

# THSADA NEWSLETTER

Presented by Home Team Marketing



November 2018

## Executive Director Report

**Rusty Dowling – Executive Director**



It's hard to believe that it's November already and we're in the month where Cross-Country, Team Tennis and Volleyball are holding their State Championships. What's even more daunting for Athletic Administrators is the "busy time" of the year – 2nd semester. It's the time of the year when Athletic Administrators are concerned with multiple games each week, practices six-days a week, staff evaluations, hiring, budget preparation, facility evaluations and so on. The THSADA understands the year-round demands placed on Athletic Administrators and it's our responsibility to assist you with any resources and information that might make your job run a little more effectively.

The 48th annual THSADA State Conference and Professional Development Program registration is now active at [www.thsada.com](http://www.thsada.com). The State Conference will be held in Waco again from March 24th – March 27th. Last year's attendance was 511 and the THSADA looks to increase that number to around 600. Make every effort to attend the State Conference and support your professional association.

The THSADA has had an outstanding year and as of this writing our membership sits at 1,080 members. The summer started with Past President Debbie Decker speaking at the annual Texas Girls Coaches Convention and doing a presentation on the TAAC program. There was a lot of interest from the attendees in the TAAC program and we had a nice response with those individuals joining the THSADA. The annual THSCA Coaching School was held in San Antonio where the THSADA held their annual PBK Sports-THSADA Hall of Honor Ceremonies. The THSADA tried a new format and eliminated the banquet and went to a more streamlined

model of light food/drink while maintaining the same first-class culture of the event.

### **PBK Sports-THSADA Hall of Honor Ceremony**

#### **Awards Recipients – Hall of Honor Program 2018**

*Hall of Honor Inductees:*

- Ronny Peacock-Tomball ISD
- Johanna Denson-Pflugerville ISD
- Rene Aguilar-Clint ISD

*Joe Bill Fox DSA:*

- Bernie Mulvaney-Goose Creek ISD

*Region Athletic Administrator of the Year:*

- Region 1- Mike Meeks – Lubbock ISD
- Region 2- Brent McCallie – San Angelo ISD
- Region 3- Steve Williams – Allen ISD
- Region 4- Maria Kennedy – El Paso ISD
- Region 5 – Debbie Fuchs – Clear Creek ISD
- Region 6- Jody Hormann – Leander ISD
- Region 7- Oscar Riojas – Weslaco ISD
- Region 8- Melanie Hinson – Southwest ISD

*PBK Sports-*

*THSADA Athletic Director of the Year:*

- Debbie Decker-Katy ISD

*Kelly Reeves State Award of Merit:*

- Bob DeJonge-Keller ISD

*NIAAA DSA: Debbie Decker-Katy ISD*

*NFHS Citation: Cliff Odenwald-Garland ISD*

*Frank Kovaleski Professional Development Award: Larry Peil-THSADA*

The THSADA General Session was held at the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center where the new THSADA Board of Directors were installed and new THSADA President Shawn Pratt-McKinney ISD-addressed the attendees.

*Outgoing Region Directors (Recognized at Monday morning General Session):*

- Region 1- Brad Thiessen – Amarillo ISD



2018 THSADA Region Athletic Administrators of the Year



THSADA past Hall of Honor Inductees



PBK Sports-THSADA Hall of Honor Ceremony



THSADA General Session

Story continued on page 2...



...Continued from Exec Director Report



THSADA Officers 18-19 L-R: David Kuykendall-Vice President, Rodney Chant-President-elect, Shawn Pratt-President, Debbie Decker-Past President



THSADA Leadership Group meeting



2018-2019 THSADA Board of Directors/Committee Chairs



THSADA President Shawn Pratt-McKinney ISD



THSADA Office Staff: 1st row L-R: Rusty Dowling-Executive Director, El-lissa Unger Administrative Assistant, Bob DeJonge-Assistant Executive Director; 2nd row L-R: Bill Daws-Exhibits Coordinator, Larry Peil-TAAC Coordinator, Keith Kilgore-Programs Coordinator



First President of THSADA: Joe Bill Fox pictured with Johanna Denison-former Region 6 Director

Story continued on page 3...





Region 3- David Kuykendall – Frisco ISD  
Region 6- Johanna Denson – Athletic Administrator  
Region 7- Oscar Riojas – Weslaco ISD

The THSADA ended the annual Coaching School with their 2018-2019 THSADA Board of Director orientation

The THSADA has grown to the point where we were able to hire an Assistant Executive Director. The THSADA hired Bob DeJonge-former Director of Athletics-Keller ISD-to assume the new role. Bob was formally introduced at the THSADA General Session and started his new duties on September 1st. Bob will coordinate all Region Director’s and Region meetings along with working alongside Kathy Mathis and THSADA membership. The THSADA has also hired several former Athletic Directors in a part-time position to assist the THSADA with several specific duties. They are as follows:

Larry Peil-Texas Athletic Administrators Certification Coordinator  
Bill Daws-Exhibits Coordinator  
Dave Stephenson-Strategic Partnerships Coordinator

THSADA Membership has grown to over 1,080 and we have seen an increase in membership with the dual-position Athletic Directors. Significant growth has occurred with the Athletic Director/Head Football Coach position. The TAAC program has been a significant reason why membership has grown as the TAAC program has given the dual position Athletic Director an avenue towards state certification as an Athletic Administrator.

