in the Illinois Athletic Directors Association (IADA) provides a wide range of personal and professional benefits, including:
 - Opportunities to pursue **leadership roles** at the district, division, and state levels.
 - **Eligibility for award programs** recognizing professional excellence.
 - Access to the **statewide list-serve** for real-time communication and collaboration.
 - Access to **research** highlighting the value of education-based athletics.
 - **Direct communication** with members through IADA's active social media platforms.
 - Ability to **nominate students** annually for the prestigious *John Van Fleet Scholarship*.
 - Opportunities for **state and national recognition** through IADA and NIAAA awards.
 - A **\$2,000 term life insurance policy** for active athletic administrators working in Illinois school districts (benefit paid to the surviving spouse or estate).
 - **\$1,000,000 in liability protection** for active athletic administrators working in Illinois school districts.

8. IADA Website Benefits - www.illinoisad.org

- The IADA website serves as a central hub for members, providing easy access to important information and resources, including:
 - Up-to-date information on IADA **programs and offerings**
 - **Registration** for the Annual State Conference and Summer Retreat
 - Access to **archived IADA newsletters**
 - Listings of upcoming **webinars and in-person professional development** opportunities, including Leadership Training Courses
 - **Membership downloads** and the ability to **update your contact information**.

BECOME A MEMBER TODAY! - <https://iada.finalforms-amp.com/>

Becoming a member of one of the nation's premier state athletic director associations offers tremendous **professional, personal, and financial benefits**. Whether you're new to the role or a seasoned AD, the IADA provides the resources and support you need to thrive.

How to Join: First-Time Users: Begin your registration by clicking the **Final Forms** link above.

- **Existing Members:** Click "**Log In**" to access and renew your account.
- Become an active member and start experiencing the many advantages of this outstanding professional organization.

ILLINOIS ATHLETIC DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION

SAVE THE DATES:

THE IADA STATE CONFERENCE

The Annual State
Conference will be held
on Saturday, March 14 -
Tuesday, March 17, 2026
in East Peoria

**BECOME A
MEMBER NOW**



**3 GENERAL SESSIONS
9 LTC COURSES
10+ HOURS OF PD
15 MINI-SESSIONS**

Registration will open in
January 2026!

<https://www.illinoisad.org/>



LEADERSHIP

MANAGEMENT

EDUCATION

SUPPORT

COMMUNICATION

THE ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATION

**ILLINOIS
ATHLETIC
DIRECTORS**

ASSOCIATION

www.illinoisad.org



Illinois Athletic Directors Association

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MISSION STATEMENT

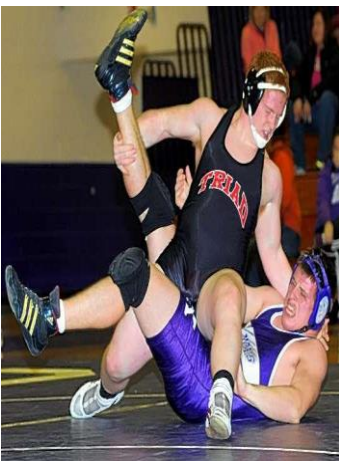
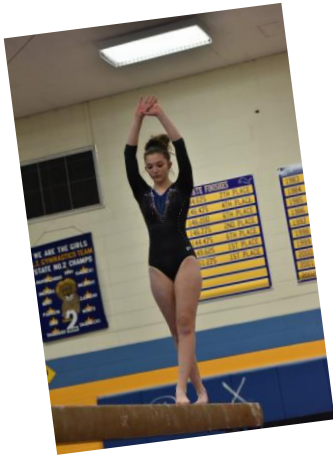
The student-athlete experience should complement the educational mission of schools. Interscholastic team membership and competition should be extensions of the classroom for positive learning opportunities.

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

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

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





INTRODUCTION

The goal of this project is to provide a plan for effective athletic administration that contributes to educational purpose. "The Elements of Effective Athletic Administration" is intended to provide leadership, support, and education to make a positive student-athlete experiences possible and rewarding.

