

THSADA NEWSLETTER

Presented by Home Team Marketing



March 2017

TEXAS HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION Executive Director's Report *Rusty Dowling, Executive Director - THSADA*

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome everyone to the 46th annual THSADA State Conference and Professional Development Program. This promises to be a great Conference as the Professional Development programs are a direct result of Athletic Director input as well as the recommendations of the Professional Development Committee.

This current school year got off to a great start in San Antonio where we held our annual PBK Sports-THSADA Hall of Honor Banquet and reached back in our history for two of our inductees who were original founders of the THSADA, Kelly Horn and Winlon Knowles. Along with Jim Slaughter that concluded a standout class of inductees. The Joe Bill Fox DSA Award was presented to Dr. Charles Breithaupt of the UIL along with our PBK Athletic Director of the Year-Chris Feris. The Kelly Reeves State Award of Merit Recipient was Shawn Pratt, NIAAA DSA was Marmion Dambrino and the NFHS Citation Award was Lisa Langston. The Monday General Session saw the installation of our 2016-2017 THSADA Board of Directors along with the new THSADA President-John Crawford. A new Board orientation was held on Tuesday morning and that concluded the THSCA Coaching School.

The THSADA office works through the months of August, September and October to prepare for the November 1st kickoff for State Conference registration. Another important process during that time is the annual sponsorship drive to support the mission of the THSADA. Currently our sponsorship involvement is high with close to 40 sponsors being involved with the THSADA. Sponsorships are the main revenue source of the THSADA and allows us to keep membership and State Conference registrations fees down along with supporting those activities such as travel, Board meetings, maintaining the THSADA office and staff support. Currently the THSADA membership is slightly over 850 with the majority members representing UIL schools and about 60 members representing TAPPS schools.

October saw the THSADA actively involved in the Legislative Council meetings and in meetings with UIL, TAPPS and other coaching associations discussing those issues significant at the secondary school level. THSADA also took our annual trip to NACDA in Cleveland, Ohio to continue to interact with that association. Many of our organizational and administrative functions are modeled to a degree after NACDA.

November saw the beginning of our State Conference and Exhibitor Registration for the 46th annual State Conference in Waco. This will be our first Conference in Waco and the hotels and convention center have been very cooperative and diligent in working with us to ensure a successful event.

December had the UIL football state championships being held at AT&T

Stadium in Arlington and the THSADA had a presence at the stadium where we entertained those AD's and coaches who attended and stopped by the THSADA suite.

January the THSADA Board of Directors held their annual winter meeting in Houston at the Wyndham Hotel and the THSADA office. The officers met on Sunday before the Board meeting at the THSADA office and had the opportunity to see the new offices along with the recently completed graphics, courtesy of Waterboy Graphics. The Board got together on Sunday evening and most of them "agonized" through the Dallas Cowboys vs. Green Bay Packers game! Monday the Board meeting was held with a long agenda of items to cover which included the State Conference agenda approval, supporting the THSCA and the AFCA in maintaining that Friday Night should be reserved for high school football, approving continued movement of the development of the TAAC curriculum and an update on THSADA future involvement at THSCA Coaching School. Dr. Breithaupt and Dr. Elza came in and did a presentation and update on UIL and the State Legislature. Specific to that was the introduction of the "Tim Tebow Home School Bill" and information on "School Choice".

In closing, I appreciate all of you who are attending the 46th annual THSADA State Conference. You are making the effort to network and be involved with your peers, pursue Professional Development that can help in what you do each day and your presence shows that you support your professional association and what it does for Athletic Administrators. Thank you for all you do and all your support for THSADA. ★





TEXAS HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION

President's Remarks John Crawford, President – THSADA

Welcome to the Waco Convention Center, site of the 2017 Texas High School Athletic Director's Association (THSADA) State Conference and Professional Development Program, as well as Exhibit Show. The THSADA is excited to be in Waco! The 46th Annual State Conference will host more than 400 active and, or, retired athletic administrators along with 160 exhibitors.

The THSADA is one of the state's most premier conferences, allowing athletic directors from across the state an opportunity to network with their peers and gain insight, motivation, and professional development skills that will enable them to return to administer programs with new knowledge, information and enthusiasm.

As an athletic director, you play a vital role in elevating the success within your athletic department in your community. Your ability to lead by example sets the

standards and expectations of your coaching staff, student-athletes, parents, and community members. Through established standards of excellence, education based athletics will continue to prosper. We appreciate your contributions to the profession and we applaud you for leading Texas interscholastic Athletics to further successes and greater advancements.