The THSADA hosted a meeting in September of the THSADA Leadership Group to discuss the upcoming calendar year and set the vision and direction for the THSADA. These were two days of meetings held at the THSADA office in Houston and consisted of the THSADA office staff, President Shawn Pratt, President-elect Rodney Chant and Vice President David Kuykendall.

September was the first official months of Region meetings and at-

**...Continued from Exec Director Report**

tendance at these initial meetings was very good. A variety of topics were discussed along with the normal THSADA business. September and October are the months the THSADA starts mobilizing for State Conference registration for both Attendees and Exhibitors. UIL Legislative Council was held in October in Pflugerville with a variety of proposals and initiatives on the agenda. The NIAAA will hold their annual National AD Conference in San Antonio from December 14-18, 2018. The THSADA Board of Director will hold their annual meeting in Waco at the Hilton Hotel on December 5th and 6th. The Board of Directors and the THSADA Committee Chairs will attend and will have two days of meetings, discussions and a presentation by the UIL Staff.

**THSADA Committee Chairs**

Membership: Maria Kennedy-El Paso ISD  
Awards: Rodney Saveat-Beaumont ISD  
Policy: Vince Sebo-Tomball ISD  
Publications: Bernie Mulvaney-Goose Creek ISD  
Athletic: Lynn Pool-Austin ISD  
Officials: Johnny Tusa-Waco ISD  
TAAC: Jerry Littlejohn-Frisco ISD  
NIAAA: Brenda Marshall-Corpus Christi ISD

**THSADA Office**

Executive Director-Rusty Dowling  
Assistant Executive Director-Bob DeJonge  
Director of Membership/Registrations-Kathy Mathis  
Administrative Assistant-Ellissa Unger  
TAAC Coordinator-Larry Peil  
Exhibits Coordinator-Bill Daws  
Strategic Partnership Coordinator-Dave Stephenson



**President Letter - Shawn Pratt**

What an honor to serve you the THSADA as your president. I have learned so much over the years with my interactions with so many of you and I am honored to be serving you. While serving as an officer I have learned a great deal from our former Presidents, John Crawford and Debbie Decker. Both served our organization with great dedication and professionalism, and both have been great mentors for me in this position and still today are willing to help me in anyway. Our current officers, including Debbie as past president, Rodney Chant as president elect, and our new vice president David Kuykendall have already met in Houston with Executive Director Rusty Dowling and Assistant Executive Director Bob DeJonge to work on the upcoming year. We hope to continue the growth of our organization in improving our profession and athletics in our great state.

As I did at coaching school I want to encourage you to be involved in our association. Being involved doesn’t always mean running for a position, you don’t have to be an officer or board member to be part of the process. Sharing your thoughts with your regional leadership, or with us as officers helps us all know how our membership feels on the important issues that affect us all. The direction of our organization and what we communicate with the UIL, THSCA, TGCA, etc., should reflect how the majority of our membership feels. This is why it is so important for us to all attend our regional meetings and to communicate your thoughts to the people serving.

Our association’s membership continues to grow and financially we have over \$400,000 in the bank, both of which are very positive signs of the current strength of our organization. Rusty has done a great job of putting us in a healthy financial state and we appreciate his efforts. Being in a good financial state will allow our association to be efficient and effective when trying to meet our goals and objectives this year.

Our TAAC certification is off to a great start and many of us will finish up the second half this year at our state convention. Professional development is one of the most important things our association can provide members, making the progression of TAAC vital to the quality of our association in the future.

I hope the rest of the fall brings the programs at your schools’ success. I am honored to be serving the THSADA and grateful for the support. I look forward to seeing those that attend the NIAAA in San Antonio, and the rest of your in Waco at our state convention.

Please feel free to contact me if I can do anything for you. spratt@mckinneyisd.net

Sincerely,  
Shawn Pratt





## Impressions of New Assistant A.D.

*Lee Martinez, Goose Creek CISD*

Coming in to this job reminds me of when I got my first head coaching position in fall of 1996. I had all the answers, and everything was going to be just great. Becoming an Assistant Athletic Director was going to be an extension of coaching, because I knew what a good program should look like, the consistencies of a staff's daily grind, the involvement of the school faculty and community, upgrading facilities, and more importantly, the importance of the feeder programs. So setting up the Head Coaches throughout the district to have success is going to be easy.

