



# BULLETIN

The Connecticut Association of Schools  
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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## CAESP HOSTS OUTSTANDING LITERACY CONFERENCE

By Gary Rosato, Principal, Great Plain School, Danbury and Chair, CAESP Board of Directors

Over one hundred fifty elementary educators traveled to the Southbury Hilton on October 19th for the Connecticut Association of Elementary School Principals' annual conference. The conference, which represented a collaborative effort of colleagues from across the state, was an informative and professionally challenging day.

In keeping with the important theme of literacy growth and development, the conference provided a number of workshops designed to help schools meet the literacy needs of today's students. Dr. P. David Pearson, a nationally known expert in the field of literacy education and author of many books and journal articles on literacy instruction and assessment, was the keynote speaker. In his address, entitled *Research-based Practice In Teaching Reading: An Appeal from the Radical Middle*, Professor Pearson discussed current research on early reading instruction and offered suggestions on how to use research to build successful policies and practices.

Following the morning workshops—which addressed such topics as using the Internet to enhance the literacy experience and reading comprehension among elementary students—participants heard an animated and energizing luncheon address by Dr. Theodore S. Sergi, Connecticut's Commissioner of Education.

Afternoon workshops also focused on the theme of literacy, with local and national experts discussing a number of successful reading and language arts programs.

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Barbara Taylor from the University of Minnesota discusses the CIERA School Change Project, a program which promotes reading achievement in high poverty areas.

## SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE ADDRESSES ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS

By Tom Galvin, Assistant Executive Director



Anne Jarvis (right), assistant principal of Glastonbury High School and chair of the CAS Assistant Principals' Committee, listens attentively to Judge Thelma Santos.

At a special program on October 23rd, members of the CAS Assistant Principals' Committee and invited guests -- first year assistant principals -- were urged to communicate and collaborate with their local courts by New Britain Superior Court Judge Thelma Santos. Judge Santos, who specializes in juvenile matters, explained that more emphasis is being placed on cooperation among community agencies, especially educational and mental health service organizations. She described the involvement of a variety of agencies as a "wrap around" of programs to help juveniles involved in some way in the legal system.

Stressing the importance of education, Judge Santos pointed out that without education these youngsters are going "nowhere." Many of these juveniles have handicaps and need appropriate educational placements. There are many supplemental tutoring services being set up in various parts of the state to help students after school. Since recidivism declines dramatically among high school graduates who have had legal problems, it is important that these students receive assistance to meet the goal of a diploma.

Judge Santos advised administrators to work closely with probation officers who are assigned to their students. They need information and support from the schools to work effectively with their assigned students. She pointed out that the courts want truancy referrals on students even if they are close to sixteen years of age, something many schools seem to avoid.

On a final note, Judge Santos made a plea for improved communication, encouraging the school administrators to contact their local courts and set up non-agenda regular meetings to discuss issues of mutual interest.

connecticut news & notes

**CT NAMED #1**

Connecticut was named "State of the Year" by the National Business Alliance for its commitment to education and to workforce development. The state was selected for its investment in education, both K-12 and higher education, and for its success in achieving high pay and high standards for public school teachers. Other data that led the National Business Alliance to name Connecticut its State of the Year include:

- first in per-capita income: \$39,000
- among best in nation in high school completion, 91.6% in 1998
- first in SAT participation rate, 81% of the class of 2000
- fourth- and eighth-graders achieved top scores in reading on 1998 National Assessment of Educational Progress

*(reprinted from the Connecticut Post, 11/1/00)*

**FBI OFFERS FREE WORKSHOPS ON SCHOOL VIOLENCE**

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) offers free workshops in "School Violence and Workplace Violence" to all schools in Connecticut. Included in these workshops is training on hostage survival, school violence and profiles of individuals who commit acts of uncontrolled rage. The workshops are open to all school personnel. Training is conducted on a regional basis and can be customized to fit a 2-4 hour block. Interested administrators should contact Supervisory Special Agent (SSA) Ralph A. DiFonzo at (203)777-6311.

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Commencing with classes graduating in 2004, students will be required to have a one-half credit course in civics and American government as part of the three social studies credit graduation requirement (Public Act No. 00-156). The civics requirement grows out of a concern that young citizens are disengaged from the democratic process.

Increasing political apathy and low voter turnout rates among youth suggest the need to support and encourage the teaching of democratic processes and institutions. The state department of education has issued a question-and-answer sheet to assist schools in developing courses that meet the new requirement. The guide can be accessed through the department's website at [www.state.ct.us/sde/dtl/curriculum/currsocks\\_civics.htm](http://www.state.ct.us/sde/dtl/curriculum/currsocks_civics.htm)

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The state is revising the test for high school dropouts who seek to obtain their diplomas under the General Educational Development program. Beginning in 2002, in order to earn their GED, students will have to write more, solve more complicated math problems and analyze "real life" material like economic charts and editorial cartoons. Last year, 7,019 people took the exam in CT.