The conference will help to elevate your programs and will provide you with resources that will foster this year's theme, which is "Creating a Successful Future". With THSADA being the 2nd largest athletic director's association, it is vital that we continue to make strides in creating successful programs, leadership, and professional opportunities to all of our members. At the conference, you will find a wide variety of seminars on topics such as evaluating, mentoring, renovations and new building projects, budget, and public relations just to name a

few. In conjunction with our professional development programs, we will offer 160 exhibitors that will allow us to gain knowledge on innovative products that will help enhance the safety and growth of our student-athletes as well as programs.

We hope that you enjoy the 46th Annual Texas High School Athletic Directors conference and gain valuable insight and tools that will help enhance the future of your programs.

Special thanks to Rusty Dowling, our Executive Director, and Kathy Mathis, Administrative Assistant to the Director, as well as all others who worked so hard in the oversight and leadership of the conference. Again, Welcome to the 2017 THSADA State Conference! ★

John Crawford

THSADA President

7 Things Every Head Coach Needs from His Athletic Director to be Successful

By *Doug Samuels*

The importance of a good relationship between a head coach and his athletic director cannot be overstated. Every year we seem to hear about a strained relationship between a coach and his athletic director, and this past fall's saga between Les Miles and Joe Alleva at LSU is a prime example. At the high school level, there are similar stories scattered across America.

If you take a look at the most successful head coaches in your state or area, chances are pretty good that they have a great relationship with their athletic director. At the college level there are a number of great modern day examples, including Mark Dantonio and Mark Hollis at Michigan State, Hugh Freeze and Ross Bjork at Ole Miss, Bret

Bielema and Jeff Long at Arkansas, and Nick Saban and Bill Battle at Alabama, just to name a few.

If you're an aspiring head coach, below are a handful of things you should be looking for as you interview with your potential boss. And if you're already a head coach, here are several things you can look for to ensure a solid, lasting relationship with your AD.

1) Leadership

While the head coach is the face of the football program, the athletic director serves as the face of the entire school's athletic department so while they share many of the same objectives, the athletic director needs to be the one providing the final say on matters. When adversity hits the program, the head coach needs to be able to go to the AD with questions, concerns, and advice and the athletic

director needs to be someone that can provide the direction to get (or keep) things on track. Leadership also means being strong in areas like organization, motivation, integrity, and a number of other areas as well.

2) Support

As a head coach, different issues are bound to arise during the course of a season and it's paramount that as a head coach, you know that your athletic director has your back and isn't going to easily fold to the pressure of parents, or other demographics. A growing number of coaches feel like they're "one parent away from being unemployed," and it's probably safe to say that the coaches saying that don't have the full support of their athletic director. A true open door policy goes a long way in the coach / AD

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relationship for both parties and this often results in a lasting, meaningful friendship.

3) Communication

The foundation of any good relationship is communication, and the dynamic between an athletic director and head coach is no different. If the head coach needs to order a dozen new helmets he needs to feel comfortable approaching the AD and asking for it, and if the AD is fielding complaints about one aspect or another of the head coach's program, they have to feel the same open line of communication with their head coach. It goes both ways.

4) A drive to be successful

Good athletic directors have a drive to see each and every program under their watch reach their maximum potential, and that means they're committed to

hiring the best people, coaches, and teachers to make that happen and will also provide anything within their power to ensure that happens.

5) A shared vision

Normally, when an athletic director hires you for a head coaching spot, they share the same vision for the program that you pitched in the interview. However, that isn't always the case and conflicts in this area can lead to a relationship that deteriorates quickly.

6) The ability to see problems before they arise

The best athletic directors are those who don't simply react to problems to they arise, but rather can see them coming a few steps ahead and are able to get ahead of things, and then prepare their head coaches accordingly. The earlier things can be "nipped in the bud" the less likely they become big issues over time.