Participation in interscholastic athletics provides students with positive learning opportunities. Mastering physical skills, exhibiting sportsmanship, developing strategy, collaborating with teammates, creating positive attitudes, exhibiting full effort, making positive choices, handling winning and losing, and focusing on academic success all are valuable and attainable educational outcomes of participation. Athletic preparation for contests provides numerous teachable moments for students, particularly when coaches assume the teaching responsibility of positive role models. Because effective directors of athletics shape the learning environment, the IADA members have collaborated in articulating the elements of effective athletic administration.

CHANGING LANDSCAPE, CHANGING CHALLENGES

Interscholastic athletics have changed greatly over the past several years.

- Athletic programs have grown in quantity and quality. In actuality, many middle school and high school programs are more extensive in number of teams and student participation than programs in nearby colleges and universities.
- Regulations on transfers, non-traditional schools, summer involvement of teams, in and out of season limitations, eligibility, equipment, playing courts, fields, and pools are more complex.
- Title IX has mandated additional opportunities for female students, along with program balance and equity considerations.
- Funding school athletic programs has become more challenging and complex.
- Differing expectations for programs among outside groups, parents, coaches, students and administration have emerged.
- Behavior models (both good and bad) have become more visible and influential.
- Conflict, controversy, and even litigation have been connected with school programs. More coaches have become necessary, and these coaches, both staff and non-staff, now require more formal ongoing training and evaluation.

Effective directors of athletics enlist the involvement of students, parents, coaches, officials, teachers, administrators and community members in articulating a vision for the interscholastic athletic program consistent with the educational mission of the school. The director of athletics provides leadership for these efforts, and subsequently establishes procedures to implement and institutionalize the vision and its values. Athletic administrators should embrace the challenge of becoming one of the most influential professionals in your community. When they do, your programs will follow suit.

LEADERSHIP



1. Philosophy

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

2. Interpersonal Skills

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

3. Written Department Policies

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

4. Community Relations

- The director of athletics should be considered the official representative of the athletic program in the school community. Ongoing interaction and communication with groups such as the Booster Club and the electronic and print media are essential.

LEADERSHIP (CONTINUED)

- Public opportunities (preseason meetings, banquets, etc.) are critical in communicating the function, goals of educational athletics and the return on investment of participation (person they become).
- Enhancing the image of athletics in the school and community is a continuing function.

5. Funding

- It is essential that the school district financially support the athletic program to help ensure the safe and equitable treatment of students and to comply with all applicable rules.
- Procedures should be established for appropriate use of athletic funds including those from local, state, and IHSA sources.
- Regulations and procedures for individual fund-raisers, booster clubs and corporate sponsorship should be in place.
- Create partnerships (revenue streams) not sponsorships with businesses in your community. Look for a win-win combination.



6. League/State Meeting Attendance and Involvement

- Professional development necessitates that the director of athletics and coaches attend required conference, IHSA and IADA meetings.
- Involvement in state and national professional associations helps keep staffs updated and allows schools to be represented.
- Involvement in the IADA state conference and NIAAA leadership training courses and workshops provides continuing educational opportunities.

7. Reviewing and Enhancing Existing Programs

- A process should be developed for adjusting the sports offered, which includes a survey (annual audit) of student interests.
- Equity, financial and facility considerations, as well as coordination with other school and community programs, should be factored into this process.
- A process (Strategic Plan) should be developed to establish priorities for future growth and expansion.
- Promote the accomplishments of your staff and student-athletes (community service, academic achievement, etc.).