I quickly learned that it is not that easy. There is a lot that I need to learn. I never realized all the details that go in to running a school district. Being an Assistant Athletic Director has given me a different perspective on how I look at a school district, and athletics. The roles the School district's directors play in upgrading facilities has really intrigued me. I never realize the amount of work that goes into simply upgrading a facility. Every director in our school district is affected when a school bond is passed for an upgrade when it comes to athletics. Each director has to have their input about the upgrade, to make sure it is cost efficient, it is safe, installed properly, etc. Each director has a role to play as the facility is built. I have learned the importance of passing School Bonds. After a bond is proposed it still has to be approved by the voters in the community. So, to assist with the bond there has to be a strategic plan in place that shows the community the purpose and the importance of the bond. That side of athletics I have never been a part of. It gives me a better understanding why upgrading facilities is not an easy thing to do. As a former head coach, I never knew all this red tape had to take place in order to improve facilities.

Athletics to me was just sports; football, baseball, soccer, volleyball, etc., nothing else. In this position, anything and everything that has to do with sports is a part of my job. Dealing with lockers, equipment, an emergency plan for a team, and in one case, an individualized emergency plan, community organizations that want to be recognized, alumni, and the inevitable District Pass; everyone wants one. Community Organizations that raise money for the school district want to see you involved in their organization; and attending their weekly events or meetings is not uncommon. The amount of detail that goes in to managing a stadium is something that I will never take for granted again. For example, the press box. There has to be food set up every week for visitors, board members, and the superintendent. Rosters that label the Home and the Visiting team are in every booth for coaches that are scouting, stadium announcers, guests, and the local sports reporter. Is the scoreboard properly working? Making sure all lights not only turn on, but their respected functions are efficient as well. Bus parking to me was something I never thought about in my 23 years of coaching. Now it is something

*Story continued on page 5...*



## *Bob DeJonge Assistant Executive Director*

Who is Bob? I retired this past June after 38 years in public education. I started as Junior high coach in Texarkana Arkansas. From there I moved to coach at Liberty Eylau HS on the Texas side of Texarkana. In 1991 we moved to Keller where I taught and coached for 8 years before becoming Director of Secondary Curriculum for two years. In 2000 I got my dream job as Keller's Director of Athletics! Along the way I was privileged to serve as the THSADA Region three Director and later served as the THSADA Awards Committee Chair as well as your President in 2015. Tricia and I have two wonderful daughters, two great sons' in law and three awesome grandkids!

Well I'm only about two months in to my new role as your Assistant Executive Director. During that short period of time I've learned that there is much to learn! As I get up to speed on the inner workings of our association as well as working in close contact with our Regional Directors as we plan the Regional meetings I'm getting a better sense of who and what THSADA really is. Organizationally we've grown from just over 200 to nearly 1100 in just a few short years. Coinciding with the implementation of TAAC our State Conference attendance continues to grow by leaps and bounds. Vendors from far and wide contact us every day wanting to join our efforts to be the largest and most significant AD's organization in the nation.

If we try to analyze why we have this sudden and sustained growth and interest in our organization I think it comes down to three components.

1. We have a leadership team dedicated to sustainable growth, leadership and meaningful professional development. This team includes office staff, THSADA officers, Regional Directors, Committee Chairs and Committee members. In the early days our leadership team consisted of a few

*Story continued on page 5...*



...Continued from Impressions

that I look at as soon I get to any other athletic stadium. Do we have enough stadium workers, ticket takers, security, law enforcement? Is the ambulance located in strategic place that enables easy on field access? These are very important details that go in to properly running a stadium for every single event.

It amazes me on how much money is expected by the Head Coaches. I have not met a head coach yet whose budget is enough. I mean that in a respectful way. Any good head coach is always looking to improve in every aspect of their program. It does not matter the sport, every head coach wants more. As an Assistant Athletic Director that is tough to listen to and not explain to them that there is a process that must be followed, and other programs that have needs as well. While a head coach I can say I never understood that either, now I get it. I just thought if the Athletic Director wanted to increase my budget he/she could. Budgets go much further into detail than that. There are so many expenses that go unnoticed, that budgets have to be manage with a strategy that is suited for everyone. Dealing with fields, chemicals, ants, weeds, wear and tear, community usage, lights, rentals, etc. all have to be considered when dealing with budgeting. When you're a head coach, you are solely focused on your program, as an Assistant Athletic Director your focus is the entire district.

There is so much more to this job. With all this, you still have to find a way to keep the coaches happy at all levels. As I did in the fall of 1996, I soon realized how wrong I was, and how much I did not know about the way athletics is managed as an entirety. I know I have gained a new respect for the Athletic Director position and everything that has to be endured . I see things so much differently now. There are many things that were not even noticed by me before that have now become vital to me. I feel privileged to be in this position and look forward to the challenges it will present to me. I realize that this is a tough job, but it is also very rewarding.



dedicated but overworked AD's. Now this team exceeds 80 members. Each and every one leading in the same direction.