7) The ability to see things from outside the AD perspective

Overseeing an entire athletic department can pull an athletic director in a variety of different directions. ADs can be asked for a variety of things that a program feels like they need to be successful, while also having to be conscious of the budget and how granting one program's wish is going to look for other programs with wants and needs. Every once in a while, it could be very advantageous for an athletic director to take off "the AD hat" and look at things from the vantage point of a coach trying to win games while transforming the lives of their players. Many times, athletic directors (especially at the high school level) have prior experience as a coach, so this is easier for those ADs than it may be for someone coming from the corporate world. ★

Dealing with Catastrophe

By Steve Amaro on January 11, 2017

It's every coach's worst nightmare. Practice has begun and one of the athletes is late. We teach our athletes honesty, discipline, and respect. Practice then begins without the absent player; however, 10 minutes into practice an administrator walks in and you have to delegate your duties to your assistants. The administrator relays why the student is not there and it shakes you to the core as you realize you, your team, and the community will never be the same. Being a coach is a challenge even in the best of circumstances; however, coaches should be prepared for every eventuality, no matter how remote the possibility. Unexpected outcomes are a natural part of games, but we also need to prepare ourselves for the unexpected outcomes of life and be there for our students in times of tragedy. These circumstances could include catastrophic injury, the death of family or teammates, and even the catastrophe of natural disaster through fire or weather related events. More times than not, our athletes and entire

communities will watch and look for direction from our coaches to find out the best ways to handle these situations.

Be Available to Listen & Provide Adaptable Activity

Being a student athlete in a time of distress can be challenging. Society sends mixed messages. Athletes are supposed to be strong, overcome adversity, and be leaders to others. It is because of these societal messages that some athletes may respond by bottling up their emotions. In every sense of the word, they are vulnerable and athletic competition is partly about exploiting the vulnerabilities of our opponents. It is no wonder then that our student-athletes respond to this paradox by shutting down.

Coaches need to be vigilant about addressing catastrophe with student-athletes, explaining the grieving process and even sharing their own personal struggles. A coach revealing his or her own struggles is not a sign of weakness, but of leadership – an example of how to deal with catastrophe and still progress through life. This is not to be confused

with being a metaphorical island of strength. Coaches also need to recognize that school athletic directors and administration are there as a team to help support. They have the resources to bring context to student-athletes and help them heal. Most importantly, coaches need to be able to open lines of communication with their athletes and listen. Student-athletes that can speak out to a vested coach will strengthen their bonds and take the first steps in recovering from catastrophe.

Coaches also need to be aware that an athlete's connection to a sport may be the only routine they have in their life. It's important that we provide a supportive environment that allows students to participate in a way that supports their recovery. Some athletes may want to use their athletic participation as a release from the tension in their lives while others may want the emotional support provided by their team bonds. It's important for coaches to listen and be observant about what methods will best help our athletes recover from catastrophe.

Be Calm and Communicate with your Administrative Team

When faced with catastrophe, it
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is important for coaches to keep open lines of communication with the athletic director and administrative team. Whether a team member faces the loss of a family member, team member, or even destruction of a family home, coaches don't need to shoulder the weight of such challenging times alone. Many schools have counseling resources to help both students and coaches recover from unsettling situations. In addition, the role of administration is to support the coaching staff to succeed. Coaches must be willing to keep administration informed, ask, and allow for help when needed.

Give Direction to Heal and Inspire Team to Unifying Action Powerful emotions are embedded in catastrophe. During these times, coaches and students

realize their own mortality and take inventory of what is most important to them. Overwhelmingly, they will find solace in the bonds they have developed with their teammates and coaches. As leaders of student-athletes, coaches can channel these emotions positively with recovery efforts for community, funding drives for teammates or families in need, or even dedications of tournaments and/or seasons to give further direction to their teams. It is imperative that these types of activities do not focus on outcome. Finite game scores or numbers of wins in a season cannot be controlled and such goals can be reckless in helping student-athletes recover from trauma if students do not reach these expectations. On the other hand, dedicating individual tournaments or seasons to individuals have a cumulative effect on healing as

athletes can focus on playing for their own motivations and focus on strengthening the bonds with their current teammates and coaches.

Final Thoughts

Catastrophic times are something coaches hope they never have to face; however, when coaches focus on listening to the student-athletes, utilize their resources provided by the school administration, and remain calm, they can serve as excellent leaders. Furthermore, coaches can influence teams by creating appropriate goals for student-athletes to better ensure their ability to recover. In taking these steps, students will better learn how to handle catastrophe and build stronger bonds with their team. ★

**SPRING ISD
ATHLETIC FIELD MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE-16-17
FIELD NAME: DEKANEY, SPRING, WESTFIELD
TYPE OF FIELD: GRASS FIELDS
TYPE OF GRASS: BERMUDA**