ADMINISTRATION

1. Educational Purpose and Focus

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

2. IHSA Student-Athlete Academic Eligibility and Performance

- The student athlete experience should complement the academic mission of schools. Districtwide policies and procedures, with regard to academic eligibility, should be in place and appropriate for the enrollment and participation levels of the school. Academic requirements that supplement the IHSA's regulations may be adopted, which could include minimum grade point, a period of ineligibility, a monitoring process, and an opportunity for student improvement.
- Special efforts should be made to identify "at risk" student athletes and to provide academic assistance.
- A program that recognizes student academic achievement is important, and should be in place both within the school and within the League. e.g.: Scholar Athletes, Athletic Honor Society, etc.
- Faculty members and athletic department personnel should communicate regularly to support student progress.
- Faculty members should be welcome and encouraged to become involved in athletics as coaches, spectators, or support personnel.

3. Sportsmanship and Citizenship

- All aspects of the athletic program should be infused with a view toward the essential components of educational athletics: sportsmanship and citizenship.
- Effective athletic administration involves defining, promoting, teaching and modeling sportsmanship and citizenship among coaches, athletes, students, parents and spectators using the Do What's Right Program sponsored by the IHSA.



ADMINISTRATION (CONTINUED)

4. Budget

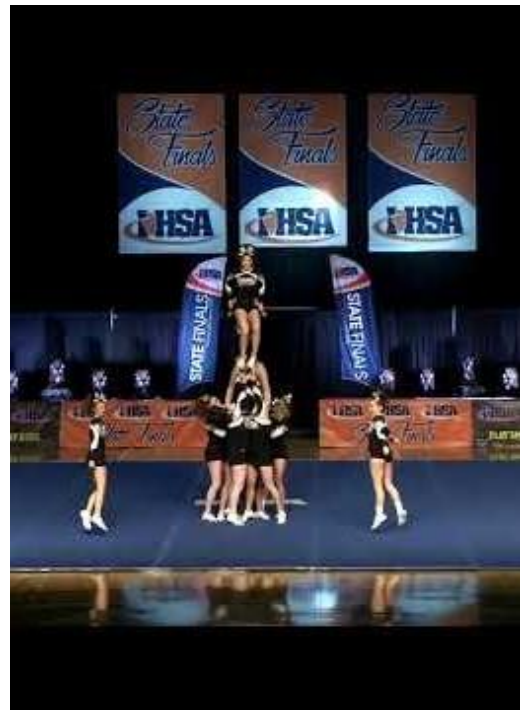
- An appropriate percentage of the general fund budget should be allocated to athletics. Preplanned money should be designated for essential expenditures such as game operation, staff salaries, professional development, transportation, uniforms, supplies, equipment, maintenance and facility needs.
-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

5. Personnel

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

6. Administrative Duties Outside of Athletics

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



OFFICE TECHNOLOGY & COMMUNICATION

1. Purpose

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

2. Direct Communication

- The director of athletics' telephone services should include a direct line or extension, "after hours" access, voice mail (or an answering machine), cellular phone, and a dedicated line for public information services.
- Delivery and pick up of mail, both within the school system and from the U.S. Postal Service, must be timely and efficient.
- Return correspondents (e-mail, text, calls, etc.) in a timely manner.

3. Emergency and Event Management Communication

- Telephone services must be available for emergency needs at all competition and practice sites and their location should be designated in emergency response plans.
- Off-site or remote practice or competition locations may require mobile cellular phones, pagers, or walkie talkies.
- E-mail communication is essential and expedites the ongoing communication between schools. Time sensitive required information includes items such as rosters, eligibility updates, schedules, contracts and meeting agendas.
- Supervision of large or multiple events may necessitate the use of two-way radios for event coordination.

