



BULLETIN

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The Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference



Affiliated with the National Association of Secondary School Principals ♦ Member National Federation of State High School Associations ♦ Member National Middle School Association

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“If mankind minus one were of one opinion, then mankind would be no more justified in silencing the one than the one - if he had the power - would be justified in silencing mankind.”

- John Stuart Mill

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CAS RELEASES SCHOOL SECURITY SURVEY RESULTS

By Dennis C. Carrithers, Assistant Executive Director

In February, 2007, the Connecticut Association of Schools initiated two surveys about school security in cooperation with the state legislature in support of SB01110. One survey was structured for school principals and the other for superintendents/districts. The surveys were designed to be relatively concise to encourage responses that could be made quickly but still provide key information. The surveys were conducted to gather information about the current status and needs of Connecticut schools in preparation for legislative discussions on providing state funding to help schools and districts with school security measures. Respondents were able to complete the surveys on-line via the Connecticut Association of Schools' website.

CAS sent all K-12 principals an email notification explaining the purpose of the survey and requesting their participation. A similar notification was sent to all superintendents from the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS.) Both organizations emphasized the importance of obtaining accurate information about the current status of security measures in Connecticut schools in order to support the efforts of legislative leaders who are advocating for state funding to assist districts in their security efforts.

We were pleased that about half (86) of Connecticut public school districts and about a third (388) of all Connecticut schools responded. For a quick survey with a short turn-around time, the return percentage was sizeable and the data collected should be helpful in gaining an understanding of what measures already exist in the state. CAS would like to thank all the responding schools/districts for their input and also thank CAPSS Executive Director David Larson for his assistance.

Summary of Results

The most important issues for principals and superintendents centered around access to school buildings. Concerns about building entry, doors, and visitors who gain access to the school during the school day were prevalent. About two thirds of all responses were related to those topics. In summary, 107 responses dealt with visitors/parents; 78 responses pertained to concerns over doors (open doors, propped open doors, unlocked doors, etc.); and another 73 were about entry issues. Less frequent responses concerned security cameras (21); identification and badges (12); weapons/ violence/disruption (11); and a variety of lesser issues.

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FIFTH EDITION OF SCHOOL LAW GUIDE NOW AVAILABLE

We are pleased to announce that the fifth edition of [A Practical Guide to Connecticut School Law](#) is now available through CAS. The *Guide* is written by Tom Mooney, a lawyer who chairs the School Law Practice Group at Shipman & Goodwin and teaches education law at both the University of Connecticut School of Education and the University of Connecticut School of Law. Tom is a long-time friend of CAS, and he has written "Legal Mailbag" for the CAS Bulletin since 2001.



Tom Mooney

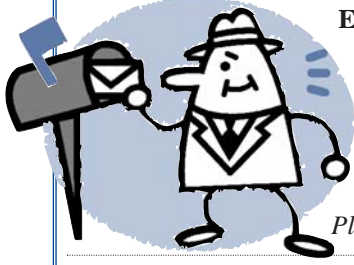
The *Guide* is the basic reference work on school law for school administrators and school board members in Connecticut. First written in 1994, it provides an understandable explanation of the important principles of school law, as follows:

- Chapter One: Board Organization, Authority and Responsibilities
- Chapter Two: Religion and the Schools
- Chapter Three: Teacher Employment, Evaluation and Dismissal
- Chapter Four: Students
- Chapter Five: Special Education
- Chapter Six: Collective Bargaining
- Chapter Seven: Obligations of School Boards as Employer

New to the fifth edition are the latest developments on student rights and discipline, *No Child Left Behind*, labor relations, special education, and the other legal issues that school administrators confront. The fifth edition also comes with a CD with the full text to permit electronic word searches, as well as links to applicable statutes and case law. New with this edition, Shipman & Goodwin now has its own server so that it can keep these links up to date.

LEGAL MAILBAG

By Attorney Thomas B. Mooney, Neag School of Education, University of Connecticut



Editor's Note: *Legal Mailbag* is a regular feature in the CAS BULLETIN. We invite readers to submit short, law-related questions of practical concern to school administrators. Each month we will select questions and publish answers. While these answers cannot be considered formal legal advice, they may be of help to you and your colleagues. We may edit your questions, and we will not identify the authors. Please submit your questions to: [<legalmailbag@casciac.org>](mailto:legalmailbag@casciac.org)

Q. Dear Mailbag: For the last five years, the football coach at our high school has been bad. Really bad. After we finished this last season at 1-7, I thought he would just fade away. So, I was surprised when we heard that he is planning to return next season. I called him right up to tell him that he is fired, but he said he is coming back, whether I like it or not. He said something about some new law and that it's too late to fire him now. Say it ain't so!

- *Desperate Dude*

A. Dear Dude: You may have fumbled here. Since 2004, coaches who have completed three seasons must be notified within ninety days of the completion of the season that their contract will not be renewed. Moreover, after receiving such notice, such coaches have the right to appeal that decision to the board of education "in a manner prescribed by" the board of education. The statute does provide that school districts remain free to terminate the contract of a coach at any time "(1) for reasons of moral misconduct, insubordination or a violation of the rules of the board of education, or (2) because a sport has been cancelled by the board of education." These reasons would not apply here, and, sadly, it appears that you own this guy for another year. In any event, you should make sure that the board of education has adopted review procedures so that you will be able to make a dismissal decision stick next year (unless of course the team wins the state championship).

Q. Dear Mailbag: I have been very dissatisfied with one of my custodians, and I have been supervising her intensively. I was thrilled, therefore, when she came into my office last week and told me she quit. However, my celebration was short-lived. This morning, I got a call from her, telling me that she has rescinded her resignation and plans to return to work tomorrow. Was I right to tell her to stay home?

- *Standing Firm*

A. Dear Firm: You might be OK, but there were two steps you could have taken to seal the deal. First, you should have accepted her resignation immediately. For non-certified staff, appointment and termination decisions are reserved to the superintendent. However, by accepting the resignation on behalf of the superintendent, you may have made it final. Second, you should have moved ahead promptly to post and fill the position. While she may not have been able to rescind her resignation in any case, there are a number of arbitration decisions holding that a resignation cannot be rescinded if the employer has already acted in reliance upon it.

Q. Dear Legal Mailbag: There was a question and answer in the last Legal Mailbag regarding parent complaints and how they become public records as soon as they are put in writing and given to school officials. My question is as follows: What is the retention requirement, if any, for parent complaint letters? Can we throw them out at the end of each school year, or must they be retained for a specific amount of time?

- *Shredder Ready*

A. Dear Ready: As you point out, once a complaint letter is received, it becomes a public record. As such, it must be retained in accordance with the Record Retention Schedule of the Public Records Administrator (online at <http://www.cslib.org/retschedules.htm>). Under the schedules for General Administrative documents as well as Personnel/Labor Relations documents, routine correspondence is to be retained for two years, and complaints are to be retained for two years after the complaint is resolved. Absent some special circumstances, therefore, it would be appropriate to maintain the records for two years after the end of the school year in which the complaint was made. Please note, however, that public agencies must still seek permission from the Public Records Administrator before a record may be destroyed. This procedure is routine and is required whenever a public agency wishes to destroy records after the applicable record retention period has run.

ct news & notes

■ According to data yielded from the 2003 National Survey of Children's Health, 12% of CT's 10-17 year-olds are overweight.

■ In Connecticut, the rate of teen deaths by accident, homicide, and suicide per 100,000 population is 40, compared to a nationwide rate of 66. (Teen death rate is the number of deaths to teens between ages 15 and 19 per 100,000 teens in this age group - data as of 2003.)

NEASC STATS

- As of academic year (AY) 2003-2004, there were 427 New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC)-accredited institutions in Connecticut, including 190 public elementary, middle and secondary schools, 179 private elementary, middle and secondary schools, 19 vocational-technical schools and 39 higher education institutions.

- The 39 NEASC member colleges and universities in Connecticut enroll over 173,000 students who alone represent nearly 5% of the entire state's population. The vast majority of the students studying at higher education institutions in Connecticut (97%) are enrolled at accredited institutions.

- Accredited higher education institutions employ approximately 26,304 full-time faculty and staff and 11,634 part-time faculty and staff whose wage earnings contribute to the gross state product. The number of full-time employees at accredited higher education institutions constitutes an essential segment of the state's labor force. In fact, there are more individuals employed at accredited colleges and universities than there are lawyers, police officers, computer programmers, social workers, clergy, dentists and pharmacists in the state combined.