TIME	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Fertilization			(MS) Gro-Tech			(MS) Gro-Tech Practice Fields (FB) Site-One					Rye seed (BB/SB) Site-One	
Aeration	(MS) Gro-Tech		(MS) Gro-Tech	(MS) Gro-Tech	(MS) Gro-Tech (HS/FB)				(MS) Gro-Tech			
Topdress	Conditioner (BB) Helena	Sand Pits (MS-Track)			(MS) Gro-Tech	Practice Fields (FB)	Sand (HS,FB) 45 yards				Infield Dirt (BB/SB)	
Slit-seed												
1/3 Rule Mowing Ht												
Paint/Chalk					(BB/SB/ TRACK) Fielder's Choice		Paint-FB (HS/MS) Pioneer					
Weed Control	(MS) Gro-Tech		Fire Ants (ALL)	(MS) Gro-Tech						ALL		



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THSADA AD SPOTLIGHT

Innovative Leader
Mack Rhoades, Baylor University
Vice President/ Director of Athletics

By Marla Brumfield Lewis



Mack Rhoades, the Vice President and Director of Athletics for Baylor University since July 2016, has a knack for elevating athletic programs. At each of his previous schools he has implemented programs to enrich student athletes lives and provide them with skills that transcend their sports careers. Let's dive into one of collegiate's most innovative athletic administrative minds, Mack Rhoades.

What was your career path, and what lead you to becoming an athletic administrator at Baylor?

I began my undergraduate education at University of Arizona where I became interested in what it took to become a collegiate Athletic Director as a result with a conversation with then-AD Cedrick Dempsey. I remember leaving that meeting saying, 'Alright, this is what I want to do.' I went and got my masters at Indiana University in Sports Management and learned a lot. It was like an MBA, but focused on sports. That opened up a door to an internship

at Yale University, then a permanent position and on down the line... Marquette, UTEP, Akron, Houston, Missouri, Baylor. I'm thrilled to be at Baylor.

Please tell us about your transition to Baylor and what your primary focus is when you transition jobs/ schools?

Initially the first three months is really focused on a few different things: One is developing relationships. That's pretty broad, but that's with everybody. That's your staff, people across campus, your university community. Certainly people external to the program, your donors and the media. Your student-athletes as well. Then also it's a time to really assess strengths and weaknesses of your organization, strengths and weakness of personnel, organizational structure, and most importantly the culture. What's the culture of the organization? Do we need to change it? If so, what are the things necessary in order to change? Finally, beginning to think about vision and where are you heading in terms of the future.

What experiences have you had in education, and as an athletic administrator, that helped you grow personally and/or professionally?

Well again, the Masters in Sports Management Marketing at Indiana University certainly was a great foundation and served as a springboard for my career in athletics and administration. Some practical things that you learned: an introduction to sport law, the art of negotiation and structure, all of those things. Also, as a requirement, you had to do an internship. So, that led me to an internship in a collegiate program at

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The Value of the Secondary School Athletic Trainer

By Brian Robinson on March 10, 2015
(Revised 2017)

Worth, Return on Investment, Metrics, Safety, Value – what do all these words have in common? They all have been used as part of the conversation regarding the importance and need of the secondary school athletic trainer.

A major concern within interscholastic athletics centers on safety, especially in light of the public's focus on concussions, sudden cardiac death and heat-related deaths, and this heightens the value of athletic trainers in the secondary school setting.

The majority of school administrators probably understand the need for an athletic trainer to coordinate the athletic health care for their student-athletes. Also, many would like to have the services of an athletic trainer if they do not already employ one – either as a school employee or a clinical outreach situation in cooperation with a local hospital or physician's clinic.

In a recent study conducted by the Korey Stringer Institute and supported by the National Athletic Trainers' Association, 70 percent of the secondary schools in this country employ the services of an athletic trainer. According to the recent NFHS Recommendations and Guidelines for Minimizing Head Impact Exposure and Concussion Risk in Football, "an athletic trainer is a key component in any strategy to minimize injury risk and optimize safety for all participants."

Due to the current educational economy, it becomes increasingly important for school administrators to show taxpayers that they are getting a substantial return on their investment. Metrics are used to gauge the success of classroom instruction. Standardized testing is gaining public attention as a means to place a value on the adequacy of today's educational process. In the quest to justify the expense of having a certified athletic trainer on staff, administrators are seeking to understand the value and worth of

these health-care professionals.

The concept of value and worth is difficult to grasp if the enterprise is not generating revenue. Whereas "worth" can be considered the monetary value of a service, value is a bit more abstract. Value is viewed by many as "the extent to which a service's worth is perceived."