**SDE Releases CAPT Scores**

Figures released from the state department of education showed that the 40,000 high school sophomores who took the CAPT last spring continued a long-term pattern of improvement. A higher percentage of students met state goals in math, science, language arts, and interdisciplinary than those who took the test in 1995. However, when compared to 1999, the percentage of students "at goal" fell in the areas of language arts and science. The new scores show that 45.3% of students reached the state goal in math and 46.2% reached the goal for the interdisciplinary portion of the test. Both represent increases over last year. However, overall results declined slightly in science, where an average of 37.3% met the goal this year, and in language arts, where the average was 37.9%.

% of Students "At Goal"						
	all 4 sections	at least 1 section	math	science	language arts	inter-disciplinary
<b>1999</b>	<b>15.3</b>	<b>58.2</b>	<b>43.1</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>39.2</b>	<b>42.3</b>
<b>2000</b>	<b>15.4</b>	<b>65.5</b>	<b>45.3</b>	<b>37.3</b>	<b>37.9</b>	<b>46.2</b>

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has developed a program called "Tools for Schools" to help schools address indoor air quality problems. The program offers guidance on how to assemble a committee of administrators, teachers, maintenance staff, school nurses and parents to investigate indoor air quality hazards and develop strategies to reduce them. An action kit provides materials necessary to promote a low-cost, problem-solving team approach to improving air quality. CT has established a resource team to help its schools implement the "Tools for Schools" program. To get the kit and get started, contact a member of the resource team:

- Deb Hovey, CT Council on Occupational Safety & Health (860)549-1877 / [connecticosh@snet.net](mailto:connecticosh@snet.net)
- Kenny Foscue, CT Department of Public Health (860)509-7742 / [kenny.foscue@po.state.ct.us](mailto:kenny.foscue@po.state.ct.us)

A report issued in Sept. by the CT Academy of Science and Engineering to the Legislature's Environment Committee indicated that 68% of schools in CT report indoor environmental problems.

Jessica Blitzer, a social studies teacher at Windsor High School, was one of 33 teachers chosen as semifinalists from among 70,000 nominees nationwide in the Disney Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award program. Blitzer was selected in the high school humanities category, one of ten categories ranging from primary grades to special education to sports. Ten finalists, one in each category, were to be named last month. Her selection as a semifinalist carries with it a \$10,000 stipend for her and a \$5,000 stipend for Windsor High School. In addition, she and her principal will be guests of the company at a summer professional development program focusing on innovative teaching, learning and leadership. A native of New Jersey, Blitzer earned both her bachelor's and master's degrees in social studies at the University of CT and has been teaching for five years. At Windsor High, she teaches American government, international relations and psychology.

**SBE proposes bold budget**

The State Board of Education called for a bold increase in education spending over the next two years, including \$45 million in new money to expand existing programs and create new ones. Highlights of the 2001-2003 biennium budget package presented by the state board include:

- \$120 million to increase the Educational Cost Sharing grant;
- \$12 million for 1,700 additional preschool slots;
- \$5 million for additional interdistrict programs that foster integration;
- \$15.9 million to help support 14 new interdistrict magnet schools (bringing the total to 36);
- \$3.7 million more over two years to allow 800 more students to participate in the interdistrict choice program and boost the per-pupil and transportation grant to \$2,500;
- \$2 million more for after-school and Saturday programs;
- \$5 million more for early reading programs in priority school districts;
- \$6.6 million more over two years to charter schools to fund new slots, increase per pupil

## ... more CT news & notes

### State Language Trends

- Italian is one of the fastest growing foreign languages being taught in Connecticut public high schools. Enrollment in Italian courses jumped 21% from 1997 to 1999.
- In 1993, about 30 school districts in Connecticut offered instruction in world languages before grade 7; in 1997 there were 70 such programs, including 21 starting before grade 4.
- Between 1991 and 1997, there was a 15.9% increase in world language enrollment in CT public high schools, outpacing the general increase in high school enrollment by 4.3%.
- Between 1997 and 1999, high school enrollment in foreign languages increased another 11%.

### What's hot

Language	1997	1999	% change
Spanish	49,770	54,743	10%
French	15,581	16,419	5%
Latin	5,517	6,572	19%
Italian	2,932	3,541	21%
German	1,296	1,129	-13%
Russian	166	173	4%
Portuguese	25	82	228%
Chinese	18	0*	
Japanese	112	213	90%
Polish	75	95	26%
Other	141	1,146	712%
<b>Total</b>	<b>75,633</b>	<b>84,104</b>	<b>11%</b>

\* Chinese is being offered in the current year at Central H.S. in Bridgeport

### Changing college enrollments

- Many CT colleges, particularly public institutions, enjoyed a boost in enrollment this fall. The enrollment figures below include full- and part-time, graduate and undergraduate students.