2. TAAC must be considered a primary driver in our membership growth. If you think back to our last State Conference, you'll remember seeing each session nearly filled to capacity. Our members recognize the value of professional development but so do our vendors, superintendents, and our partner organizations such as the UIL, THSCA and TGCA. This coming spring we'll graduate our first group of TAAC Certified Athletic Directors! Pretty exciting!

3. Our membership – this group of nearly 1100 around the state use their Regional meetings as a place to share ideas and strategies, discuss issues and look for solutions to problems that challenge their region or the entire state. The needs and expectations of our members drive our organization to be the top AD organization in the nation. As I travel around the State to these meetings I get a feeling about the unique nature of each region but also see that each AD and Region have similar needs and face many of the same challenges.

As we move forward this year and beyond I'm confident that our leadership team will continue to not only celebrate our current successes but even more importantly plan for our future growth. I look forward to many exciting years of service.

Bob DeJonge



**WHATABURGER.**

**THE Group DINING PROGRAM**

**SERVING BREAKFAST, BURGERS, AND BUSLOADS**  
Teachers, coaches, and anyone else in charge of feeding large groups of hungry people, we're here to keep everyone happy. The Whataburger Group Dining Program is your way to feed 'em fast and get 'em full.

**LEARN MORE ABOUT Group Dining TODAY**



## 21 Ways to Be a Better Leader

By Lolly Daskal

*"Not everyone will become a great leader, but everyone can become a better leader."*

It doesn't matter if you are running a business, managing a team, or teaching a class--leadership skills are important. Some people seem to be born knowing what to do to inspire and lead people, but for most of us it doesn't come that naturally.

Luckily for us, leadership isn't a magical gift but a set of skills that you can acquire and practice. It may come more easily to some than to others, but it's within reach of all of us. You just have to want it, be willing to work and dare to take a risk.

Wherever you are, whatever you do, here are 21 ways you can start to become a better leader today:

- 1. Manage your emotions.** Your emotions give you energy. If they're low, your energy is low; if they're running high, you feel positive and optimistic. To be at your best as a leader, manage your emotions--when you do, you manage your energy too.
- 2. Develop your skills.** If you don't have the skills to lead, no title or position will ever make you into the leader you want to be. There's only one way to become a better leader, and that's to work on your leadership skills, develop expertise in your field, and discover the heart of what leadership is about for you.
- 3. Become a great communicator.** Discipline yourself to understand what's happening around you by observing and listening. A great leader is always a skilled communicator--not only as speaker but as a listener, someone who stays focused and tuned in to the nuance of a conversation.
- 4. Admit when you are wrong.** It takes a strong, confident person to say they are wrong. Sometimes people think that admitting you're wrong is a sign of weakness, but in fact just the opposite is true--the more honest and open you are, the more people will respect you as a leader.
- 5. Learn how to spot talent.** A huge element of great leadership is knowing how to connect with the right kind of people--those who can move your vision forward and develop successful strategies. But hiring great individuals is only half the game;

it's just as important to understand how people of diverse backgrounds and abilities can best work together.

- 6. Be part of the team.** There's an acronym that says "team" stands for Together Everyone Achieves More, and great leadership comes from those who see themselves as part of a team, who are willing to roll up their sleeves and do what it takes to support, help, guide and mentor.
- 7. Give credit where it's due** It's not uncommon to see someone in a leadership position take credit for the work of others, but true leaders are generous with credit. They know that any great accomplishment takes many people and talents.
- 8. Be a mentor, not a preacher.** People are interested in growth and development; they want to know how they can do better and find their own path. As a leader your job is to mentor them, guide them and support them--not to boss them or preach to them.
- 9. Invest in people.** To be a great leader, you need to start at the heart of what matters in your organization--and what matters is your people. If you want to see them happy, engaged, loyal and dedicated, make the time to invest in them, nurture them and provide them with a clear vision of what needs to be done.
- 10. Give freedom and be flexible.** As long as people know how to get the job done right, stay out of their way. A leader who fosters freedom and flexibility gives people room to work in whatever way is best for them.
- 11. Be quick to praise.** Praise people often and openly. Let others know when the work is well done, a job is completed with excellence and the results are great. But when it comes to feedback that's focused on development and growth, do it privately. It's likely to feel like a negative assessment, and no wants to feel they're being berated in public.
- 12. Bond with your team.** It's easy for people to talk about wanting great teams, but that doesn't happen by itself. It takes a leader who's willing to get in the trenches and spend time working with their team to create the bond that great teams share.
- 13. Get out of your office.** Come in early to get your work done while things are peaceful. Then, when everyone else arrives, get out of your office and connect with people. It's an efficient way to balance the demands of a leadership role, and people feel good about their team when they

can see a leader not only working hard but also being available and accessible. It's a win-win.