The value of an athletic trainer within the secondary school setting may differ in the eyes of the principal, school board member, athletic director, teacher, coach, parent and student-athlete. For example, the value of the athletic trainer as perceived by the athletic director may be as simple as keeping safety-related issues off of his or her desk; the value to the school board member may be the reduction in liability risks.

In the eyes of the principal, an athletic trainer provides positive public relations and the peace of mind that everything reasonable and prudent is being done to minimize the risk for

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those involved in educational athletics. The coach may see the athletic trainer as invaluable when it comes to making unbiased return-to-play decisions, eliminating daily health-care concerns so that he or she may concentrate on the educational aspects of interscholastic athletics.

In addition to providing peace of mind to the parent, an athletic trainer is also an invaluable resource for accessing the medical community, navigating the health insurance environment and serving as another set of eyes and ears to monitor their child.

Risk Minimization

The ability of the athletic trainer to help minimize the risk involved with interscholastic athletics is critical even though serious or catastrophic injuries are significantly rare. Also, an immediate response is crucial to preventing sudden death in many cases.

Athletic trainers work together with coaches, administrators, local emergency management personnel and other district staff to ensure that plans are established to minimize the risk associated with interscholastic athletics. The secondary school athletic trainer is in a unique position to monitor health safety procedures, students, facilities, practices and games on a daily basis.

One example of the expertise that the athletic trainer brings to the concept of risk minimization is the development and implementation of venue-specific action plans. The athletic trainer is most qualified school employee to identify unique circumstances that may impact the health and safety of student-athletes. Likewise, the athletic trainer is well-positioned to help facilitate injury prevention strategies while working with coaches, which should enhance student-athlete performance and

competition outcomes.

Medical Services

The athletic trainer is well-positioned to consider the many factors involved in the medical referral process, including parental preferences, health insurance limitations and medical specialization, which is immensely helpful to parents. An athletic trainer can facilitate open communication between the student, parents, physicians and coaches, which can be invaluable to parents.

In many schools, the athletic trainer and the school nurse work closely to provide health-care services for the entire student population. In addition, the daily presence of the athletic trainer provides an opportunity for on-site injury rehabilitation and reconditioning, which is paramount to the successful and safe return to play of the student-athlete after an injury.

Cost Containment

Since the cost of rehabilitation and reconditioning services can be extensive, having those services provided by the athletic trainer within the school environment can be a tremendous savings. Parents frequently report to athletic trainers about the cost savings that the athletic trainer was able to provide within the school setting. In larger high schools, athletic trainers commonly provide hundreds of thousands and, in some cases, millions of dollars' worth of injury-care services per year.

The availability of this "in-house" care means that the parent does not have to leave his or her place of employment to transport the student, losing valuable work time. This also aids employers by keeping their employees

on the job. When supplied with a cost analysis of the health-care services provided by their athletic trainers, many school administrators are astounded by the savings afforded to parents and the community.

The ability of the athletic trainer to contain costs as it relates to a school district's liability insurance premiums provides additional value. Athletic trainers create standard prevention protocols, including regular inspections of playing fields and facilities, and monitoring the standard protective equipment worn by athletes in various sports.

Academic Success

Athletic trainers are positioned to influence student success as well. Absenteeism can be minimized by allowing student-athletes to remain in school rather than seeking outside injury-care services. Athletic trainers are increasingly becoming the coordinators of "Return to Learn" protocols for student-athletes who have suffered concussions. Athletic trainers who are available during the school day can treat athletes during lunch periods, study halls and unscheduled time rather than interrupting the educational process when the student must leave school in order to obtain similar care.

It is common for the athletic trainer to be asked to provide life skills education when approached by a particular student-athlete. The athletic trainer's advice is frequently sought regarding career choices pertaining to the medical field. Parents and students appreciate this unexpected value that the athletic trainer brings to the educational process through his or her experience and expertise. ★



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5 Important Things to Consider When Purchasing Your Turf Field

Purchasing a synthetic turf field is one of the most important financial decisions a high school athletic administrator can make. Research reveals that athletes are as safe or safer on an artificial turf surface than natural grass. Plus, turf is a powerful investment that pays for itself in the form of increased usage, rental fees, and savings on maintenance and upkeep.

But when it comes to determining which surface best fits your needs, it's easy to become quickly overwhelmed. Below are five important factors to consider during the research, planning and purchasing process.

1. Infill.

Not all infill systems are created equal. Player safety depends on the weight of a given field's infill. Research by the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine indicates that the use of lighter-weight infills increases the incidence of game-related high school football trauma.