- Connecticut has a higher proportion of public higher education institutions and enrollees relative to the New England average. Nearly half of Connecticut's higher education institutions (48%) are public versus about one-third (32%) for New England overall.

- Higher education institutions in the state attracted 7,254 foreign students in 2002.

- In AY2003-2004, Connecticut's accredited public elementary, middle and secondary schools spent roughly \$85.1 million on transporting students to and from school.

- Accredited public elementary, middle and secondary schools spent nearly \$380 million in capital expenditures in AY2003-2004.

(Source: NEASC Connecticut Fact Sheet)

... more ct news & notes



Students engage in team building activities during the two-day student leadership conference at Wesleyan University last month.

Connecticut is among the healthiest states in U.S.

Connecticut went up two positions to become the 5th healthiest state in the country, according to the annual America's Health Rankings survey prepared by the United Health Foundation. CT's strong showing is due to its high rate of immunizations and to decreases in smoking, motor vehicle deaths and infant mortality.

The 10 healthiest states from highest to lowest score	The 10 least healthy states from lowest to highest score
1. Minnesota	50. Louisiana
2. Vermont	49. Mississippi
3. New Hampshire	48. South Carolina
4. Hawaii	47. Tennessee
5. Connecticut	46. Arkansas
6. Utah	45. Alabama
7. Massachusetts	44. Oklahoma
8. North Dakota	43. West Virginia
9. Maine	42. Georgia
10. Wisconsin	41. Florida

(Source: Connecticut Town & City, CCM)

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www.casciac.org/pdfs/summer_institute_07.pdf

national news & notes

■ According to a new federal study, going "high-tech" doesn't lead to higher math and reading scores. The study on the effectiveness of education technology was released earlier this month by the National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, a research arm of the Education Department. The study found achievement scores were no higher in classrooms using reading and math software products than in classrooms without the new products. Researchers looked at elementary and secondary classes in 132 schools. The teachers that participated used more than a dozen software products to help deliver their lessons. Nearly all the teachers received training on the products and believed they were well prepared to use the technology in their classrooms.

■ Although principals' and assistant principals' salaries continue to rise, they still do not match the consumer price index (CPI), according to a new report from Educational Research Service (ERS). In terms of cumulative gains, principal and assistant principal salaries have increased by 11.9%, on average, from 2001-02 through 2006-07. In comparison, the CPI increased by 13.8% over the same five-year period. According to the results of the *National Survey of Salaries and Wages in Public Schools*, the mean of the average salaries reported by school systems for junior high and middle school principals in 2006-07 is \$87,866. For senior high school principals, the average is \$92,965. Additionally, the average salaries paid assistant principals in 2006-07 are \$73,020 at the junior high and middle level and \$75,121 at the high school level.

■ A new federal study by the Corporation for National and Community Service has found that volunteer work gives poor teenagers a boost in confidence that can propel them to college.

However, youth from low-income backgrounds have a volunteer rate of 43 percent, compared with 59 percent for other youth, and are less likely to participate in other service or school civic clubs. The group, which promotes volunteering through federal programs such as Senior Corps, AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve America, said it found that poor youth are more likely to volunteer with religious organizations than with youth civic or leadership groups. Some 48 percent of youths from disadvantaged backgrounds who volunteered said they did so because of religious or spiritual beliefs. By volunteering, poor youth are 40 percent more likely to believe they can make a difference in their community and 50 percent more likely to say they probably will graduate from a four-year college, according to the report. (www.signonsandiego.com)

■ Online AP courses are experiencing a surge in popularity. While no firm national statistics exist, school-by-school information suggests strong growth in online AP enrollment in recent years, as high school students' quest to get into top colleges has grown increasingly competitive. Providers have also proliferated, with many state virtual schools and some school districts offering online AP courses, along with universities, companies, and non-profit groups. Enrollments in online AP courses offered by Apex Learning, a Seattle-based online-learning company, skyrocketed from 8,400 in the 2003-04 school year to 30,200 in 2006-07, the company reports. The College Board, the group that sponsors the Advanced Placement program, does not track enrollment in online AP courses. The College Board notes, though, that of the 1.3 million students who took an AP exam in 2006, 1.1 percent, or 14,724 students, said they took an AP course or an AP-exam review program online.

... more national news & notes

■ The Bush administration is letting more children with disabilities take simplified tests under the *No Child Left Behind* education law. The change, outlined in final regulations issued earlier this month, could triple the number of children who can take tests that are easier than those given to most students under the 2002 law. Roughly 10 percent of special education students -- those with the most serious cognitive disabilities -- currently can take simplified alternative tests and have the results count toward a school's annual progress goals. Under the new rules, about an additional 20 percent of children with disabilities could take alternative tests and have those count toward a school's progress goals. The new tests are for children who are not severely disabled but who have been unable to work on grade level at the same pace as their peers because of disabilities, such as some forms of dyslexia. The new tests will not be as easy as those given to the children already exempted from the regular tests. But the tests will not be as hard as those given to typical students. To access the new regulations, visit <http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2007/04/04042007.html>. (Source: www.boston.com)

■ Teachers are less likely than administrators to say their students can excel academically, according to a survey released last week showing that educators have strikingly different perspectives on students and school life. The study of 4,700 teachers and 267 principals and assistant principals in 12 school districts was conducted by the Council of Urban Boards of Education, part of the Alexandria, Va.-based National School Boards Association, in an effort to gauge school climate. Nearly all the administrators agreed that "students at this school are capable of high achievement on standardized exams," but only three-quarters of the teachers concurred. Far more teachers than administrators said that students were not motivated to learn. Eighty-five percent of administrators disagreed with the statement that most students at their schools would not be successful at community college or a university; only 58 percent of teachers disagreed. Those gaps surprised Brian K. Perkins, the principal researcher on the study and the chairman of the council's steering committee. "This wasn't anticipated, but it is certainly real," he said. "Now the question is, what do teachers know to give them a perspective administrators don't have, and how can that

be shared?" The report, "Where We Teach," can be downloaded from the National School Boards Association website at <http://www.nsba.org/site/docs/40500/40409.pdf>.

■ Two McLean (VA) High School students have launched a court challenge against a California company hired by their school to catch cheaters, claiming the anti-plagiarism service violates copyright laws. The lawsuit, filed this week in U.S. District Court in Alexandria, seeks \$900,000 in damages from the for-profit service known as "Turnitin." The service seeks to root out cheaters by comparing student term papers and essays against a database of more than 22 million student papers as well as online sources and electronic archives of journals. In the process, the student papers are added to the database. Two Arizona high school students also are plaintiffs. "All of these kids are essentially straight-A students, and they have no interest in plagiarizing," said Robert A. Vanderhye, a McLean attorney representing the students pro bono. "The problem with [Turnitin] is the archiving of the documents. They are violating a right these students have to be in control of their own property." (www.washingtonpost.com)

■ Far greater shares of students are proficient on state reading and mathematics tests than on the National Assessment of Educational Progress, and those gaps have grown to unprecedented levels since the *No Child Left Behind Act* became law in 2002, concludes a study released earlier this month. The study by Policy Analysis for California Education, a nonprofit research group based at the University of California, Berkeley, was released during the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association. The researchers compiled state and federal testing results for the period 1992 to 2006 from 12 states: Arkansas, California, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Texas, and Washington. In all but two states—Arkansas and Massachusetts—the disparity between the share of students proficient on state reading tests and on NAEP, a congressionally mandated program that tests a representative sample of students in every state, grew or remained the same from 2002 to 2006. A similar widening occurred between state and federal gauges of math performance in eight of 12 states. Those findings call into question whether the

state-reported gains are real or illusory, according to the researchers.

■ *Technology Counts 2007* explores developments in educational technology over the past decade and tracks data from the 50 states and the District of Columbia in several critical areas of technology policy and practice: access, use, and capacity. The report assigns grades to the states for their performance in those three categories. State grades are not comparable with those in last year's report because of changes in two access indicators and improvements in the scoring for indicators related to teacher and administrator licensure. The full *Technology Counts 2007* report can be accessed online at www.edweek.org/go/tc07. See Connecticut's report card below.