College	2000 Enrollment	% change
UConn	23,421	3.0
<b>CT State Univ. System</b>	<b>35,330</b>	<b>3.8</b>
Central	12,252	2.9
Eastern	5,145	3.2
Southern	12,127	5.0
Western	5,806	3.9
<b>Community Colleges</b>	<b>40,825</b>	<b>1.9</b>
Asnuntuck	1,850	7.6
Capital	3,050	10.3*
Manchester	5,135	-1.1
Middlesex	2,309	-0.3
Tunxis	3,412	-1.2
<b>National Independents</b>		
Connecticut College	1,856	2.0
Trinity	2,246	-5.3
Wesleyan	3,158	-1.3
Yale	11,099	0.6
<b>Regional Independents</b>		
Fairfield	5,188	1.2
Quinnipiac	6,477	7.1
Rensselaer	1,807	-11.8
St. Joseph	1,823	4.8
Univ. of Hartford	6,895	.2

\*state officials say figure is somewhat inflated because of a change in counting methods

## national news & notes

■ Principals need training that focuses on instructional issues, rather than management, if they are to direct successful schools, a report released by the National Staff Development Council argues. The report, "Learning To Lead, Leading To Learn: Improving School Quality Through Principal Professional Development," stresses the need for continual, hands-on training in the classroom for principals. The report describes some of the new demands on school leaders and identifies what schools, districts, states, and the federal government can do to strengthen the ability of principals and other educators to become instructional leaders. The focus is on what can be done to bolster the skills and knowledge of principals already on the job who are, on average, 48 years old and nearly a decade (nine years) past their original training for the job. The full report can be accessed at [www.nsd.org/leader\\_report.html](http://www.nsd.org/leader_report.html).

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■ "Fool's Gold: A Critical Look at Computers in Childhood," a report released in September by the Alliance for Childhood, calls for a nationwide halt to the introduction of computers in elementary classrooms and in early childhood programs—with the exception of computers to aid children with learning disabilities. Among the group's other recommendations: educators should offer children experiences and a curriculum that is based in the natural and physical world; conduct research on the full physical, emotional, and developmental effects of computers on children; and halt commercial "hype of harmful or useless technology for children." The recommendations have been endorsed by 82 experts in various fields, including Diane Ravitch, an education historian and a former assistant U.S. secretary of education in the Bush administration; Larry Cuban, an education professor at Stanford University; Jane Goodall, the

renowned researcher on primates; and Jane M. Healy, the author of the 1998 book "Failure To Connect: How Computers Affect Our Children's Minds—for Better and Worse." The group concluded that healthy development grows out of children's "hands-on experiences, face-to-face conversation with adults, strong bonds with caring, reliable, consistently available adults, and spending lots of time in personal interaction." All of that can be done, and done better, without the interposition of a computer, researchers concluded. In special cases, children with certain learning disabilities might benefit from the sound and visual capabilities offered by computers, the group argues. To view the full report, visit <http://alliance-forchildhood.net/>. (Source: Education Week, 9/20/00)

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■ Federally financed school-to-work programs, which promote stronger links between employers and students through internships and other work-related activities, received high marks from the participants, according to a recent report. The Public Forum Institute, a nonpartisan, Washington-based group that explores public-policy issues, released "Perspectives on Progress: The School-To-Work National Customer Dialogues." According to the report, nearly 100 percent of the more than 700 educators, parents, and employees surveyed said school-to-work programs had increased students interest in careers and better prepared them for college. But a majority of participants said more time and resources were needed to fully develop and sustain their partnerships. Federal funding for the school-to-work program is scheduled to run out on Oct. 1, 2001. States are then expected to assume full responsibility for their school-to-work programs. The report, "Perspectives on Progress: The School-to-Work National Customer Dialogues," is available online at <http://www.publicforuminstitute.com/stw/>.



... more national news & notes

■ A new study revealed that the test scores of students taught by teachers with probationary or emergency credentials improved just as much on some national standardized exams given in the early 1990s as those of their peers with fully certified teachers. The study analyzed the scores of more than 6,000 public school 10th and 12th graders who took science and mathematics exams as part of the National Education Longitudinal Study in 1990 and 1992. The researchers sought correlations between the students' scores and their teachers' certification status. They concluded that the contributions of a teacher who had either probationary or emergency credentials were roughly comparable to teachers who were fully certified. However, whether a teacher was teaching in his or her area of certification did make a difference. The test-score gains by students who were taught by teachers working in their specialties were higher than those taught by teachers working outside their specialties. The researchers warned, however, that the study's conclusions should not be applied to today's job market. Currently, demand for teachers with probationary and emergency licenses is significantly higher than in the early 1990s. That means principals are forced to hire a majority of those in the hiring pool, not just the very best applicants.