- 14. Give the benefit of the doubt.** Many of the bad things that happen in the course of a day or a week--a miscommunication, an uncomfortable moment, an act of disrespect--happen because someone is quick to judge and to give their opinion. The best leaders give the benefit of the doubt. They work on being fair and kind and on always giving people a second chance or the benefit of the doubt.
- 15. Stop micromanaging.** Leaders who micromanage their teams are not allowing the talented to excel, the gifted to produce, and the experienced to make best use of their skills. If you want to be a better leader, step back and give people the room they need to do their best.
- 16. Have fun.** Business may be serious, but the best leaders know how to build excitement and fun. They're great at creating an optimistic culture and an enthusiastic environment--they know fun's important when people are working hard.
- 17. Recognize the gifts of your people.** Learn to quickly pick up on the gifts and strengths of your people. When you do, you're best equipped to help them build on their strengths and grow in the most productive direction.
- 18. Hold people accountable.** One of the biggest derailments of leadership happens when people aren't held accountable. If responsibility and accountability are important to you, don't let those who are slacking get away with it. You gain respect by sticking to your principles, and your team stays highly functional. It can't get better than that.
- 19. Give trust to earn trust.** When you trust, you send a message that you believe in people and have confidence in them. And, in turn, they're more inclined to trust you.
- 20. Show compassion and care.** Compassion helps to bridge the gaps between what the organization needs, what your people want, and what you can give. And it's the leaders who show compassion who are the most admired.
- 21. Lead with love.** Amor vincit omnia: Even the ancient Romans knew that love conquers all. Love your people, love your organization and love those you serve, and you'll have discovered the secret of great leadership.





*By Stephen Collins;  
Alvin Sun Sports Editor*

**IOWA COLONY** - Alvin ISD served as the hosts for the monthly Region V meeting of the Texas High School Athletic Directors Association, which was held at the Heritage Complex's Liberty Alumni Center on Wednesday morning

Region V Director Debbie Fuchs (also the athletic director for Clear Creek ISD) said the organization meets monthly to discuss pressing issues concerning AD's around the surrounding area that the region covers.

"Last month, we talked about safety, because that's at the forefront of what our brains are thinking about and today we're talking about some professional learning ideas that we want to make beneficial to all coaches," said Fuchs, who's currently in her second year as the Region V chairperson. "We want to make it educational as well a time for us to come together and discuss some topics."

Fuchs said Region V includes about 185 athletic directors with the chapter reaching as far as Schulenburg in Fayette County.

"We normally expect about 75 to 85 (AD's) for each meeting," she added. "The athletic director's association has been around for 40 to 50 years. Due to (executive director) Rusty's (Dowling) wonderful leadership, our AD membership has grown to the largest in the country. We has grown to be one of the largest."

"So that's really a compliment to Rusty and their work. We want to bring in coordinators and head football coaches and also the AD's at their campuses. We just want it to be a very learning time. It's also a time of camaraderie. I learn so much from my fellow AD's, who are also my friends. Without their mentorship and help, I wouldn't be standing here today."

Dowling, who guided Texas City to a pair of state football titles in the 1990s, has been the statewide executive director for the THSADA since 2012. Dowling started his gridiron coaching career in Mission, before moving to San Antonio Jay HS and then Texas City for 10 years. He proceeded to take both the AD and head football coaching jobs at McKinney and later decided to assume full-time administrative athletic director duties with the Katy school district. "I retired there (Katy) in 2012 and took this job as executive director at the same time," Dowling said. "Right now, our membership in the association is about 1,070. That includes some public and private schools. I've only been here for six years, so we're still a relatively new organization, as far as athletic administrators go. The day I took over, we were at 230 (members) and we've jumped up pretty well since then."

*Story continued on page 8...*

## Burke Center Service Day







## Clear Bag Policy in Austin ISD

Times have changed in our Society. Safety and security is of utmost importance for all of our fans, players, parents, and staff that enter the stadium. As a result, we chose to go with a clear bag policy in Austin ISD for all of our Central Athletic Facilities.

Like many other coaches, there is no need in reinventing the wheel. We reached out to the University of Texas, who rolled out their policy the previous year; to find out how they implemented it and what problems they ran into. They helped us identify suppliers of bags and provided valuable information on size, type, etc. We wanted the same policy as UT so that fans could use the same bag for our Austin ISD games as they use when they go to UT games. We also quickly found out that communication of the policy was very important.

We met with our District communications department to come up with a plan. The plan included development of a flyer, short videos, social media content, and other media that we communicated through various communications mediums such as online, website, social media, news media, and even a press conference. In addition, we called outside districts and emailed them information on the policy to get the word out. We trained our game day ticket taker/gate keeper staff. We also met with our Chief of Police to get help from their department. Details of the policy and a link to our website can be found here:

[www.austinisd.org/athletics](http://www.austinisd.org/athletics)

In addition, we reached out to other Districts such as Northeast in San Antonio to get details on implementation of the policy. They were very helpful in describing how their staff would be used to implement the policy on game day at the stadium.