STATE TECHNOLOGY REPORT CARD 2007		
	Connecticut	How did the average state score?
Access to technology	C-	C
Use of technology	D+	C+
Capacity to use technology	B	C
Overall grade	C	C+

■ Millions of children eat in school cafeterias that don't get the twice-yearly health inspections required by Congress to help prevent food poisoning. Schools are supposed to get two visits from health inspectors every year. But one in 10 schools didn't get inspected at all last year, according to Agriculture Department data. Thirty percent were visited only once. Inspections are meant to ensure cafeteria workers wash their hands properly and that they keep lunchtime staples such as pizza hot or milk cold to prevent germs from growing. Common violations in cafeterias involve wrong temperatures, failing to keep hot food hot enough or cold food cold enough, or things such as having an open dumpster outside the cafeteria. In school cafeterias, the news is not all bad: sixty-one percent of schools got two or more inspections in the 2005-06 school year. That was the first year Congress required two inspections; the old requirement was one inspection per year. The inspection rules apply to all schools that participate in the federal school lunch program, which provides free and reduced-price meals to low-income children.

legal news & notes

High Court: Don't Delete that E-Mail

New rules make e-mail subject to legal review

Reprinted from "School Administrators of New York State News & Notes," February 2007

With more school district business being conducted online now than ever before, school technology leaders should be aware of new federal rules flowing from a recent ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court. Experts say the rules could force school administrators to rethink their e-mail storage policies and take stock of existing technologies to ensure compliance.

According to the new rules, which went into effect December 1, schools, business, and other organizations are required to keep tabs on all e-mail, instant messages (IM), and other digital communications produced by their employees.

The rules, first approved by the U.S. Supreme Court in April, have been widely reported as important for businesses and other for-profit enterprises. But according to legal experts familiar with the case, the high court's ruling also applies to public schools and other nonprofit organizations.

The rules – which state that any entity involved in litigation must be able to produce "electronically stored information" during the discovery process, in which opposing sides of a legal dispute must share evidence before trial – could have significant implications for school technology departments, especially in places where technicians routinely copy over backup discs and other information housed on school servers.

New York Attorney Alvin F. Lindsay, a partner with Hogan & Hartson LLP, said that while the law has always required schools, corporations, and other entities to produce certain kinds of documentation as evidence in the discovery process, the latest ruling is an affirmation that e-mail messages and electronic documents are part of that mix.

An expert on issues concerning technology and the law, Lindsay has called prematurely deleting or copying over e-mail documents a matter of "virtual shredding."

Lindsay says the rules will require schools and other organizations to think about how and where they store digital information in advance of potential legal skirmishes. Schools, for example, might want to conduct technology inventories to better understand what types of e-mail storage and data backup systems they have in place; establish guidelines for the kinds of information that must be saved and for those that can be deleted; and decide

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A Principal's Message

by John Dodig, Staples High School, Westport



A friend of mine recently sent me an article she read from the McClatchy-Tribune News Service. It was titled *Let Life Principles Prevail* and was written by Bruce Weinstein. Mr. Weinstein is a professional ethicist who teaches and speaks in public on the subject of ethics all over the country. By consolidating categories of human behavior into the five "life principles," he has tried to convince people that living an ethical life is simple. The five principles are:

- **Do no harm**
- **Make things better**
- **Respect others**
- **Be fair**
- **Be loving.**

That's it! How simple! Just about every "crisis" that comes across my desk each day every year comes from someone not living up to these five principles.

Imagine if we all accepted these principles. After all, they are part of what most major religions teach in one way or another. Would schools need a Code of Conduct if students truly believed that they should do no harm to themselves and should respect others? In Westport, all children must take health classes from grade one through grade twelve. By the time these students get to high school, they know very well that smoking is bad for their health and, in fact, reduces life expectancy.....do no harm. They also know that showing respect for your coaches and your parents means that you should not use alcohol and drugs of any kind.....do no harm & respect others.

Every year we talk about the problem of cheating in school. I wind up saying either in public or in writing that cheating at SHS is no bigger a problem than cheating is in the general population in our daily lives. Every newspaper in the country almost every day has a story about someone being caught cheating in business or stealing from someone who trusted them. Imagine if, by some miracle, all students walking through our doors as freshmen decided to live their lives by the principles of "be fair" and "respect others." Accepting those two principles would cause each student to self regulate. Problem solved.

I can't tell you how often I read about or attend meetings in this state on the topic of bullying and harassment. It has been going on from the beginning of time and today is virulent in middle schools and high schools. Imagine if our students accepted the principle of "do no harm" and "be loving;" again, the problem would go away. After all, how difficult can it be to remember each morning after we shower, get dressed, and eat breakfast to do no harm to others and to be loving or at least be respectful to everyone with whom we come in contact for the entire school day? It doesn't seem that difficult to do.

What I really like about this article is that it is simple, easy to remember, and speaks to the issues that interfere with student academic success in high school. If we all lived by these principles - adults and students - for the four years we are together in this wonderful building, we would address the last principle which is to "make things better." Food for thought.....no?

2007 GOVERNOR'S SCHOLARS ANNOUNCED

By Dennis Carrithers, Ph.D., Assistant Executive Director

Under the direction of Education Commissioner George Coleman, the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS) and Big Y World Class Markets have again collaborated to sponsor the Governor's Scholars Program. Now in its eleventh year, the purpose of the program is to recognize academically talented high school students in schools throughout the state.

All principals of CAS member high schools are given the opportunity to nominate one junior ranked in the top four percent of his/her class. An essay on an assigned topic has to be completed by the nominee. Members of the Governor's Scholars Committee, professional educators from throughout Connecticut, judge the completed applications and assign a composite score to each based on rank in class, PSAT or SAT scores, CAPT scores, and the student essay. Laura Ferrante-Fernandes, chair of the Governor's Scholars Committee, is pleased to announce the thirty finalists in this year's competition and, on behalf of the CT State Department of Education, CAS, and Big Y, extend congratulations to:

- Samuel Adler-Bell, Canton High School in Canton
- Kirstie Albert, Suffield High School in West Suffield
- Stephanie Bernardi, Woodstock Academy in Woodstock
- Kimberly Betts, East Lyme High School in East Lyme
- Daniel Camacho, Pomperaug High School in Southbury
- Kimberly Carey, Darien High School in Darien
- Francesca Carlisle, Sacred Heart Academy in Hamden
- Brian Carvalho, Bulkeley High School in Hartford
- Mara Dauphin, Rockville High School in Vernon
- Chen Ding, Branford High School in Branford
- Megan Dupuy, Stratford High School in Stratford
- Emma Fidel, Valley Regional High School in Deep River
- Michael Guarino, Bacon Academy in Colchester
- Edith Hanson, Haddam-Killingworth High School in Higganum
- Emily Heath, Maloney High School in Meriden
- Briana Hennessy, CT International Baccalaureate Academy, East Hartford
- Cameron Jones, Platt Technical High School in Milford
- John Karpinski, Shelton High School in Shelton
- Mary Ellen Keneally, New Canaan High School in New Canaan
- Alexander Milvae, E.O. Smith High School in Storrs
- Nora Murphy, Fairfield Warde High School in Fairfield
- Victoria Parkes, Holy Cross High School in Waterbury
- Ryan Pelletier, Plainville High School in Plainville
- Rian Rooney, Joel Barlow High School in Redding
- Anne Rosenblum, William Hall High School in West Hartford
- Kathryn Saxton, Cheshire High School in Cheshire
- Neda Shahriari, Hill Regional Career High School in New Haven
- Courtney Stewart, Montville High School in Oakdale
- Kevin Su, Simsbury High School in Simsbury
- Bianca Yuh, New Milford High School in New Milford

All of the distinguished nominees will be recognized at their schools for their outstanding work and participation in this program. The thirty students listed above will attend the Governor's Scholars Luncheon at The Aqua Turf Club in Southington on May 24, 2007. At the reception, Governor's Scholars will receive recognition as well as information on participation in courses at selected Connecticut colleges and universities. Included in the latter is a four-year, half-tuition scholarship to the University of Connecticut for any of the thirty Governor's Scholars who choose to matriculate there.

Big Y has been a dedicated corporate partner of CAS since 1997. In addition to sponsoring the prestigious Governor's Scholars Program, it produces a highly acclaimed nutritional newsletter mailed to all CT students and funds the Flanagan Memorial Grants Program. Big Y was founded in 1936 and currently employs over 8,500 people in fifty-two locations in Massachusetts and Connecticut.

Don't Delete, *continued from page 5*

where to store critical data, so the information is easily accessible in the event of a problem, he said.