4. Information Technology & Communication

- An up-to-date office computer equipped with athletic management software and printer are necessary for schedules, contracts, rosters, eligibility lists, and correspondence.
- Access to, and use of, student data is needed for emergency information, eligibility, honors, and monitoring class work. Information should be entered only once in the school database and extracted as needed.
- Convenient access to a photocopy machine and scanner is essential for duplicating and distributing schedules, directions, rosters, eligibility, memos to coaches, teams and parents.
- IHSA forms, team entries, schedules, the Handbook, and other documents are on the Internet. A great deal of information is exchanged only through computers and e-mail.
- An athletic department Web site with downloadable forms and documents can enhance communication within the school community. Updating the Website is to be a delegated duty, however, the responsibility for its content and proofreading that content should rest with the athletic department.
- Electronic calendars such as Task Management Applications greatly enhance the organizational and communication efficiency of the office.
- Social Media should be used to enhance the marketing plan for your program.



MANAGEMENT

1. Illinois High School Association (IHSA)

- As voluntary members of the IHSA, schools agree in advance to abide by and support the rules and regulations set forth to govern interscholastic athletics.
- Communicating IHSA regulations is essential in educational athletics.
- The director of athletics must comply with IHSA requirements, such as tournament entry, eligibility, forms and meeting attendance.
- Support IHSA programs and initiatives that promote good sportsmanship, scholarship, health, safety and the proper scope of athletics.
- Hosting IHSA tournament competition is a responsibility of all member schools.

2. Team Communication

- Directors of athletics should ensure that a good flow of program information exists between the coaching staff, parents and athletes.
- The director of athletics should review significant publications such as team rules and written parental communication, prior to a coach's announcing or releasing them.
- The director of athletics should update school and district administration on any matters of significance.
- The director of athletics should clearly communicate the district/system policy on the use of electronic transmissions.

3. Contest Management and Supervision

- Contest management and supervision requires substantial advance organization.
- Additional staff able to supervise and administer a contest should be provided for multiple-event nights.
- The role and responsibility of the director of athletics should be reviewed periodically considering the scope, demands and frequency of contest management.
- Financial accountability (checks and balances) of expenses, gate receipts, and payment of workers and officials should comply with district policies.

4. Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

- Proactive safety information for coaches, parents, and student athletes is part of an effective risk management program or Emergency Action Plan.
- An effective Emergency Action Plan should be implemented and include components such as insurance, legal duties of staff, event medical personnel coverage, equipment and facility inspections, as well as other areas of compliance.
- Pre-participation physical examination requirements must comply with MHSAA regulations.
- An emergency response, emergency action plan, and injury care plan should be formulated, and communicated to coaches. Rehearse the plan with your team.
- Certified athletic trainers should serve an integral role within the athletic department.

5. Maintenance & Facilities

- Effective communication with maintenance staff, custodians, coaches, community groups and administration is essential.
- The director of athletics should be included in decisions regarding athletic facility maintenance, planning, and scheduling.
- The use of athletic facilities by the community is an important consideration.
- Facility and practice schedules should be assigned fairly and clearly communicated to staff, students, parents and others.

6. Transportation

- There should be a commitment from the school district to provide safe and appropriate transportation.
- Communication between the athletic and transportation departments should be timely and efficient.
- Written policies for transportation (Travel Plan) should be developed and communicated to all stakeholders.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANTS & SUPPORT STAFF



1. Office Philosophy and Policies

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

2. Department Administrative Assistant

- Support for secretarial services should be based on the number of sports, participants, staff, facilities and the duties of the director of athletics within the school system.
- Written job descriptions should exist with duties assigned for administrative assistance to the athletic department.
- Office staff members should be properly trained within the realm of the job description, based on a wide range of skills and functions.
- Informal periodic and formal annual evaluation of support staff should occur and be based on a written job description with the director of athletics as supervisor.
- The director of athletics should be involved in the selection of staff.
- Develop an Administrative Assistance manual that includes seasonal timelines, information of student databases, scheduling software, websites, etc.

3. Office Location and Configuration

- The director of athletics' office should be in proximity to athletic facilities and furnished for efficiency. Consideration should be given to work, reception, storage and meeting areas.
- The Athletic Secretary's office should be in proximity to the director of athletics and to athletic facilities.
- Confidential information stored within the athletic office requires a secure area, often for seven years beyond a student's graduation for concussion forms and pre-participation physical examination forms. Other local school district documents may have other parameters.
- Funds should be allocated for proper operation of the athletic office, including upgrades for computer technology, hardware and software.