Overall, the policy has been well received by our patrons. Being proactive with regard to safety was a small step that we felt was really necessary to make the City of Austin safe when they come to a football game on Friday night. ★

## Bigger Than Ball

From 2012-2017 the TAPPS Division II District 3 football championship went through Holy Cross of San Antonio or Regents School of Austin. For the past three seasons, both teams ended up playing each other in the playoffs as well. Even though prior to 2012 the schools had never played each other, the Holy Cross vs Regents match-up quickly became a rivalry.

Realignment this year put Regents and Holy Cross into two different districts. Both schools wanted to continue their rivalry, so non-district match-ups were scheduled. However, wanting to use the rivalry for something bigger than football, Regents Head Coach Beck Brydon and Holy Cross Head Coach Mike Harrison decided to bring their teams together to kick off two-a-days in a far different manner.

“When we scheduled our non-district match-up, Coach Harrison and I thought it would be good for our boys to spend some together off of the field, getting to know each other on a different level. For the most part, our kids come from different backgrounds with different life experiences,” said Brydon. Regents is a classical, Christian school with predominantly Caucasian families, located in southwest Austin. Holy Cross is a Roman Catholic school with predominantly Hispanic families, located in the Loma Vista neighborhood of west San Antonio.

Coach Harrison stated “Every school works so hard to build a championship level program and our schools Risk Management Manuscript for Texas High School Athletic Administrators’ Association’s Newsletter no different. But when you break the components down though, most of what we are doing is focused on us. We wanted to do something where our focus was on someone else.”

...Continued from Stephen Collins

“It’s only fitting that we’re the largest AD association in the country, because all our coaching organizations in the state of Texas are also the largest in the country. Some of the things we do is sponsor all these regional meetings. We have eight regions throughout the state. Every one of the regions have monthly regional meetings like we’re doing here. I attend every one of them and just got back from another one in El Paso last week.

“We facilitate the regional meetings. We also put on our annual state conference. We work with the Texas High School Coaches Association with coaching school at their big summer convention. We also basically work with the UIL on information that athletic administrators need to know.”

Along with winning the state titles at Texas City, another highlight of Dowling’s coaching career was seeing the high school stadium at Mission getting dedicated after former Dallas Cowboys’ coach Tom Landry in 1984 and also meeting the NFL and hometown legend himself.

“You walk reverently around there,” Dowling said. “I was in Mission when they dedicated the stadium to coach Landry. It was an incredible event. The city of Mission reveres coach Landry still to this day and his father, as well. There’s a Landry park in Mission. We had opportunities to see him come through Mission. When you’re practicing on the football field and you would see coach Landry come by, that was something that quickly got your attention.

“He was always very supportive of us and when we dedicated that stadium to him, that was quite an event.”

**The next meeting for Region 5 is scheduled for Nov. 7 in Spring Branch.**

Story continued on page 9...







*...Continued from Bigger than Ball*

On Saturday, August 4, the two teams met in Driftwood, TX to lock arms and serve the Burke Center for Youth, a foster, adoption and residential treatment facility for boys aged 11-17. Coaches and dads from each school joined the players for a half-day of various labor-intensive projects such as building lean-to shades for horses, fencing, wood chipping, mass area clean-up, and improving their sand volleyball pit and basketball court. To encourage relationship building, each project was made up of kids, dads and coaches from both schools.

**By the numbers:**

- 660 man hours
- 115 football players
- 60 dads of football players
- 20 coaches
- 15 projects

Burke Center Executive Director Steve Fournier said “This work will help to greatly improve the lives of the boys who are healing here. One of the projects included clean-up of a camping area that has been unusable for over 9 months. The boys now have many more opportunities to play outdoors and to enjoy therapeutic healing at the ranch. Each boy can now has more areas to play, and can now use equine therapy to open their hearts and minds.”

Following the projects, the two school communities came together for lunch and more “get to know you” time. Coach Brydon added “This day was about serving someone else, but it was also about breaking down walls and giving our kids the opportunity to start and/or build real relationships with guys they battle fiercely against on the football field. Life is more than just the game itself.”



## Not an Ordinary Day

February 9, 2018, was a busy ordinary day for Tara Grubbs until the final minutes of the Richardson Pearce – Dallas Jesuit game. A busy day is a typical day for Grubbs as the Head Athletic Trainer for JJ Pearce HS. She had just returned from maternity leave a few weeks earlier, so she was just getting back in the swing of things – chaotic athletic periods where everyone needs something in the athletic training room, checking on her own 3 children, grabbing a bite for dinner, and making sure she had everything she needed to provide coverage for the soccer games happening on campus that afternoon and evening. Tara, who has just finished her 11th year at Pearce, had just finished dinner and checking on her family as she headed out the door to the field. As she was to drive out to the field, Grubbs realized that she had forgotten the AED, something told her to go get it then before she forgot about it. She returned to the athletic training room and grabbed the AED backpack and started towards the field.