■ Kentucky students may soon get extra credit toward their grade point averages for above-par performance on state tests. The state board of education is considering a proposal to add up to 0.12 points to a high school senior's GPA based on scores on the state assessments in reading, mathematics, science, social studies, and writing. Under the plan presented this month by board member Craig True, students would receive an extra 0.024 points for every time they scored at the "distinguished" level; 0.016 for "proficient"; and 0.008 for "apprentice." Students take a test in each subject once during high school, starting with reading in 9th grade and ending with writing in 12th grade. The idea of the extra points would be to give students an incentive to perform well on exams that otherwise matter little in their high school careers. The state uses the tests to rate schools and districts, but not to make decisions about high school graduation or promotion to the next grade. (Education Week, 11/18/00)

■ A recent study from the Urban Institute suggests that things are looking up for more of the nation's children. "Snapshots of America's Families II" shows that the percentage of children under age 18 living with both their parents edged up from 63% in 1997 to 64% last year, while the percentage living in single-parent households dipped 2 percentage points, to 25%. The remaining children either live with a parent and his or her spouse, or with neither parent. Among older children living in low-income families, 34% of 12- to 17-year-olds were "highly engaged" in school last year, according to their parents, compared with 30% in 1997. The percentage of low-income children having serious emotional and behavior problems, as reported by their parents, also fell. The report is based on the second National Survey of America's Families, which involved 42,000 families of all income levels. The report is available online at [http://newfederalism.urban.org/nsaf/snapshots\\_index.html](http://newfederalism.urban.org/nsaf/snapshots_index.html).

■ At least six states—Florida, Hawaii, Kentucky, Louisiana, New Mexico, and Utah—have launched online "virtual high schools" that offer complete online courses to students in school or at home. A few other states, including California, Michigan, Illinois, and West Virginia, are not far behind. And several regional education agencies and consortia, and local school districts, are also offering or preparing to offer their own online courses.

Kentucky's virtual high school is offering 11 Advanced Placement courses this school year—its first full year of operation—to home schoolers and regular students alike. So far, the states that have started virtual high schools have generally bought courses from commercial providers, who see growing state involvement as a boost to their industry. But state officials do not necessarily want to remain tied to any particular vendors and are pursuing development of their own courses, too.

■ A new report prepared by the Institute for Higher Education Policy suggests that colleges and universities that serve large proportions of minority students can play a crucial role in producing more minority teachers, but that role has been largely overlooked. While almost 40 percent of U.S. elementary and secondary school students are members of racial or ethnic minorities, nine out of 10 teachers are white, the authors point out. Minority-serving institutions produce nearly half of all minority holders of teaching degrees, they write, but have been "chronically underfunded." The report, released last month, calls for a \$100 million federal pilot program, to be administered by the U.S. secretary of education's office, that would support the development of model teacher-preparation programs at such institutions. "Educating the Emerging Majority: The Role of Minority-Serving Colleges and Universities in Confronting America's Teacher Crisis" is available online at <http://www.ihep.com/finalTeacherEd.pdf>.

**Keep subs from jumping ship**

According to research from the Substitute Teaching Institute, the number one reason substitute teachers leave or quit is a perceived lack of administrative support.

Administrators, principals and administrative assistants must set the example of professional recognition and courtesy by showing support and respect for substitute teachers and the work they do in the classroom. School administrators should make an effort each day to meet every substitute working in the building. Ideally, administrators should:

- be available to greet substitute teachers as they arrive and introduce them to secretaries and/or teachers with the specific responsibility of providing necessary information and materials.
- stop by the classroom to see how they are doing.
- conduct an informal, end-of-the-day interview to ascertain how things went and to thank the substitute teachers for their service.

(Source: SubExchange, found at <http://subed.usu.edu/newsletter/index.html>)

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### The Education Freedom Index

The Manhattan Institute compared the 50 states on the degree of freedom their residents enjoy when it comes to educating their children. When ranking states, the following five criteria were considered: (1) charter school options; (2) government support of private education, such as tuition vouchers, tax credits, and direct financial aid to private schools; (3) home schooling regulation; (4) interdistrict options for choosing public schools; and (5) the ease of moving to different districts. CT ranked 10th in the nation.

Most Free States	Least Free States
1. Arizona	41. Georgia
2. Minnesota	42. Alaska
3. Wisconsin	43. South Carolina
4. New Jersey	44. Virginia
5. Oregon	45. Rhode Island
6. Texas	46. Maryland
7. Delaware	47. Kentucky
8. Colorado	48. Nevada
9. Maine	49. West Virginia
10. Connecticut	50. Hawaii

### Is Teaching Satisfying?

New teachers were asked how important it was that a job have each of the following characteristics.

Characteristic	% saying it is absolutely essential	% saying that current teaching position has it
• involves work you love	83	96
• allows enough time to be with family	81	79
• contributes to society and helps others	72	97
• provides the supervision & support you need	64	78
• has job security	60	84
• makes you feel respected and appreciated	59	66
• has good opportunities for advancement	33	59
• pays well	30	31

(Source: *A Sense of Calling, a report from Public Agenda, 2000*)

### legal news & notes

■ The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled that valedictorians, who in many schools get to address the graduation audience on a topic of their choice, do not have the right to discuss religion. Two co-valedictorians at Oroville (Calif.) High School sued the Oroville Union High School District in 1998 over their proposed graduation speeches. Both students submitted their remarks for review by the school principal, who expressed concerns about their proselytizing Christian tone. The students were told to make the speeches non-denominational. The students refused to alter their speeches, and they unsuccessfully sought a temporary restraining order requiring the school to let them deliver their preferred remarks. In a unanimous decision, a three-judge panel of the 9th Circuit court ruled for the district and its officials. The panel said the district's refusal to allow a "sectarian" invocation was necessary to avoid a violation of the establishment clause of the First Amendment.