The new regulations don't constitute any major changes to the law per se, Lindsay said, but by noting that electronic communications should be preserved with the same care and diligence as other business-related documents, the high court ruling forces managers "to recognize this distinction up front," giving schools, businesses, and even individual users an opportunity to be pro-active in efforts to secure relevant computer-based information.

Many districts are already working with their staff members to help them understand that they should expect limited privacy when using school-owned technology.

"We have a policy that employees need to sign indicating they have no right to consider anything that they do on our network – including our [voice-over-IP system] – as confidential," wrote Marc Liebman, superintendent of the Berryessa Union School District in San Jose, CA.

But even that isn't enough, explained Lindsay – not anymore.

Though it's important for educators and other school stakeholders to recognize how information that is sent and received on school computers and other devices might be used in litigation, the new rules represent a call to action for schools and other entities to understand how and where personal communications between employees are stored on the network, he said.

To do that, several corporations – and even some schools – have begun turning to companies that offer solutions for tracking, storing and searching for e-mail communication and other electronic data.

Security Survey, *cont'd from page 1*

When asked to delineate other concerns, make comments or identify needs, most superintendents and principals commented on the need for cameras (54 responses); and, many noted concerns about entry and the need for security personnel (31 responses each).

It is clear that Connecticut schools and school districts have been addressing school security needs for some time in various ways and to various degrees. Further, by establishing funding support and offering directions or recommendations, the state could enhance the work already being done by school districts. CAS has been working closely with legislative leaders to support the funding initiative.

THE CHARGE TO ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS

By Susan Homrock, Asst. Principal, Simsbury High School

Editor's Note: In welcoming assistant principals to the 30th Annual Assistant Principals' Conference on March 19th, Assistant Principals' Committee Chair Sue Homrock offered these compelling and insightful words of advice.

"As I prepared my remarks to address the meaning of today, I went to the experts - our students. I asked them two very important questions, the first being: *What is the most important characteristic for an AP to possess?*

"Here are their responses (these are unedited, I might add...):

- easy to talk to/a good listener
- supportive
- friendly
- understanding
- one who knows students

"But the top vote getter was "TRUSTWORTHY." And they do trust us with so much, don't they? Course selections, letters of recommendation, conflicts with a teacher, a parent, a break-up with a boy or girlfriend. They need to know that they can come to us and we will have their backs.

"The second question I asked was: *If you were to give APs a piece of advice, what would it be?*

"I told my students that I would be speaking to APs from all over the state - from urban to rural areas, large schools to small. Their responses included (and remember, these are uncensored):

- "Always have open ears."
- "Don't ruin kids' lives." (Geez, I hope not!)
- "Students need to know HOW you are and WHO you are."
- "Don't be condescending."
- "Don't act like you are the principal."
- "Get a life! Seriously! Have a life outside of school!"
- "If you are having a bad day, please do not let us see it or know about it. Your day affects ours."

"Although there were many great responses here, I think the most poignant came from one of my students, Shantay. She again asked me, "Ms. Homrok, you are talking to APs from all over the state?" I answered her, "Yes, Shantay, I am." And then with such conviction she looked at me and said, "Ms. Homrok, tell them to 'Keep it real.'"

"I was going to ask Shantay what she meant by that. But I decided not to. We have to find out for ourselves what it means to "Keep it real." That may mean something different to each one of us, but I think we owe it to ourselves and to our students to complete the ongoing exercise. So my hope for each and every one of us today is that we attend a workshop, hear a guest speaker, or participate in a conversation that helps us to "Keep it Real." If we do, it is to the benefit of our students and their success."

HOW DO YOU PERSONALIZE A SCHOOL WITH 3,000 STUDENTS?

by Mike Buckley, Director, CT Principals' Center

This is an essential question for Danbury High School Principal Cathi Richard. She wonders, "How do I connect every one of my students to this school and help them to feel valued?" This is no small task when you have a population that includes almost 3,000 students speaking 43 different languages and having a high degree of mobility. Last year 460 new students moved into the high school while another 432 left. It's one thing to organize a path of classes and credits leading to a diploma; it's another to put in place a structure that helps keep students from "falling through the cracks."

This challenge is not peculiar to Danbury High School. Indeed, all schools face it to one degree or another. While size is a variable - it is certainly easier to know and be known in a school of 500 - it is not the only determinant. There are large schools that have successfully created a personalized environment for teaching and learning - witness Branford High School - and there are smaller schools that have not.

Incentives other than a moral imperative exist to encourage schools to look for mechanisms with which to personalize their communities. These include:

- a growing research base that connects positive school climate with improved discipline, increased attendance, and higher achievement.
- an accreditation standard with the New England Association of Schools and Colleges that each student shall have an adult member of the school community who serves to personalize that student's educational experience.
- a significant national reform blueprint, *Breaking Ranks II*, insisting that to improve

schools each student must be known well and that personalization is not optional if the curse of student anonymity is to be eliminated.

- the 2006 *Framework for Connecticut's High Schools: A Working Guide for High School Redesign* setting as one of seven core expectations that, by 2010, each high school in the state will have small, safe, personalized, and positive learning communities.
- the recommendations stemming from the CAS examination of the state's dropout problem (*Bulletin*, February 2007), including creating alternatives, especially smaller learning communities, with relationships (teacher to teacher, teacher to student, student to teacher, student to student) at the core.

All of these were on Ms. Richard's mind when, in a faculty meeting at the end of the previous school year, she asked for some help in looking at advisory and other programs as a possible antidote for a perceived lack of community. An eclectic group of teachers representing a variety of faculty opinions volunteered.

What emerged from their research and planning efforts over the next several months is a student advisory program being implemented this year. This did not happen easily and significant challenges existed - and still exist. Start with logistics. How do you organize 3,000 students and 216 teachers into manageable sized groups? And once you've done that, where do you find the space for 136 advisory groups to meet? Even more important, what do you ask of teachers meeting with students in these groups? The planning

continued on page 8

GUEST EDITORIAL

'Off-the-charts crazy'

Reprinted from the *Waterbury Republican-American*

Apple Inc. CEO Steve Jobs knows a few things about technology and running a business. So when he says all the computers, wiring, programs and Internet access in the world won't improve public schools as currently constituted, maybe it's time that the powers that be paid attention.

Appearing in Texas recently at a conference on the technological future of education, Mr. Jobs named the No. 1 reason for public schools' manifest failures: "(T)hey have become unionized in the worst possible way." To enthusiastic applause from his audience, he added, "This unionization and lifetime employment of K-12 teachers is off-the-charts crazy."

How crazy? Senator Lamar Alexander, R-Tenn., recently proposed, and the U.S. Department of Education endorsed, \$99 million in new federal aid for the nation's poorest school systems to reward their best teachers and principals and to entice talented people to choose education as their career. But majority Senate Democrats refused to entertain his bill at the behest of the National Education Association. Though it incessantly agitates for more money for inner-city public schools, the nation's largest teachers union vehemently opposed Sen. Alexander's bill because teachers would be paid what they're worth. That would be contrary to the NEA's collectivism and its guiding principle of protecting the worst teachers at the expense of the best.

Real education reform can't happen, no matter how much money government throws at it until anarchistic work rules, especially tenure, are replaced by a system under which principals act as school CEOs, Mr. Jobs said. Without this sea change, the best and the brightest will continue to shun education and public schools will continue to languish. "What kind of person could you get to run a small business if you told them that when they came in they couldn't get rid of people that they thought weren't any good? Not really great ones because if you're really smart, you go, 'I can't win.'"

Are you listening, Gov Rell?

DANCE TEAM

CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS

Following are the top three finishers in each division at the *First Annual Connecticut High School Dance Team Championships* held on Saturday, March 10, 2007 at East Haven High School. The dance championship is one of several new initiatives sponsored by the recently established Connecticut Student Activities Conference.

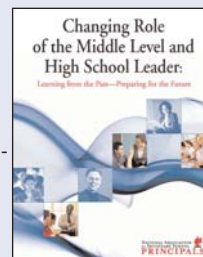
Jazz Division: Masuk High School
Shelton High School
Woodland Regional H.S.

Hip Hop Small Division: Branford H.S.
Harding H.S.
Bassick H.S.

Hip Hop Large Division: Masuk H.S.
Torrington H.S.
Wethersfield H.S.