Christian Lerma and his family, teammates, and everyone at the Pearce B field are glad Tara turned around and retrieved the AED that early evening. During the final minutes of the varsity game, Jesuit soccer player, Christian Lerma fell to the turf. Lerma, a senior, lead Dallas Jesuit to the 6A state soccer title last year. He scored the game-winning goal in overtime

against Arlington Sam Houston.

When Lerma went down, Tara rushed to his side. “I looked at him, and his coach was there too. We made eye contact, and I told him to call 911,” Grubbs said.

Lerma was having trouble breathing. “At that point, I knew we were dealing with something serious,” Grubbs said. She yelled for someone to bring her a defibrillator from the sideline, and got to work. When Tara yelled for the AED, everyone realized that intense district soccer game turned dramatically into something else. Two doctors that were in the crowd came to assist Grubbs with CPR as one of the Pearce soccer players brought her the AED.

“I opened it up, and put the pads on,” she said. “It told us that we needed to deliver the shock, and then it told us to start compressions.” After the AED delivered its shock, they continued compressions until the ambulance arrived. Tara continued to assist the paramedics until they left the field. The game was called at this point by mutual agreement of both teams. The Jesuit team was obviously shaken by these events, but the Pearce team was just as emotional. Lerma played club soccer with several Pearce players and is close friends with them. Several of the Jesuit and Pearce players went to the hospital the next day to check on Christian. They all took a picture and sent it to Grubbs letting her know that Lerma was feeling much better and thanked her for heroic measures. Christian said many times how very

thankful he is for each person who helped saved his life. “I have no words to describe how thankful I am for Mrs. Grubbs being there. I’m blessed that she was there, and I’m blessed that she was there to help me out and how she took control of the situation,” he said.

Everybody was asking, “Is it scary,” said Grubbs. “Yes it was scary! But I was just doing what I knew to do.” It was her first time using the AED on a live victim. “I’m grateful that he’s OK,” she said while becoming overwhelmed with emotion. “I’m grateful that his mom gets to wake up and still have a kid. I’m grateful for the doctors and anybody that helped me because I couldn’t have done it by myself.” Grubbs says she can recall three instances where an AED saved a student’s life in the Richardson ISD in the last few years.

She is thankful for the AED and even more for the reminder she was given to get the AED as she drove to the field the first time. What she thought would just be an ordinary soccer game became not so ordinary.

Jesuit College Prep School honored Tara in March at the rematch between Jesuit and Pearce at Jesuit’s stadium. It was a great evening especially when she received many hugs from Christian and his family as they were reunited with each other for the first time since that night in February.





# Risk Management Manuscript

for Texas High School Athletic Administrators' Association's Newsletter

## Failure to Fit Football Helmet Leading to a Concussion

Ripple V. Marble Falls  
Independent School District  
2015 WL 1640554  
March 27, 2015

### Introduction

In fall of 2007, Ripple began his freshman year at Marble Falls High School in Marble Falls Independent School District. Throughout his high school career, he participated in the Marble Falls High School Football team, which was a voluntary, extracurricular activity. For the duration of his time on the team, the Athletic Director served as the Head Football Coach.

### Background

Ripple attests that he was not fitted for a helmet in anticipation of his junior year, so he received a helmet that did not fit him when he returned to practice that year. He further attests that during an early-October 2009 game, his head caused him significant pain. After he told Belk that his head was pounding, he was nauseous, and he felt dizzy, he accidentally asked Belk for a Midol instead of a Tylenol. Ripple attests that Belk asked him if it hurt a lot. Ripple replied that it did not. Ripple attests that Belk gave him Tylenol and instructed him to lie down and rest on the trip home.

### Findings

Even viewing the evidence in the light most favorable to Plaintiff, there is no evidence that the District acted with bad faith or gross professional misjudgment with regard to Ripple's physical safety. According to Plaintiff, his doctors cleared him annually to play to football. The coaching staff never sent Plaintiff back onto the field during the game when he sustained the injuries he complained of. The only concussion that Plaintiff informed the athletic team about was the one he sustained after the Lampasas game; he avoided reporting and seeking treatment for his concussive symptoms thereafter in an attempt to remain competitive for college scholarships. During the incident in Plaintiff's senior year when Plaintiff became severely dehydrated and began bleeding out of his nose and ears, Plaintiff attests that the coaching team gave the team water breaks.

### Judgement

Although there may be a question of fact as to whether failing to fit Ripple's helmet at the start of his Junior season or failing to affirmatively identify signs of concussions through Ripple's behavior rises to the level of negligence, the facts do not present a question of fact as to whether Defendant acted in bad faith or with gross professional misjudgment. Accordingly, the Court grants Defendant's Motion for Summary judgement.