4. Student and Adult Volunteers

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

EDUCATION & PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

1. Educational Background

- Directors of athletics should possess a Bachelor's Degree; a Master's Degree is preferred.
- Directors of athletics should possess a teacher's certificate or equivalent experience in education.
- Directors of athletics should possess relevant experience in the areas of coaching, physical education, sports medicine and/or athletic administration.
- All Coaches must have a current, valid Illinois Teaching, School Administrator, Substitute Teaching, School Psychologist, School Counselor, School Social Worker Certificate or be retired from teaching to meet the IHSA By-Law requirement to coach without going through an IHSA coaching certification program. If you have taken an exam and possess any of the ISBE (Illinois State Board of Education), Certificates noted previously, then you are certified to coach in Illinois and do not need to take a coaches certification course. Otherwise coaches would need to complete an approved Coaching Certification Course.

2. Professional Membership and Involvement

- There should be district and community support for membership, leadership, and service in professional organizations and in committee assignments. Organizations currently providing opportunities for professional growth are listed below. Regularly visiting professional/affiliated organization web sites is a valuable educational tool.

- Illinois High School Association (IHSA) – Web: ihsa.org.
- Illinois Athletic Directors Association (IADA) – Web: <https://www.illinoisad.org/>
- National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA) - Web: niaaa.com (Instructors, Committee Members, Workshop Presenters, etc.)
- Leagues or Conferences
- Other professional, administrative, and educational associations.

3. Professional Certification and Continuing Education

- There should be local district expectations, support, and recognition for the pursuit of professional growth and continuing education in the field of athletic administration.
- Obtaining an advanced degree in athletic or educational administration, Registered Athletic Administrator (RAA), Registered Middle School Athletic Administrator (RMSAA), Certified Athletic Administrator (CAA) or Certified Master Athletic Administrator (CMAA) endorsement or training in other leadership programs is worthy of support and is of long term benefit to the district.
- School districts should encourage attendance at local, state and national Athletic Directors conferences and workshops.
- NIAAA Leadership Training Courses (LTC) are specific to athletic administration, available locally and nationally, and are of significant value.

- **The IADA offers more professional development than any other state association in the country.**

As a model for children and a leader of coaches, the directors of athletics should demonstrate the importance of intellectual growth. The IADA and IHSA are partners in providing professional development to leaders of education-based athletic programs at little or no cost

CHANGING LANDSCAPE

14 LEGAL DUTIES FOR ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATION

(Doleschal, 2006)

Several obligations or duties have been identified as absolute requirements for coaches and athletic program administrators. *These standards have the weight of moral obligation for coaches and athletic administrators and have evolved as a result of various case law proceedings and legal judgments against individuals and school districts.*

1. DUTY TO PLAN – This is a comprehensive requirement that transcends all other duties. Inherent in this duty is the need to continually conduct focused analyses of potential hazards and to develop responsive strategies that prevent or reduce the potential for injury and loss in the following areas: coaching competence; medical screening; appropriate activities that consider age, maturity and environmental conditions; facility and equipment evaluation and improvement; injury response; warnings to athletes and their families; insurance of athletes; child advocacy in cases of alcohol and other drug abuse (AODA) or family neglect or abuse. Plans and policies should be rigorously implemented unless dangerous conditions prevent implementation. Plans should become policy documents and updated regularly by administrators, coaches and experts in specific areas (e.g. equipment, emergency response, etc.). Negligence can be alleged when an injury loss results from no planning, inadequate planning or when plans are developed but ignored.