Pom Division: Hamden High School
Wethersfield High School
Shelton High School

Where has the principalship been? Where is it going? A National Association of Secondary School Principals'



(NASSP) task force of principals and professors spent the past two years exploring these questions and their findings have been released in a new report titled "Changing Role of the Middle Level and High School Leader: Learning from the Past – Preparing for the Future." The report analyzes the context in which school leaders work, presents some trends that will affect leadership, and examines emerging models of effective leadership. The report is available for free download at http://www.cas-ciac.org/pdfs/nassp_changing_role.pdf. Printed copies can be ordered through the NASSP online principals' store at www.principals.org.

Danbury High School, *continued from page 7*

committee led by business teacher Carmela Califiore and health and peer leadership teacher Lisa Frese, helped find the answers to these questions.

Typically, two sources of faculty concern emerge when advisories are implemented. First, teachers worry that they'll be asked to do something for which they're not trained - confront personal, social, and emotional issues without the requisite counseling skills. Secondly, they fear that they'll be asked to prepare lessons and implement another curriculum in addition to their regular teaching load. The planning committee addressed both areas by negotiating a memorandum of understanding with the Danbury Education Association for a one year pilot program. They also did not assign counselors and social workers to advisory groups, keeping them "on call" and available for presentations and interventions. The program also does not require teachers to teach a curriculum, only to be a caring adult who listens, provides information, and monitors and supports student academic progress. The expectation is that teachers will engage in a year-long conversation with a small group of students ensuring that every student at Danbury High School has regular contact with a caring adult.

Will this program become institutionalized and flourish or will DHS decide that the returns do not warrant the investment? A formal assessment will be conducted at the end of the first year and negotiations with the DEA are ongoing. Key to the latter discussions is the impact of advisory on the school day. Mid-way anecdotal evidence is encouraging.

An advisory bulletin board is prominently displayed chronicling the accomplishments of groups and their advisors. Information is being communicated - better in the administration's eyes - without the use of the intercom. Service projects are cropping up (i.e. two advisory groups joined together to make sandwiches for a homeless shelter). A school spirit competition during homecoming week was a success leading to a four-fold increase in attendance at the homecoming dance. One advisor has even taught her students to knit. How do you quantify the value of the thousands of conversations that prior to this year were not occurring because the advisory structure was not in place? Principal Richard already has. In her words, "I have terrific people. Put them with kids and they are doing great things."

middle school news

Did You Know...?

By Earle G. Bidwell, Assistant Executive Director

Did you know that there is a bill before the state legislature that would make it a crime for failing to report an act of bullying? Furthermore, the proposed legislation would remove the words "which acts are repeated against the same student over time" from the definition of bullying. Did you know that the state legislature is considering a bill that would require students to score "proficient" on all aspects of the CAPT test in order to graduate? Are you aware that "An Act Concerning an Alternative Program for School Suspensions" would take away one's ability to place a student in in-school suspension more than once? These are but three of the literally scores of bills being considered by the state legislature that could impact administrators and teachers in Connecticut public schools.

As these bills are considered, it is imperative that legislators hear from practitioners regarding the impact on their work. While many readers of the Bulletin have attended public hearings and expressed their views, the vast majority have not been able to spare the time to leave school and journey to Hartford in order to be heard. While a personal appearance at a public hearing is arguably the best way to express your views, your CAS website provides readers with a powerful alternative in the "Legal and Legislative Resources" section. Thanks to the efforts of the CAS Legislative Committee and CAS executives Dennis Carrithers and Matt Fischer, this section lists all of the education bills being considered by the legislature with an up-to-date chronology of their status. Furthermore, one or more is generally featured along with a CAS position statement or additional information.

Just one "click" away is a link to "Contact Legislators." This link allows one to select an individual senator or representative, a committee, a delegation or a group and to email or call them about any bill before them. In the time it takes to read the Bulletin, one could voice support or concern for a piece of proposed legislation that could have a great impact on Connecticut educators and the children in their care.

Decision makers at the state and national level need to know the impact of proposed legislation on students and educators, and there is no better source than our practitioners, the administrators and teachers in Connecticut Schools.

I urge you to add Legal & Legislative Resources to your to-do list each week and set aside fifteen minutes to respond to those items that impact you and your students. As few as a half dozen responses from knowledgeable educators can be interpreted as a groundswell of support or concern and can make a difference. Be among those who help to shape education policies as you certainly are the ones who will have to administer them.

Middle Level Board Partners With CAAD

By Earle G. Bidwell, Assistant Executive Director

At a recent meeting, the CAS Middle Level Board of Control voted to partner with the Connecticut Association of Athletic Directors (CAAD) to promote athletic administration services to member middle schools. While CAAD services have always been open to middle schools, Connecticut statutes concerning public school athletics puts a premium on highly trained athletic administration at all levels. The state department of education mandates that coaches hold permits and that all coaches be certified annually in CPR. Furthermore the SDE requires all coaches to receive ongoing continuing education units (CEUs). Effective in 2005, the state issued a directive to school systems that all coaches at all levels be evaluated. That means that all J.V, freshman and middle school coaches, as well as head coaches need to be licensed, trained and evaluated by athletic administrators. CAAD is Connecticut's primary provider of training for coaches and athletic administrators.

Like CAS/CIAC, CAAD membership is open to schools rather than individuals. Member middle schools are represented by either an athletic director, coordinator or an administrator designated to head up the athletic program. Member schools are eligible to participate in ongoing workshops, an annual conference and will receive newsletters and notices of other events.

Beginning with the 2007-2008 school year, schools wishing to join CAAD may do so by adding CAAD dues to their CAS invoice in the same manner that they now join the National Honor Society or Connecticut Association of Student Councils. Furthermore, CAS will add a slot on the member section of the webpage where schools can identify an athletic administrator for the building. This will ensure seamless communication on matters of interest to middle school athletic personnel.

The CAS Middle Level Board of Control is looking forward to supporting additional services to middle schools through this partnership with the Connecticut Association of Athletic Directors and urges member schools to take full advantage of these expanded services.

RESEARCHERS LOOK AT MIDDLE GRADE CONFIGURATIONS

A recent report by researchers at Johns Hopkins University concludes that turning elementary schools into K-8 schools, rather than sending graduating fifth-grade students to middle schools, may not be the best decision. The study has heated up the debate regarding whether to eliminate middle schools altogether. Now, many school districts are paying close attention as they try to determine how to best handle the growing problem of falling achievement levels in the middle grades.

The study, conducted over several years, examined newly developed K-8 schools in Philadelphia. Paul Vallas, chief executive officer of the Philadelphia school system, decided that the traditional middle school system had not been working and, since 2002, closed 17 traditional middle schools and converted more than three dozen elementary schools into K-8 schools. Johns Hopkins researchers found that no significant change occurred in academic achievement between students in the new K-8 schools and others in traditional middle schools. (*Source: NASSP NewsLeader, March 2007*)

elementary school news

ELEMENTARY ARTS BANQUET

By Lou Pear, Assistant Executive Director

On February 5th and 6th, over 1,300 parents, students and school personnel celebrated the artistic talents of 350 elementary students at the Aqua Turf Club in Southington. This festive annual event was designed to further students' artistic interest by encouraging them to engage in a variety of art-based activities. Students were treated to balloon sculptors, face painters and professional caricaturists. They also applied their talents at the visual arts center as well as the dance revolution challenge. In addition to the awarding of certificates of achievement, students were treated to performing artists and groups: a drum line the first night and a mask theater performer on the second night.

A special thank you goes out to our arts committee and to the school personnel who took the time from their busy schedules to recognize and celebrate the talents of our youth.



Two accomplished young artists show off their award certificates.



The phenomenally talented Jefferson School Hot Stix Drum Ensemble provided the entertainment on the evening of February 5th.

CAS OPENS NOMINATIONS FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OF THE YEAR AWARD

The CAS Elementary Division is pleased to announce that applications are available online at www.casciac.org for the *Elementary Outstanding School of the Year Award, 2007-08*.

PURPOSE: To give public recognition to an outstanding CAS member elementary school. The school selected will not necessarily be "the best" in the state, but rather a school that deserves major recognition for its exemplary programs.