### URBAN SCHOOLS COMMITTEE HOSTS PR CONFERENCE

On November 7th, the CT Association of Elementary School Principals' Urban Schools Committee, in conjunction with the Connecticut School Public Relations Association, hosted an all-day conference on public and media relations. Approximately twenty administrators, primarily from the Danbury Public School System, participated in the interactive workshop series designed to help them "beef up" their schools' public relations efforts.

The morning workshop featured Diane Alverio, nationally known communications specialist & veteran journalist, and Lucille Teale Caliendo, Communication Specialist for Northeast Utilities who has worked extensively in TV & radio reporting as well as in newspaper reporting. Diane and Teale gave a lively and engaging presentation on how to handle the media. They offered the following advice on dealing with the media during a time of crisis.

- How you say something is just as important as what you say.
- Try to avoid saying "no comment." The reporter will do the story with or without you. Give him/her the real story.
- Panic increases exponentially the longer people must deal with uncertainty.
- Use the media as a tool to dispel any rumors or dire predictions and to prevent public unrest.
- The principal does not have to allow the media "free reign" during a time of crisis. He/she can make the call whether or not to let the media in, taking into consideration the safety and welfare of the students.
- Never speculate on the cause, cost, or future ramifications of a crisis. There could be legal repercussions.

The afternoon workshop was facilitated by Dr. Betty Sternberg, Associate Commissioner of Education. Dr. Sternberg discussed ways to prepare students for the new third generation CMTs and provided suggestions on how principals could put their schools in the best light when reporting CMT results to the media.

Many thanks to the Connecticut School Public Relations Association and the Institute for Teaching and Learning for subsidizing this important event.



Pat Emons (l), principal of Children's Community School in Waterbury and chair of the Elementary Urban Principals Committee, introduces presenter Diane Alverio.

Gary Rosato (r), principal of Great Plain School in Danbury and chair of the CAESP board, and Lyme-Old Lume M.S. Principal Barbara Miller enjoy the presentation.



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REACTS TO TESTIMONY ON ADMINISTRATOR SHORTAGE AND MINORITY RECRUITMENT

*Editor's Note: The following remarks were prepared by Executive Director Mike Savage in response to testimony presented to the Commission on the Teacher and School Administrator Shortage and Minority Recruitment at a legislative hearing on September 27th. Mike appeared before the special commission for a second hearing in November at which time he had the opportunity to present some of these remarks.*

■ Let me begin by thanking the members of this commission who are legislators for recognizing the importance of the issues before us. I think we would be foolish to believe that any significant progress can be made in tackling these problems without the legislature's willingness to make these issues a legislative priority and to enthusiastically provide the leadership to get the necessary legislation passed. It will not happen otherwise.

■ I was particularly impressed with the remarks from the NEA representative. He was clear in his message that with due diligence much more progress can be made in Connecticut towards the induction of minority teachers and administrators into teaching and administrative roles in Conn. However, while it was heart-warming to be told that well-educated and talented African-Americans and Latinos are a premium on the professional job market, it is difficult to also hear that these same individuals are accepting non-teaching jobs because they provide better opportunities than can be offered them as Connecticut teachers. We need to be able to compete on the open job market for these talented individuals, and I look forward to working with you to finding ways to solve that problem.

■ I was also encouraged by the fact that this commission is willing to take serious note of the work of the State Department of Education's committee on the Future of School Leadership in Connecticut. I was a member of that committee, and I assure this body that your support and assistance in the implementation of its recommendations will serve this state well and will provide the necessary leadership and programs to tackle the issues. I hope that those recommendations will encompass the majority of this commission's work.