2. DUTY TO SUPERVISE – A coach must be physically present, provide supervision and control of impulsive behavior, competent instruction, structured practices that are appropriate for the age and maturity of players, prevent foreseeable injuries and respond to injury or trauma in an approved manner. This duty requires supervisors to ensure that facilities are locked and that students are denied access when a competent staff member cannot be physically present to supervise. Supervision responsibilities also pertain to athletics administrators who are expected to be able to supervise coaching staff members competently. In addition, athletics administrators are expected to supervise contests to ensure that spectators do not create an unsafe or disruptive environment. A further extension of this duty is the need to supervise the condition, safe usage, maintenance and upkeep of equipment and facilities.

3. DUTY TO ASSESS ATHLETES READINESS FOR PRACTICE AND COMPETITION – Athletics administrators and coaches are required to assess the health and physical or maturational readiness skills and physical condition of athletes. A progression of skill development and conditioning improvement should be apparent from practice plans. Athletes must also be medically screened in accordance with state association regulations before participating in practice or competition. Moreover, some children may require specialized medical assessment to ascertain the existence of congenital disorders or the existence of a physical condition that predisposes the athlete to injury. In addition, injured athletes who require the services of a physician. A new area of concern that may grow from the duty is the difficulty of assessing the readiness of handicapped children who are referred for practice and competition under the American with Disabilities Act or the Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975. In these cases, it is imperative that medical and multidisciplinary team approval and recommendation be obtained before a handicapped student becomes a candidate for practice and competition.

4. DUTY TO MAINTAIN SAFE PLAYING CONDITIONS – Coaches are considered trained professionals who possess a higher level of knowledge and skill that permits them to identify foreseeable causes of injury specific to a sport and inherent in defective equipment or hazardous environments. Courts have held athletics supervisors responsible to improve unsafe environments, repair, or remove defective equipment or disallow access to unsafe equipment or environments. The use of sport-specific equipment safety checklists can be helpful in enhancing the safety of participants. In addition, weather conditions must be considered. Athletes should not be subjected to intense or prolonged conditioning during periods of extreme heat and humidity or when frostbite may be a factor. In addition, a plan for monitoring and responding to dangerous weather conditions is necessary. Building codes and laws must be observed and implemented with respect to capacity, ventilation, air filtration and lighting.

CHANGING LANDSCAPE (CONTINUED)

5. DUTY TO PROVIDE PROPER EQUIPMENT –

Coaches and athletic administrators must ensure athletes are properly equipped with equipment that is appropriate for the age and maturity of the athletes and that is clean, durable and safe. Fitting should be carried out in accordance with manufacturer's specifications. This is especially important for protective equipment which must carry a National Operating Commission on Safety in Athletics Equipment (NOCSAE) certification and must be checked for proper fit and wearing. Athletes must wear protective equipment any time they are exposed to the full rigors of contact in practice or competition. Selection of equipment must also consider the age and maturity of the athletes.

6. DUTY TO INSTRUCT PROPERLY – Athletics practice must be characterized by instruction that accounts for a logical sequence of fundamentals that consider the developmental level of the athlete and that lead to an enhanced progression of player knowledge, skill and capability. In this regard, instruction must move from simple to complex and known to unknown. Instructor coaches must be properly prepared to provide appropriate and sequential instruction and to identify and avoid dangerous practices or conditions. Instruction must demonstrate appropriate and safe techniques and must include warning about unsafe techniques and prohibited practices.

7. DUTY TO MATCH ATHLETES – Athletes should be matched with consideration for maturity, skill, age, size and speed. To the degree possible, mismatches should be avoided in all categories.

8. DUTY TO CONDITION PROPERLY – Practices must account for a progression of cardiovascular and musculoskeletal conditioning regimens that prepare athletes sequentially for more challenging practices and competitive activities. Consideration must be given to student readiness and maturational factors. In addition, consideration should include weather conditions and their impact on student health.

9. DUTY TO WARN – Coaches are required to warn parents and athletes of unsafe practices specific to a sport and the potential for injury or death. This warning should be issued in writing and both athletes and parents should be required to provide written certification of their comprehension. Videotapes of safety instruction and warnings to players and parents are recommended.