ELIGIBILITY: The following criteria will be used to determine the recipient of this award:

1. The school must be a member of CAS;
2. The school must:
 - a. provide an educational program which is conducive to meeting the needs of all of its students.
 - b. provide student opportunities that go beyond those that are a part of a typical school, i.e., clubs, activities, support services, extra help for those who need it.
 - c. show evidence that the school's educational programs are consistently being reviewed and improved.
 - d. show evidence that the school welcomes participation from all constituencies.
 - e. show evidence that the school plays an active role in the community.
 - f. show evidence of parent-school involvement.
3. Nominations may be made by any present or former member of the school staff or district central office personnel.
4. Nominations must be made on the form provided.
5. Deadline for submission of nominations is no later than September 10, 2007.
6. The *CAS Elementary School of the Year* will be recognized at the Elementary Exemplary Program Banquet, November 27, 2007.
7. Nominations should be sent to: Regina S. Birdsell, Asst. Executive Director
The Connecticut Association of Schools
30 Realty Drive
Cheshire, Connecticut 06410

TIMELINE: Applications will be reviewed by September 14, 2007, and the finalists will be visited in late September or early October.

CHILDREN LACK A CONSISTENTLY RICH, SUPPORTIVE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

The typical child in the U.S. stands only a 1-in-14 chance of having a consistently rich, supportive elementary school experience, say researchers who looked at what happens daily in thousands of classrooms across the country. The findings, published last month in the weekly journal *Science*, take teachers to task for spending too much time on basic reading and math skills and not enough on problem solving, reasoning, science and social studies. They also suggest that U.S. education focuses too much on teacher qualifications and not enough on teachers being engaging and supportive. Funded by the National Institutes of Health, educational researchers spent thousands of hours in more than 2,500 first-, third- and fifth-grade classrooms, tracking kids through elementary school. It is among the largest studies done of U.S. classrooms, producing a detailed look at the typical kid's day. The following are among the findings on what teachers and students did and how they interacted.

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... more elementary school news

THE ARIYAWANSA SCHOOL, SRI LANKA

By Lou Pear, Assistant Executive Director

Through the late Bob Carroll's vision and generous contributions from Connecticut school students and staff, the Ariyawansa School is up and running. There are 800 students currently enrolled in this K-12 school with the expectation of 1,500 students attending next year. In speaking to Luke Hingson, president of the Brother's Brother Foundation, this school is the largest of all the new schools in Sri Lanka and is equipped with the latest, state-of-the-art equipment. Words cannot express the appreciation of these students who find their new school the first indication of stability since the tsunami hit two years ago.

As in all building projects there are cost overruns, and this project is no exception. However, through the generosity of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, the extra costs were covered. In a recent ribbon cutting ceremony, members from Brother's Brother, Rotary International, the chief minister of the western province as well as the district's governor provided words of appreciation for Bob Carroll, the Connecticut students and the Connecticut Association of Schools.

In the entrance to the Ariyawansa School there is a granite monument with the inscription "School Re-Awakening." This monument is a dedication in remembrance of those who lost their lives in the tsunami in December, 2004, in celebration of the lives of those who survived, and in gratitude to those people who gave the gift of this new temple of learning. Also inscribed are the four partners who are responsible for the rebuilding project: Brother's Brother Foundation, the Connecticut Association of Schools, Sri Lanka Pittsburgh Friendship Association, and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. There is also a plaque in the entrance of this school which reads: "These new buildings are dedicated in memory of Dr. Robert F. Carroll." His vision to rebuild a model school for the students of Ariyawansa Maha Vidyalaya was realized on January 17, 2007.

I am sure that Bob is looking down at this new school and is proud as he can be that he was able to unselfishly provide these students a new start. Two of Bob's many fine attributes were his energy and enthusiasm to make dreams come true. For that we are truly grateful to have known this great man of vision and conviction.

Elementary Study, *continued from page 10*

- Fifth-graders spent 91.2% of class time in their seats listening to a teacher or working alone, and only 7% working in small groups, which fosters social skills and critical thinking. Findings were similar in first and third grades.
- In fifth grade, 62% of instructional time was in literacy or math; only 24% was devoted to social studies or science.
- About one in seven (14%) kids had a consistently high-quality "instructional climate" all three years studied. Most classrooms had a fairly healthy "emotional climate," but only 7% of students consistently had classrooms high in both. There was no difference between public and private schools.

(Source: usatoday.com, article by Greg Toppo)

ciac news

THE ROLE OF ATHLETICS IN OUR HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM

by Robert F. Kanaby

"Create good people, the rest follows."

— Walt Whitman

This simple sentence identifies the role athletics and activities can play in our high school curriculum. As coaches, administrators, and educators, we hope to instill in our students the desire to act with character, not because they believe it is expected but because they believe it is right.



Today our society is reluctant to teach morals and character. Some believe parents, family members, and religious leaders should be the ones to instruct our students on these subjects. They should, and frequently they do. However, I believe it is shortsighted to leave such important tasks to the few. What constitutes good morals and excellent character does not vary among people. The only variable is the level of accountability. We should not shrink in the face of making a stand for good character nor should our students. In fact, we should look for every opportunity to teach good character and demand the same from our students and those around them.

One of our best opportunities to build students' character and to teach them ethics, morality, and citizenship can be through high school athletic and activity programs. This does not deny, or diminish, the value of the classroom. The skills of citizenship and good character can and should be taught in class. But the actual practice of these skills cannot be just a hopeful byproduct of classroom interaction. Although you can study the benefits of honesty in class, it is another thing altogether to practice honesty when an unseen kick with the old foot wedge could win you the state golf championship. It is one thing to hear in the classroom that self-restraint is a virtue, but it is another thing to practice that restraint when you know that a couple shots of anabolic steroids might help you make the football team. And while racial tolerance is preached in the classroom, it is practiced when, during a hotly contested basketball game, your chin meets an elbow ... of another color.

The two most basic principles of citizenship are respect for oneself and respect for others. Sports and other co-curricular activities present a wealth of teachable moments to impart these principles, but the path our sports culture seems to have taken would indicate that far too often we overlook such opportunities. Instead, we adopt the words of George Orwell: "Serious sport has nothing to do with fair play. It is bound up with hatred, jealousy, boastfulness, disregard of all rules, and sadistic pleasure in witnessing violence. In other words, it is war without the shooting." Or we subscribe to the theory, "Winning isn't everything. It's the only thing." I agree that winning on the professional level is required and winning at the collegiate level has become an expectation. Winning is important. However, I propose that winning at the high school level should be a pleasant outcome to fulfilling the true purpose of sport in school, which is to serve the complete educational needs of those who choose to participate.

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. . . more ciac news

March 19, 2007

Dear Mr. Tonelli,

Hey, I am Luis Camacho. I live in Willimantic, Connecticut and attend Windham Technical High School in Willimantic. I am writing this letter to tell you that steroids are bad for high school sports and student-athletes in Connecticut and around the country. Nearly 15% of high school athletes use steroids across the country, and 70% think about using them. What would you think will happen if we don't do something about it? I am a high school athlete, and play 3 different sports at the school I attend; I play cross country, basketball, baseball, and maybe football next year. For baseball and basketball we are in the Constitutional State Conference (CSC), which are mostly Technical High Schools and some prep. schools and the magnet schools in Hartford. Some athletes that I played against looked like they used steroids.

I think there should be random testing for any kind of anabolic steroids used in sports. There is a document that we athletes signed before the season starts; the document says, "You must not use drugs, cigarettes or any other drugs." But the CIAC doesn't test you for those uses. I know some student-athletes that have used drugs but its kept secret by his teammates. Steroids are stupid and people that have used them have no self-esteem. Steroids do make you bigger, faster and may give you confidence in the sports you are playing, but the health problems you face in the future are life threatening, some of those health problems and mental problems are: heart problems, strokes, weight gain, depression and suicide.

Not only are steroids used in boys' sports but also in girls' sports. In the Northeast 3% of girls have tried steroids to get better in the sports they play. I know that the pressure to win is enormous in high school sports, but if athletes use steroids they are known as cheaters. Whether it's legal or not, people are going to take them but we should stop the student-athletes in Connecticut from using them. That's why there should be random testing across the state to get the cheaters out of the sports they play.

I hope you try to get this testing thing going across the state and get all high school coaches to vote to support it. I also know that the cost for this is a lot but people will donate money to get the testing for their children, and see if they are taking steroids or any other drugs. I hope you read this with due consideration and get the testing in high school sports.

Sincerely,

Luis Camacho

April 4, 2007

Dear Luis,

Thank you for your insightful letter of March 19, 2007 in which you expressed your views regarding the use of steroids and other drugs in high school athletics. With your permission, we would like to use excerpts from your letter in the CIAC bulletin. Please let us know if you would like that to happen. Please know that CIAC shares your beliefs that these substances have no place in high school sports, and all schools have policies, with consequences, prohibiting their use by student athletes.