■ Unfortunately, in my judgement there were a few remarks offered that were particularly bothersome. The first related to ways of developing enhancement strategies to encourage prospective teachers into the system as well as ways to retain those that are presently teaching. While I agree that all opportunities ought to be investigated, they should be reviewed in the context of making the profession of teaching rise to a level of respectability so that the stigma, which is so profoundly expressed in the age-old cliché "If you can't do anything else you teach" is eliminated. I believe such programs as interest free loans for housing, rent subsidies, and other programs which connote teachers as second class citizens are misguided and only help permeate the notion that teachers cannot make a sufficient salary to enjoy the advantages of other professionals without government assistance. Enticements are important but they should be offered as ways to enhance the desire to enter the profession and not viewed by the public as "state subsidies to the professionally poor." Connecticut did not get to the top nationally for quality public education by chance. The Teacher Enhancement act helped us recruit better quality students into teaching. There isn't a practicing administrator in this state who will deny that the young people entering the teaching profession today are of superior quality as compared to their predecessors. Now we need to take it to a higher level. We need to look at compensation packages which compete with other professionals. Let me give you a recent and personal example of what we are facing today. Just last month I hired a secretary. I had been looking throughout the summer and while I offered the job on three separate occasions to applicants, each refused because of insufficient salary and benefits. However, the secretary I finally hired is a recent college graduate with a degree in English, experienced in journalism and trained to teach. She is starting at a salary which exceeds the money she could have earned as a first year teacher in her home town in Conn. To me that is a sad commentary on teacher salaries and the job market in which we are competing. This commission needs to address this issue. Also, at a recent meeting of the elite student leaders in our high schools with the commissioner and governor, when the group asked how many of them planned to enter the teaching field, there was literally not even a handful of students who acknowledged any interest at all. That is a real sad fact and one which needs to be recognized and explored by this leadership.

## Everything I Needed to Know, I Learned as a High School Principal

By Ivan Kershner

- A plugged toilet will overflow if you keep flushing.
- Truly great teachers are also great human beings.
- Kids need second chances.
- Parents make the worst sports fans.
- Some kids succeed despite all we do for them.
- Some kids fail for the same reason.
- No matter what decision you make, it will upset somebody. Make it anyway.
- You never get all the spray paint off the brick.
- The buck really does stop at your desk.
- Every day, at least one person will do some thing dumb and you will have to deal with it.
- Frequently, groups of people do dumb things.
- Every school has successes.
- Every school has failures.
- Sleep on a problem. Tomorrow usually brings a better decision.
- Horizontal: It's a pile. Vertical: It's filed.
- Write it down. Otherwise, you'll forget.
- Sometimes if you ignore a problem, it will go away.
- Sometimes it won't.
- Nobody really expects you to have all the answers.
- Call the parents before the kid gets home.
- Having the police on speed dial is a good thing.
- Be nice to secretaries.
- "Building security" is an oxymoron.
- Experience, though boring, is often valuable.
- The pendulum always swings back.
- Deep breathing.
- Good janitors are worth their weight in gold.
- Make the coffee.
- Talk to the media. With or without you, the story gets written.
- Parking lots have trash. Get over it.
- Don't try to establish a student dress code unless you have a lot of time on your hands.
- Windows get left open at night.
- Anything can happen. Anywhere. Any time.
- Having good intentions is no excuse.
- Leave your office door open most of the time.
- When somebody asks whether you're busy, say, "Yes, but I have time for you."
- Do it now!
- Find a mentor.
- Roof leak.
- Being a high school principal is a very important job.

*The author is principal of Eagle Valley H.S. (CO) Reprinted from NewsLeader, Oct. 2000*

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## RAMOS CITES NEED FOR SENSE OF URGENCY TO CLOSE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

By Tom Galvin, Assistant Executive Director

Speaking at New Britain High School on November 2nd to CAS Urban Principals, Dr. John Ramos reviewed research, findings, and recommendations from his report "Closing the Gap- Raising the Achievement of All Students." He pointed out that the achievement gap between the minority and white student populations is wide not only in his own school system in Norwalk but across the country. For example, African American and Latino 12th graders perform in math and reading at the same levels as white 8th graders. He advised we all need to have a sense of urgency to address this problem and his research shows best progress is made when schools set out to raise the achievement of all students, not specifically addressing sub groups alone.

Recommendations include: pre-K programs for all students, alternative programs and interventions, smaller class sizes, comprehensive staff training, empowering stakeholders to identify performance standards, and comprehensive professional development.

Ramos had the opportunity to conduct his study and write the report during a special assignment in 1999 while he was principal of Norwalk High School. This year he was named assistant superintendent of schools in Norwalk and has the opportunity to incor-

porate the recommendations of the report into the curriculum and instruction of all the schools.

Anyone interested in more information may contact Dr. Ramos in Norwalk at 1.203.854.4081.



Dr. John Ramos speaks about the achievement gap to a small group of urban high school principals.

## RECORD TURN-OUT FOR MINI-CONFERENCE ON NEASC

By Tom Galvin, Assistant Executive Director

The recent CAS Mini-Conference Panel Discussion on the new NEASC standards and process saw the largest attendance at a mini-conference in recent years, providing clear evidence of the interest of high school administrators in the changes that have been instituted by the NEASC. Close to 150 high school administrators and teachers enrolled in the program hosted by Meriden's Maloney High School on November 6th.

Facilitated by Dr. Mike Buckley, chair of the CAS Association of High School Principals, the panel consisted of principals of schools which were evaluated under the new standards, chairs of visiting committees using the new standards or both. Members included: Dr. Dennis Carrithers, principal of Simsbury High School, Dr. Gladys Labas, principal, Maloney High School, Robert Pitocco, principal of Rocky Hill High School and William Barney, principal of The Morgan School, Clinton.