The various proprietary sand/rubber infill compositions applied during the construction of an artificial turf field are typically defined in pounds of infill per square foot of surface (p/sq.ft.). The heaviest weighted infill system on the market is 9.2 p/sq.ft. — making it the safest option. Other infills weigh in at 6 p./sq.ft. and, in some cases, 5.9 p./sq.ft. or less.

That's why it's imperative to research the various infill weights that different manufacturers offer. Safety studies indicate that to meet the minimum safety threshold, a field's infill should consist of a minimum of three pounds of sand plus three pounds of rubber, for a total of 6 p./sq.ft.

Ask your field designer to specify infill weights in the request for proposal. That will put all turf companies bidding on your project on alert that you care about safety as much as cost.

Heavier infill costs more, but can you put a price tag on student-athlete safety?

2. Fiber.

Just like infill, not all turf fiber is the same. Each fiber type boasts its own characteristics, which may or may not be suitable for your surface, depending on the sports that will be played on that field.

When vetting turf manufacturers, explain to representatives from each company the intended uses of your field, and then ask them if they produce their own fibers and conduct their own testing to determine fiber durability. Then request references from previous customers.

Turf fibers must be durable while providing a natural grass-like look with a soft and pleasing grass-like feel. The ideal fibers should result in low skin friction and skin abrasion, with high resilience and temperature stability. Football and soccer, for example, different fiber types are recommended. For example, different fiber types are recommended for football than for soccer. Make sure you understand the differences.

3. Drainage.

Have you ever seen an artificial turf field that didn't drain and wondered why? Lots of facility operators have stared helplessly at their expensive, waterlogged field as it goes unused for days at a time because of improper drainage installation.

Efficient drainage begins well below the surface and works from the bottom up. That's why it pays to hire an experienced contractor who understands that a turf field's base should last for at least 30 years — or the life of about three turf fields.

The drainage base consists of compacted stone materials found beneath the turf carpet, providing a level surface that allows precipitation to trickle through before reaching the drainage system.

Coating is applied to the back of the turf to keep fibers in place. But rather

than using a perforated backing to allow for drainage, FieldTurf uses a coating system applied along fiber rows — thus providing for increased and consistent draining. Non-perforated turf systems can drain up to four times the amount of water as randomly perforated systems.

If you're considering the installation of a shock pad underneath the field, make sure it drains well, too. Plenty of shock pads boast solid absorption characteristics but poor drainage.

Remember that infill can impact a field's drainage capabilities, too, depending on the material used in the infill. Tiny particles from the infill or other debris can clog the backing and prevent proper draining. That's why routine turf maintenance is essential to your field operating at its best.

4. Financial benefits.

There is no question that the upfront cost of artificial turf is higher than that of natural grass. You already know that; otherwise wouldn't have made it to this point in the article. However, over time, the cost savings of artificial turf make the surface a much more financially sound decision than maintaining a natural grass field.

In many cases, price isn't even the determining factor in a school district's decision to install an artificial turf field. Rather, administrators want to know they're choosing a proven, durable product that's likely to last one year or more past its warranty period. That allows districts to recoup an even greater return on their investment.

Granted, the installation of turf dramatically reduces the amount of field maintenance required, but the surface is not maintenance-free. Regularly brushing fibers and managing infill will boost the longevity of your field and broaden its appeal to a wide range of user groups that can rent it for anything from sporting events and band concerts to community fairs — sometimes all in the same weekend!

Story continued on page 11...

...Story continued from page 10

5. Choosing the right company.

If you do your homework and speak with enough operators of artificial turf facilities, you'll likely hear at least one story about a salesperson declaring which product was best for a school — without even knowing the primary use of the new field.

Choose a turf company that allows

you to pick the product that is right for you, based on information the company shares. The serious manufacturers with longevity in the industry have more than simply one or two types of turf from which to choose. A professional turf sales representative should be willing and able to discuss various types of infill and fibers, prove why his product's various components work efficiently, speak to its product's safety benefits, and provide

financing options that have your school district's best interests in mind.

Do your homework. Ask for references and check-in with them about their experience with their product and supplier. Paying attention to these five factors can ease the turf-purchasing process and put you in control when it comes to making decisions. ★

TO TEXT OR NOT TO TEXT

Regardless of how we feel about it, we are in an electronically driven society. And like most things in life, proper usage of electronics and social media can be very beneficial to us as coaches, while improper use can be extremely harmful. This article will address one component of electronic communications – cell phone texting.