10. DUTY TO ENSURE ATHLETES ARE COVERED BY INJURY INSURANCE –

Athletic administrators and coaches must screen athletes to ensure that family and/or school insurance provides a basic level of medical coverage. Athletes should not be allowed to participate without injury insurance. Deductible and co-payment requirements should be clearly explained to parents and athletes. Certain schools may need to publish this information in several languages. Comprehensions should be required of parents and athletes.

11. DUTY TO PROVIDE EMERGENCY CARE –

Coaches are expected to be able to administer accepted, prioritized, standard first aid procedures in response to a range of traumatic injuries – especially those that are potentially life-threatening.

12. DUTY TO DEVELOP AN EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN –

Athletic administrators and coaches must develop site-specific plans for managing uninjured team members while emergency care is being administered to an injured athlete. In addition, plans must be in place to: ensure access to a telephone, a stocked first aid kit, spine board and other emergency response equipment. The plan should also account for a timely call to EMS and an expedited access by EMS to the injured athlete by stationing coaches or team members at driveways, parking lots, entry doors and remote hallways.

13. DUTY TO PROVIDE PROPER TRANSPORTATION

– In general, bonded, commercial carriers should be used for out of town transportation. Self or family transportation for local competition may be allowed if parents have adequate insurance coverage for team members other than their family members. The age and maturity of athletes should always be considered when allowing athletes to use public transportation to travel to a local contest. Athletes should be prohibited from driving to an out of town competition, scrimmage or practices.

14. DUTY TO SELECT, TRAIN AND SUPERVISE

COACHES – Athletic administrators will be expected to ensure coaches are capable of providing safe conditions and activities as outlined in the preceding list of duties.

Janis K. Doleschal, Managing Risk in Interscholastic Athletic Programs: 14 Legal Duties of Care, 17 Marq. Sports L. Rev. 295 (2006) Available at:

<http://scholarship.law.marquette.edu/sportslaw/vol17/iss1/11>

THE PROCESS

More than 80 directors of athletics created this initial document. It has been edited by directors of athletics, superintendents, school board members, principals, journalists and print media professionals.

The concept was first discussed at the 1996 MIAAA Summer Workshop when attendees expressed concern that school districts needed greater knowledge and understanding of the details and demands of the position of director of athletics.

The process began with a survey of directors of athletics conducted in March of 1997 among 264 directors attending the annual Mid-Winter Conference. The survey requested information regarding a variety of topics:

In the summer of 1997, 64 directors of athletics met to develop this document. The attendees were divided into study areas which evolved into the six major topic areas.

- Leadership
- Administration
- Management
- Secretary, Office Support Staff
- Education and Professional Growth
- Office Technology and Communication

Topic leaders met in advance to develop a common structure for each topic. A group facilitator carried the attendees through the process and coordinated the larger group's input. The work of each study area and all their comments were recorded and presented to the entire assembly for editing.

The MIAAA Board of Directors was given copies of the document the following September and asked to share this draft with school board members, superintendents and principals whose suggestions were incorporated. The final phase was consultation between the committee and an advertising/public relations team to develop the document's appearance and presentation. This revised version was completed in 2004.

In October of 2018, the IADA Executive Board was given a copy of the Michigan document as an example of what the IADA could produce with some alterations for the IADA membership to better explain and promote the benefits of IADA membership. This documented was recently updated and shared with the IADA Board in January 2024. We will continue to share ideas so that we can help make our profession one that benefits school districts and communities throughout our state.

The IADA would like to thank all of the individuals who helped create the MIAAA document and for allowing the IADA to use their document in the state of Illinois. The document will help educate school board members, superintendents and principals in the state about the benefits of being an active member of the IADA. This will help athletic administrators to continue to better their professional development, which in turn will help countless communities, coaches and student-athletes as they continue to reap the benefits of participation in an educationally based athletic program.