The panel members advised principals that the new process is

more akin to school improvement planning than to accreditation. There is a change from the former "check list" to a process to facilitate school reform. There is a much greater focus on teaching and learning with much more emphasis given to observing student work and performance and actual teaching. Intensive teacher interviews are used to launch the visit. They pointed out the need to have a clearly written mission statement and an even greater need to be able to provide evidence that the contents of the statement are being implemented. Assessment is still a very difficult as well as important aspect of the evaluation and the NEASC is working on the provision of models to help schools in this area.

The panel members expressed strong support for the changes, citing the important role of this evaluation process in the improvement of schools.

Additional information is available on the NEASC Web Site at [www.neasc.org](http://www.neasc.org).



Be Inspired ...  
Be Energized ...  
Be in Phoenix!

**NASSP 2001  
Convention Offers  
Quality Professional  
Development**

Middle level and high school leaders across the nation are making their plans now to attend the NASSP Convention in Phoenix, AZ, March 9-12, 2001. This 85th annual event brings together more than 6,000 middle level and high school educators for four days of professional development, networking, motivation, and collegiality.

Keynote speakers, more than 200 concurrent sessions, special interest forums, luncheons, school visits, and exhibits provide cutting-edge information about and proven strategies for effective school leadership -- strategies administrators can implement in their schools immediately. Sessions will address those topics administrators want and need to know about: curriculum and instruction, assessment and accountability, school leadership and governance, and integrated technology.

The NASSP Convention also affords school leaders an opportunity to expand their network of colleagues and contacts. Through both formal and informal networking activities, attendees meet and learn from colleagues from across the nation and around the world who have the same dreams, challenges, and commitment to education.

*Register today for NASSP's 2001 Convention. For more information and to register online, visit [www.nasspconvention.org](http://www.nasspconvention.org).*

### From the CASC President. . .

“The autumn brings with it a dramatic, environmental change. It also marks the time of the CASC Regional Conferences. The Eastern Region Conference will be held in Jewett City at Griswold High School and the Central Region Conference at East Hartford High School. At this time plans are being made for the Western Region Conference.

As a result of last year's state conference and the CASC Executive Board, the decision had been made to tailor the conferences around "basic" leadership skills. The justification for the decision is a result of state, regional, local and personal growth. This growth has produced a lack of "basic" leadership skills within most student leaders. In 1999 the CASC Executive Board decided to make a conscious effort to offer activities that revolved around the vital skills that all leaders must have. The effort started with the regional conferences in the fall of last year. The executive boards developed conferences that touched upon such issues as diversity, tolerance, and the importance of communication skills. As a follow-up, the CASC Executive Board devised a state conference program that focused on the "core" leadership

issues. With the help of Tom Schiff the board developed and implemented an agenda that produced an overwhelming empathetic response from both student and advisor delegates.

The 2000-01 CASC Executive Board has decided to continue this "Basic elements of Leadership" concept. The theme for all CASC activities and the spring CASC Conference is RESPECT and how it relates to every aspect of life. Presently each region is working diligently to produce a conference that focuses on the importance of RESPECT. The notion will be carried one step further at the CASC State Conference (March 16-17) at The Colony in Vernon, Connecticut.

To conclude the year, the CASC Executive Board will host its Second Annual Student Executive Leadership Institute at the Newington Town Hall. Coupled with the talents of Jim Fitzgerald (Fitz), the institute attempts to set the foundation for the creation of positive, influential, student leaders. This event will be followed up by a statewide community service project to reaffirm the importance of "basics", and the positive change that it creates in all areas of daily life.”

Jared Kupiec  
Koop25@hotmail.com

### Handling Criticism

Principals are in highly visible positions and make many tough decisions every day. That combination makes it easy for others to offer criticism. It ranges from sharp words from an angry parent to constructive comments from a superior. Your status as a leader is amplified if you handle it well. Here are some tips:

- ✓ **Listen first, judge later.** Pay full attention to what others tell you, even if it stings. The most valuable criticism often hits close to home, making it hard to take. Assess the merits of what you hear before you judge it.
- ✓ **Resist mounting an instant defense.** Nod and digest the criticism silently. If you rush to react to it, you'll take it personally and feel hurt.
- ✓ **Bounce it off others.** Just because someone critiques you doesn't make it accurate. Politely thank the person for the input and then discuss it with a trusted colleague.
- ✓ **Think "teach me."** Strive to extract facts or insights from any criticism. By treating it as a chance to learn, you'll welcome feedback without flinching.