Issues regarding alcohol, drugs, and steroids have historically been handled by the local boards of education, and we expect that process to continue in the foreseeable future. However, you would be pleased to know that the CIAC Board of Control, the governing body for high school athletics in Connecticut, recently approved a Chemical Health Policy that calls for a suspension of 180 school days for any student athlete found by his or her school system to be using steroids. This policy has the support of the Superintendents' Association and will be voted upon by the entire CIAC membership at the annual meeting. This new regulation should pass and would be effective for the 2007-2008 school year. The punishment for the use of alcohol and other drugs will remain an issue of local control.

Regarding drug testing, currently there are no school systems in our state that obligate their student athletes to submit to random testing. However, CIAC would not be opposed to such a program if the schools we service strongly favored its adoption. For the drug testing idea to move forward in Connecticut the concept must not only have the support of the majority of local boards of education, but also a testing program would need legislative backing so that the necessary funding could be provided.

Thanks again for taking the time to write to us on this very important matter. Continued success at Windham Tech. and in your future endeavors

Sincerely,

Joe Tonelli, CIAC Staff

. . . more ciac news

“Most people achieved their greatest success one step beyond what looked like their greatest failure.”

-- Brian Tracy, self-help author

In 2006, the average high school football play-off game in the United States was 2 hours and 17 minutes long. Of 630 high school play-off games reported, 25 went into overtime. The average score of winning teams was 33.48 while average score of losing teams was 13.64. (Source: Survey of 32 state associations and the District of Columbia conducted by National Federation of High School Associations)

Wrestler's Sacrifice Earns Ovation ...

What would you do? Your team shows up for a wrestling meet, and the home coach informs you that one of his wrestlers has Downs Syndrome. He has no skill but loves to compete. You can pin him in seconds. He knows he'll lose; he just wants to roll around on the mat for a little bit. Would anyone on your team be willing to wrestle with him?

That's what happened last month when Ogden High School's wrestling team showed up to face Iowa Falls and Humboldt. After Humboldt's host coach made the unusual request, there was silence. Then a lone voice on the Ogden team replied, "I'll do it," and wrestler Lane Brueland stepped forward to grapple with the boy named Brent.

The gesture alone was commendable, but what Brueland did next was exemplary. Instead of doing what the Humboldt coach requested, Brueland wrestled with the boy for the full six minutes. Not only that, he let the youngster score enough points to win the match.

When Brent's hand was raised and he looked up in wonder and said, "I won?" there wasn't a dry eye in the gym. Both boys got a standing ovation.

Afterward, Brent's parents wrote Brueland the following letter, a portion of which reads:

Dear Lane,

We would like to thank you for your kindness and outstanding generosity. The invaluable joy that this gave Brent will never be forgotten by him or by us.

We did not have the opportunity to meet you, but wish we could have to thank you in person. Your remarkable character shown that evening touched many of the individuals that were watching. Sportsmanship at this level truly reflects athletics at its best.

[The Ogden Reporter, 2/21/07]

A truism for young athletes:

Opponents are not evil. Successful athletes don't waste time and effort rooting against anyone or trying to prove they're better. They don't have enemies. Once you respect the competition, the pressure is off. You can just play instead of stockpiling ammunition for some meaningless status war. Lay down your weapons and come in peace.

(From *Strength In You*, by Dr. Dan Saferstein)

COACHES' CORNER

News from the National Federation of High School Associations



■ **Football Rules Changes:** Rules revisions regarding illegal helmet contact were among fourteen rules revisions adopted by the National Federation Football Rules Committee this year. In Rule 2, the committee placed butt blocking, face tackling and spearing under the heading of "Helmet Contact - Illegal" to place more emphasis on risk-minimization concerns. In Rule 9-4-3, the committee added a note that lists examples of some types of illegal helmet contact that could result in disqualification. For more information on these and other changes, visit www.nfhs.org/sports.aspx and click on "Football."

■ **Field Hockey Rules Changes:** The National Federation Field Hockey Rules Committee approved fourteen rules revisions, most of which will be in effect beginning in the 2007-08 season. One of the most important changes deals with the extension of the deadline for the new stick requirements. Rule 1-6-4, stating that players' bows cannot exceed 25 millimeters and weigh more than 23 ounces, will not be enforced until January 1, 2009. The revised rule also requires the stick to be visibly and permanently labeled. As a follow-up to the requirement approved last year for field players to wear tooth protectors that are colored, not white or clear, Rule 1-7-1h was revised to require all goalkeepers to wear colored tooth protectors, which may be attached to the face mask or helmet. A revision to Rule 1-6-6 states that all braces, casts and splints shall be padded with at least one-half inch of all closed-cell, slow-recovery rubber or similar materials. No metal should be exposed with these features. For more information on these and other changes, visit <http://www.nfhs.org/sports.aspx> and click on "Field Hockey."

■ **Soccer Rules Changes:** Beginning with the 2007-08 soccer season, if a player enters the game improperly equipped, and it is discovered by an official, the coach will be cautioned (yellow card). This addition to Rule 4-3 was one of four major rules changes approved by the National Federation Soccer Rules Committee. A change in shinguard requirements approved last year aimed at reducing the risk of injury has been delayed one year. Instead of 2007-08, shinguards must meet the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) standard effective with the 2008-09 season. Another major rules change involves placement of the team benches on opposite sides of the field. Although team benches are on the same side of the field in most cases, Rule 1-5 does allow an exception for teams to be placed on opposite sides of the field. Beginning next year, when teams are placed on opposite sides of the field, they shall be placed diagonally across from each other. For more information on these and other changes, visit <http://www.nfhs.org/sports.aspx> and click on "Soccer."

MICHIGAN STATE ASSOCIATION LOSES PROTRACTED LEGAL BATTLE

After a nine-year fight, two moms from the Grand Rapids (MI) area won a legal victory earlier this month that will resonate with high school girl athletes in Michigan for years to come.

The U.S. Supreme Court, by refusing to hear an appeal, let stand a ruling that Michigan's prep sports scheduling discriminates against girls. Eight sports seasons will switch next school year as a result.

Girls' basketball will move from fall to winter and girls' volleyball from winter to fall. Golf, tennis and soccer seasons for boys and girls also will be altered, depending on when those sports are played in the Upper and Lower peninsulas.

The high court's decision disappointed the Michigan High School Athletic Association, the governing body for high school sports, which said its scheduling helps girls and ensures their high sports participation rate in Michigan.

MHSAA Executive Director Jack Roberts listed a number of headaches that could result from the ruling but said he felt the worst for athletes who no longer can play multiple sports. Girls' tennis and soccer, for example — which now are played in the fall and spring — will both occur in the spring.

"Thousands of boy and girls will find that the combination of sport that they had in mind is not a combination that's going to be available to them," Roberts said.

In 2001, U.S. District Judge Richard Enslin in Kalamazoo ruled that the scheduling policies violate the equal-protection clause of the 14th Amendment, the federal Title IX statute and Michigan civil rights law. He ordered a realigned sports schedule, and the case was tied up in appeals courts for more than five years.

The suit especially sought to eliminate the practice in Michigan of scheduling the girls' basketball season in the fall and the girls' volleyball season in the winter. Because colleges and high schools in most other states flip-flop those two sports seasons, critics say Michigan's schedule limits the exposure of the state's female prep athletes and hurts their chances of winning sports scholarships.

Michigan is the only state to play volleyball in the winter, and one of two to play girls' basketball outside of winter. Hawaii girls play in the spring.

The MHSAA, whose members include more than 1,500 public and private schools, says the purpose of having some different athletic seasons for boys and girls is to maximize opportunities for participation. Many coaches and administrators disagree that Michigan's schedule is discriminatory.

The MHSAA had vigorously fought the schedule switch and worries some schools will struggle to find enough coaches, officials and gym time to make the new setup work.

(Source: "Seasons to change next year," by David Eggert, www.record-eagle.com, April 3, 2007)

Kanaby, *continued from page 11*

The preeminent purpose of sports and activities is not to teach someone how to hit a three-pointer or to throw a curve ball but how to harness the discipline, desire, and commitment that come from striving to achieve those goals and then channeling those traits into overcoming the challenges of everyday life. We must instill a sense of determination to do things the right way; not to cheat, lie, deceive, taunt, or flaunt our abilities or successes over others but to respect them and ourselves through our actions.