On the upside, cell phone texting has allowed people to communicate very quickly and efficiently to one person or many people (group text) at the same time. Used well, texts are an easy way to send a quick note of encouragement to someone. On the downside, texting has replaced face-to-face communication as a primary means of communication which has diminished interpersonal skills needed in today's world. Texting has moved beyond simple, efficient communications into full-blown discussions (threads). Used poorly, texts have become a tool for mean spirited and/or inappropriate behavior.

Policies on coach's texting student-athletes vary from school district to school district. Some schools do not allow it at all, regardless of circumstances, while other schools do not address the topic in their employee handbooks and policy manuals. Most common, however, is some version of texting being allowed between coaches and student-athletes under certain circumstances. It is im-

portant that schools and coaches alike understand the risks that go along with the rewards of this communication tool.

As with any other school policies, student-athlete safety and well-being must be the first priority in regard to texting. It is never permissible for coaches to send texts that would put into jeopardy a student-athlete's physical, mental or emotional health. Transparency is also important. A coach should be willing for anyone to see his/her text to a student-athlete at any time.

If a school allows a coach to text student-athletes, here are some best practice considerations:

- Avoid one-on-one communications with student-athletes as much as possible. If that is not possible, include a parent and/or another coach on the text. Coaches can also send a text to a team captain who could use group text to disseminate the content to the rest of the team.
- Male coaches should include another coach (ideally a female coach) when texting female student-athletes. The same applies to female coaches with male student-athletes.
- Limit texting to school and athletic event hours. Meaning, coaches should not text student-athletes late at night or on weekends when there is no athletic activity

- Texting should be a monologue tool, not a dialogue tool. It should be used for disseminating brief information of urgent nature, not engaging in conversation or used for problem-solving.

In addition to best practices, it is important for schools to be very explicit about what is NOT allowed when coaches text student-athletes, such as, but not limited to:

- Texts of sexually oriented humor or language or content with sexual overtones
- Texts promoting or encouraging the use of tobacco, alcohol, drugs, gambling or other illegal activities.
- Texts that include profane language, obscenities, harassment or bullying
- Texts of personal, confidential information

Athletic departments, like any other institution, can benefit from the proper use of technology. Sound school policies and a commitment by coaches to know and abide by those policies enables coaches to achieve the benefits and avoid the pitfalls of cell-phone texting. ★

-- Beck Brydon, CMAA, Director of Athletics, Regents School of Austin



GETTING TO KNOW: Dr. Toby York *Goose Creek CISD*



In his thirty-seven year career in public education Dr. Toby York has served as classroom teacher, coach, Athletic Director, Assistant Principal, Principal, Assistant Superintendent and Superintendent.

As a former Superintendent, what qualities and qualifications did you look for when hiring an Athletic Director?

Qualities

a. Integrity – First and foremost; will research prospect extensively to determine this characteristic.

b. Personnel Decision Maker – ability to hire and manage people is paramount; will not succeed without this quality.

c. Ability to - vision, plan, model by example, hold others accountable; CEO of Athletics stands for “Chief Example for Others.” Must model all areas of professionalism; dress, language, actions, expectations.

d. Balance ability to show others you deeply care and to close the door and have the tough conversations.

e. Passion for the job – outstanding work ethic and refuse to accept mediocrity.

f. Visibility – a must for evaluation purposes.

Qualifications

a. Certified by the State to perform evaluations.

b. Ability to execute Mission of the District and the Superintendent of Schools.

How did you feel that Athletics contributed to the overall educational experience of the student?

How Athletics Contributes

a. Finest tool for social adolescent development; defines the ability to work together with all people and cultures; builds relationships.

b. Develops concept of teamwork.

c. Develops work ethic, which is crucial to future success.

What issues and challenges do you see in the future of extra-curricular activities?

a. Must defend all facets of extracurricular in Public Education – will continue to be pulled in areas of time and funding. Best way to defend is to create an environment of professionalism, communicate success and develop relationships with all of the school community.

b. Understand importance of word “extra” in extra-curricular. Pressure on Superintendent with new academic accountability system. Always defend that academics is first and foremost.

c. Adopt some aspects to “new world” of “club level” and “private education.” Work to fund athletic personnel year-round to combat this paradigm shift.

What advice would you give a young educator aspiring to be an Athletic Director in the future?