### Risk Management Actions

The following are a few risk management actions that athletic directors should implement:

- include the full-text of both the state law and state association requirements in coaching handbooks and during in-service programs,
- create and use of a Concussion Incident Form/Concussion Clearance Form on which a coach or athletic trainer will provide a brief description of any suspected head injury to a student-athlete, document the return-to-play (RTP) protocol that is employed, and to which may be attached the written RTP clearance by the appropriate medical personnel, and
- clarify for student-athletes and parents that the school retains the right to refuse to grant medical clearance for an athlete's RTP if evidence is provided by any qualified individual (a coach, athletic trainer or other appropriate medical professional) that the athlete remains concussion-symptomatic.

-30-

Thomas H. Sawyer, Ed.D.  
Professor Emeritus, Kinesiology, Recreation, and Sport  
5840 South Ernest Street  
Terre Haute, IN 47802  
thomas.sawyer@indstate.edu









# Texas Athletic Administrators Certification Program



The 2018 THSADA State Conference in Waco saw the first rollout of the Texas Athletic Administrators Certification program-known as TAAC. Registration at the State Conference was the highest it's ever been and a good share of that can be attributed to the initial TAAC program. THSADA membership has also spiked as a result of TAAC.

### At the 2018 State Conference:

- 320 individuals took TAAC courses.
- 278 of 320 took 8 or more TAAC classes.
- 181 of the 320 took all 14 classes.
- 40 individuals watched the TAAC video for credit

The Texas Athletic Administrator Certificate (TAAC) is a THSADA, *two-year* state certification specific for athletic administrators in the *State of Texas with an emphasis on UIL/TAPPS compliance*. The *Texas-based* curriculum will consist of those courses that will enhance the ability of the athletic administrator to successfully perform the duties and responsibilities of an Athletic Administrator in the State of Texas.

*TAAC is not a state requirement and not a replacement for LTI*

### Purpose of TAAC:

- To certify that an Athletic Administrator is better prepared to carry out the duties of a *Texas* Secondary Athletic Administrator.
- Prepare New and Aspiring AD's for a role in Texas Secondary Athletic Administration.

**TAAC Overview:** To receive a Texas Athletic Administrator's Certificate, a candidate must complete ALL classes. *Cost to take TAAC classes is included in current THSADA Membership. Non-THSADA members will be charged a fee for TAAC classes.* Classes are conducted at the THSADA State Conference. Classes can be offered outside of these events, however there may be a charge for members and non-members.

TAAC has been developed by the THSADA through a group of Texas Retired Athletic Administrators, the THSADA Professional Development Committee, UIL Staff, TAPPS Staff and representatives of various UIL committees and Superintendent members of the UIL Legislative Council.

**Faculty:** The curriculum that will make up the certification will be delivered by those individuals who have exceptional experience and knowledge of the specific topic. This curriculum will be taught by THSADA members, UIL Staff, designated industry speakers, TAPPS Staff, designated topic professionals and ISD Superintendents.

**Certification:** Once the candidate successfully completes all Sections/Courses, they will be awarded and recognized as having a Texas Athletic Administrator's Certificate. TAAC Certification will confirm and validate that an Athletic Administrator has completed *Texas-specific field of study in Athletic Administration*.





# TICKET ROAR **TR** POWERED BY **eventbrite**

## *Campus-Wide Ticketing and Registration Solution*

ATHLETICS | PERFORMING ARTS | DANCES | CAMPS | AND MORE

### BENEFITS



#### GREATER ACCOUNTABILITY

- ▶ Verify & count every ticket
- ▶ Accurate cash-out
- ▶ Detailed reports



#### LESS WORK

- ▶ Manage your crowd
- ▶ Less cash to manage
- ▶ Limit fan access to school



#### INCREASE SALES

- ▶ Easily promote your events
- ▶ Cross-promote other events
- ▶ Advance sales & data capture



#### IMPROVE FAN EXPERIENCE

- ▶ Convenient purchase options
- ▶ Mobile-friendly
- ▶ Avoid long ticket lines



## *Proud Partner of 420+ Texas Schools*

“Going with TicketRoar has diversified how our fans can purchase tickets, shortened ticket lines and streamlined our ticket sales reports. Their customer service personnel are immediately accessible, quick to respond and are genuinely interested in making us look good for our customers. From introduction of the process with our personnel to post-season evaluation, they’re with us all the way.”

**KEVIN GREENE**

Executive Director of Athletics, Forth Worth ISD, TX

CONTACT US TODAY TO LEARN MORE:

Kaitlin McCann • kmccann@ticketroar.com • 214.619.5637  
Jennifer Lewis • jlewis@ticketroar.com • 210.273.5566

**ticketroar.com**  **@ticketroar**