That is what the spirit of sport is all about: students finding in themselves an inner core of commitment, determination, and resiliency. Students discovering they can do more than they thought. They learn that success in life comes with patience, with control, with discipline, and with help from others. We need to preserve and promote in our education system those experiences that encourage character development. Such situations abound in athletics and other co-curricular activities — if we take the time to find and use them. It is the curriculum of sports. And it is a curriculum that should be taught by the most skilled professionals available.

Research from the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports states, "Sports are powerful social experiences that may, under the right circumstances, have positive benefits. If sports are to have a positive impact on the character development of participants, the leadership and behavior of coach is key." The council further determined that coaches can be trained to provide positive moral development: "Despite all the various shapes and sizes of sports, there are commonalities that can be used to advantage by the knowledgeable and skilled coach." Thus, it is the responsibility of administrators and teachers to hire only those coaches capable of teaching through doing, in terms of character development. "Sports can build character, but only if coaches deliberately seek to do so and are adequately informed regarding the educational process required," the report states.

Educator Thomas Huxley once challenged, "Let us ask ourselves ... What is education? Above all things, what is our ideal of a thoroughly liberal education? Of that education which, if we could begin life again, we would give to ourselves — of that education which, if we could mold the fates to our will, we would give our children." Would we limit such to the classroom?

I will not be apologetic about the outside-the-classroom focus of our efforts. It is our responsibility to define a curriculum that recognizes the value of athletics in our schools. It is our responsibility to evaluate and demonstrate the efficacy of such programs. And it is our time to prove, once and for all, that high school sports and activities offer excellent educational experiences for our children.

Robert F. Kanaby is executive director of the National Federation of State High School Associations. Since 1920, the National Federation of State High School Associations has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and activities that help students succeed in their lives. We set directions for the future by building awareness and support, improving the participation experience, establishing consistent standards and rules for competition, and helping those who oversee high school sports and activities.

HEADS+UP CONCUSSION IN HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

A FACT SHEET FOR PARENTS

What is a concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury. Concussions are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Even a "ding" or a bump on the head can be serious.

What are the signs and symptoms?

You can't see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after the injury or can take days or weeks to appear. If your teen reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, seek medical attention right away.

SIGNS OBSERVED BY COACHING STAFF	SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETE
Appears dazed or stunned	Headache
Is confused about assignment	Nausea
Forgets plays	Balance problems or dizziness
Is unsure of game, score, or opponent	Double or fuzzy vision
Moves clumsily	Sensitivity to light or noise
Answers questions slowly	Feeling sluggish
Loses consciousness	Feeling foggy or groggy
Shows behavior or personality changes	Concentration or memory problems
Can't recall events prior to hit	Confusion
Can't recall events after hit	

What should you do if you think your teenage athlete has a concussion?

- 1. Seek medical attention right away.** A health care professional will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your teen to return to sports.
- 2. Keep your teen out of play.** Concussions take time to heal. Don't let your teen return to play until a health care professional says it's okay. Athletes who return to play too soon - while the brain is still healing - risk a greater chance of having a second concussion. Second or later concussions can be very serious. They can cause permanent brain damage, affecting your teen for a lifetime.
- 3. Tell all of your teen's coaches about any recent concussion.** Coaches should know if your teen had a recent concussion in ANY sport. Your teen's coaches may not know about a concussion your teen received in another sport or activity unless you tell them. Knowing about the concussion will allow the coach to keep your teen from activities that could result in another concussion.
- 4. Remind your teen:** It's better to miss one game than the whole season.

It's better to miss one game than the whole season.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION.

For additional information, visit:
http://www.nfhs.org/web/2006/10/concussion_point_of_emphasis.aspx

A SINGLE GOAL IN COMMON

More Young Athletes Are Playing One Sport, and Only One Sport
by Bill Finley

Shannon Larkin is a gifted and versatile athlete, a standout at any sport she has tried. But Shannon, a 12 year-old seventh grader from Burlington, Conn., will not be scoring baskets, running track, hitting softballs or playing field hockey this year.

That might interfere with her aim: to be the best soccer player possible and to make the Olympic team. And that, she figures, can be accomplished only with hard work and an unwavering focus on her favorite sport.

So Shannon made up her mind to specialize in soccer, and all other sports are out. Between her middle school team, soccer clinics and camps, and her games for - and practices with - the Connecticut Football Club Wolves, an elite team from the area, there is no time for anything else.

"This is the way she wants to do it," said Rich Larkin, Shannon's father. "Soccer is what she loves to do. We give her every opportunity to play as much as possible. We encourage her but never told her she had to do this. She just has an internal competitiveness that drives her."

Shannon's talents make her unusual, but there is nothing unusual about her situation. A growing number of coaches, parents and children believe that the best way to produce superior young athletes is to have them play only one sport from an early age, and to play it virtually year-round. Some youth sports experts say it is an attitude that has trickled down from high school, where specialization in sports has been more prevalent for years.

"Forget about just high school, specialization has crept into youth sports," said Pat McNally, a former punter for the Cincinnati Bengals and the author of "Moms and Dads, Kids and Sports" (Scribner, 1988). "If you are a good athlete in a sport like basketball, you'll be involved in a 9 or 10-month program, you'll practice twice a week, and you'll have tournaments on the weekends.

"On the days you don't practice, they're going to expect you to see the shooting coach one day, a defensive specialist the next. That happens at age 10, 11, and it has become what you need to do to compete."

Matt Blumel, 15, came to that conclusion four years ago and stopped playing all sports other than basketball. Now a 6 foot sophomore at Rumson-Fair Haven Regional

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High School in New Jersey, he is intent on playing in college at the highest level, Division I, and knows he will have to work hard to make that a reality. Between practices and games for the high school and his Amateur Athletic Union team, the Central Jersey Hawks, Matt's basketball season never seems to end.

"No, I never get sick of playing basketball," he said. "It's my passion. Some of my friends told me I should go out for the football team, but I don't want to risk getting hurt for basketball. The way I have done this has made me a lot better player. Just having one focus really helps."

Not everyone agrees. Specialization has its critics, including those who argue that it is not the best way to create a standout athlete from a physical or mental standpoint and that this is another symptom of youth sports spinning out of control.

It is not difficult to see a 10-year-old one-sport athlete as the creation of overambitious and pushy coaches and parents who have forgotten that sports are supposed to be about fun. That push can have consequences contrary to what parents may hope for, youth sports experts say.

Even at a young age, I can find the kids not doing it for themselves but for the parents who are pushing them," said Steve Coxon, the coaching director for the Connecticut Football Club, which oversees several pre-

mier soccer teams, including the C.F.C. Wolves. "Those are the ones who will burn out. Some kids will play with a smile on their face and play every day of the week and they will love it. When it gets to the high school age, they have choices to make, like do they want to go out with their friends on a Friday night and socialize or do they want to go to soccer practice? Lots of the kids don't want to put up with the grind. Parents need to keep that in mind."

Sometimes, the problem is not with the parents but with the coaches. Some of the experts say it is not uncommon for coaches to pressure a youngster to play only their sport. The pressure can include threats to cut anyone who plays another sport.

But even if parents and coaches do not push, and a child adores a sport and wants to play it round-the-clock, there may be reasons to consider a more diverse approach. Jack Hutslar, who runs the North American Youth Sports Institute, a consulting firm in Keenersville, N.C., says that specialization can be physically detrimental.

"When specializing in one sport, youngsters use a very narrow range of muscles, so there's an increased likelihood of injury when you are using the same muscles over and over," Mr. Hutslar said. "From a health point of view, it's not good. Kids either need to play multiple sports or take a break."

Try telling that to a youngster caught up in the competitive maelstrom of youth sports. Or the youngster's parents.

The HoopScoop Online is a Web site and, previously, a monthly publication that has for years ranked the nation's top youth basketball talent, and it is widely used by college coaches in their recruiting. The HoopScoop recently began to rank the nation's top fifth-grade players.

Clark Francis, its editor and publisher, said parents had called him to complain that their child did not make his lists. Many parents are interested in any edge in getting their child one of a limited number of college athletic scholarships.

Shannon Larkin hopes to be among the few who get one of those scholarships and has set her sights on the University of North Carolina, a perennial women's soccer power. Her father may understand the odds better than his daughter, but he is proud that she is so driven.

"As long as that is what she truly wants to do, I have no problem with it," Mr. Larking said. "I know things get crazy sometimes with these sports. But I've never heard anyone say a thing when a family has its child practicing and playing the violin all the time. How is this different?"

(Source: *The New York Times*, Sunday, December 17, 2006)

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