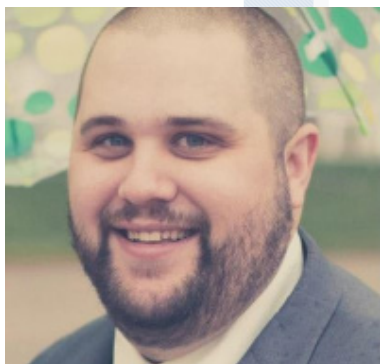
a. Hitch yourself to a Winner – very important to be a part of a system with strong mentor-ship and core values.

b. Establish your own career. Don’t worry about tomorrow, your deeds will open doors down the road.

c. Complete your education along the way – must obtain administrative qualifications.

d. Network and study successful leaders. ★

DOUG SAMUELS FOOTBALL SCOOP



Content manager - Doug took the reins in 2011 and the website has been better ever since. A former college player and small college coach, Doug now serves as assistant head coach / offensive coordinator at West Ottawa HS (MI).


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THE NIAAA NATIONAL CONFERENCE WAS A GREAT EXPERIENCE FOR TEXAS ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATORS

By Dena Scott, CAA, Assistant Director of Athletics, Fort Bend ISD

The National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association held its 2017 National Conference on December 9 - 13, in Nashville, Tennessee. Many Athletic Administrators from across the great state of Texas attended and provided feedback on their experiences.

LTI Courses/Certifications

During the NIAAA Conference, a variety of Leadership Training Institute courses were offered and those who took advantage of the courses were not disappointed.

"The 2017 NIAAA conference was the best I have attended to date. The LTI classes were impactful and the instructors were full of energy and passion. I am already looking forward to the 2018 conference."

- Andre' Walker, CAA, Senior Athletic Program Administrator, Houston ISD

The LTI courses covered a wide range of topics that are applicable to the Athletic Administration profession.

"There is no better professional development that is relevant and meaningful and accredited regarding legal issues in athletics, Title 9, Risk Management, leadership, sports law, sportsmanship, and many more. The growth of Certified Athletic Administrators in Texas has accelerated across the State and is being noticed at the National Level."

-Marmion Dambrino, CMAA, Director of Athletics, Houston ISD

Attendees could also take the CAA exam at the conference. This is just one of the requirements for those wanting to obtain their Certified Athletic Administrator endorsement.

"The attainment of professional certification demonstrates the completion of a comprehensive plan for self-improvement and results in a genuine sense of accomplishment and confidence in one's preparation as an athletic administrator. This year, the state of Texas certified 36 candidates as RAA, RMSAA, CAA, or CMAA."

-Sheri Stice, CMAA, Certification Program Director for the NIAAA

Workshop Sessions

Attendees were also able to choose from a wide range of workshop sessions run by fellow athletic administrators. Some returned from the conference and started to implement what they learned with their coaches.

"I am currently implementing a campus based professional development after attending the In House Professional Development Program for Coaches session. I have asked my coaches to identify 3 areas that they feel we should have professional development on and we are going to start by having once a month professional development classes. We will also start next year with 2 days of professional development with my coaches to start educating and growing them in our profession. All in all, I feel this was an excellent conference with many useful topics being discussed and I look forward to attending next year's conference as well."

-Gil Baber, Athletic Coordinator, Bryan Adams HS

Membership/Endowment Committee

Membership in 2015-16 surpassed 10,000 for the first time and has increased by 91% since 2005 through the efforts of so many! New members for Texas reached 106 this year. The commitment of state athletic administrator associations and the NIAAA is strong. They aim to reach America's leaders in interscholastic education based athletic programs with the tools, message and understanding that they need.

The endowment committee raised over 16,000.00 at the conference and secured endless donations from vendors participating in the conference bringing the endowment balance well over the million-dollar mark. These funds are available to school districts for LTI Courses for Athletic Administrators, Campus Athletic Coordinators and anyone interested in Athletic Administration, all you have to do is apply!

Final Thoughts

Being a first time attendee myself to the NIAAA Conference this year, I highly recommend it. It is not only informative but it is a place where you can meet other Athletic Administrators from across the country. As I sat in on the LTI classes, I not only gained knowledge from the presenters, but also learned from those attending the classes. The workshop sessions were just as informative. Experienced Athletic Administrators were moderating the discussions and everyone was there to share and discuss ideas. I too look forward to attending the 2018 NIAA National Conference on December 8-12 in Phoenix, Arizona. ★

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-Physical Education Co-ordinator



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-Program Manager



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-Administrator



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-Coach



Keep Parents Happy

"Beats writing on what feels like countless forms."

-Parent



"The more this is a standard, the better."

Steve Wozniak, Co-Founder, Apple



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