-- Adapted from *Entrepreneur's Business Start Ups* / Reprinted from *Illinois Principals Association Newsletter*

### New report on school violence suggests there is no accurate profile of school shooter

The U.S. Secret Service has released a study intended to help schools judge when violence may erupt on their campuses. Unlike more than a dozen other school violence reports that have flowed out of Washington following a string of campus shootings in the past few years, the U.S. Secret Service's findings are based on in-depth interviews with many of the actual assailants. Compiled from reviews of medical, mental-health, and school records in 37 incidents involving 41 attackers since 1974, as well as face-to-face interviews with 10 of those students, the study lets the perpetrators speak in their own words. Most of the students—all were boys—say that they had planned their attacks, that they acted out of a desire for revenge, and that their assaults shouldn't have been a surprise to anyone. Contrary to a common perception that student gunmen "just snap," the Secret Service found that in more than three-fourths of the incidents, the students had planned their aggression. And more than 75 percent of the time, other students knew of the plans in advance. More than half the attackers interviewed cited revenge as their motivation. Although the attacker acted alone in at least two-thirds of the cases, in almost half, he was encouraged by other students, the report says.

In one case, a student brought a gun to school to appear "tough" to two students who were bullying him, the Secret Service report says. But it wasn't until two of the boy's friends persuaded him to confront his harassers that the boy decided actually to attack.

Unlike an FBI report issued last month that included a list of personality and behavioral traits of likely school gunmen, the Secret Service report uses the case studies to construct a broader statistical

portrait of the incidents. The Secret Service investigators found, for instance, that more than half the attacks took place in the middle of the school day, and that more than half the assailants had histories of gun use. The study also shows that in the vast majority of cases, people at the school, not police, defused the crisis, or the gunman committed suicide. More than half the attacks had ended before law-enforcement personnel arrived on the scene. In only three of the 37 incidents did law-enforcement officers discharge a weapon.

The report also notes that the incidents tended to be quick. In contrast with the most serious incident—in April 1999 at Colorado's Columbine High School where two students shot 13 other people over a three-hour period before killing themselves—half the incidents described in the study lasted 20 minutes or less.

There "is no accurate or useful profile of the school shooter," says the report, which shows some similarities and many differences among the students interviewed. The 41 student attackers, who ranged in age from 11 to 21, came from a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds, though more than three-fourths were white. Some of the assailants were popular in their schools, while others were socially isolated; some came from intact families with ties to their communities, while others lived in foster homes where they were neglected. Their academic records ranged from excellent to poor: Some were high-achieving students in Advanced Placement courses, while others were failing.

(Source: "Gunmen in School Attacks Sought Revenge, Revealed Plans," By Jessica Portner, *Education Week*, October 25, 2000)



## middle school news

### Newsletter Notes

#### Walk for Music Education

More than twenty East Hampton Middle School students participated in a Walk for Music Education organized by Muzak. The walkers followed a route from Sears Park to Mott Hill and Back all to raise money for the school's music program. -- EHMS News

#### "Demonstrate Respect. It's A Powerful Thing!"

Students on the 8.2Team at Jared Elliot Middle school participated in a Character Counts assembly. Some students acted out a fable demonstrating the power of respect while others contributed their artistic talents to a backdrop and banner. They also wore tee shirts designed by students Josh Martin and Daryl Baker which featured a dragon (In Asian cultures, the dragon is a symbol of respect). The logo and the motto are representative of the team's mission statement for the year: "Demonstrate Respect. It's a Powerful Thing!"  
-Jared Elliot Middle School Newsletter

#### NMSA Convention

The National Middle School Association convention in St. Louis, MO was judged a success by the national office.



It attracted just short of ten thousand participants. Among the presenters at the conference were: James Johnston from Tolland Middle School, Monita Lkeavitt from Rochambeau Middle School in Southbury, Robert Lincoln from Parker Memorial School in Tolland and Sam Lewbel, Editor of the New England League of Middle Schools Journal and Rochambeau Middle School.

**"We are now at a point where we must educate our children in what no one knew yesterday, and prepare ourselves for what no one knows yet."**

-- Margaret Mead

### CAS Middle Level Fall Conference a "Four Star" Show

by Earle G. Bidwell, Assistant Executive Director



Keynote speaker Dr. Neila Connors infuses the audience with humor and inspiration.

Nearly two hundred middle level teachers and administrators converged on the Southbury Hilton Hotel on October 27, 2000, for the 17th Annual Middle Level Fall conference. According to over 90 conference evaluation forms, they were far from disappointed. Some of the comments were: "The positive attitude that Dr. Connors set up at the beginning was something I can take back to school and use for the remainder of the year," and Neila Connors was excellent, a much needed burst of positive attitude."

In addition to keynoter Neila Connors, participants were treated to a workshop on integrated curriculum and multiple intelligences by Connecticut's own Dr. Kathleen Butler. Conference attendees were most impressed with Dr. Butler's handouts which will be a great asset in applying her strategies in the classroom.

Tom Mooney, one of the most knowledgeable experts on school law in Connecticut, presided over two sessions on school law. Among other topics, he updated his audience on changes in the teacher tenure laws. Several participants suggested that Mr. Mooney be brought back for an extended session.

J. Howard Johnston, one of the middle level's most distinguished presenters led sessions on "Combating Bullying and Intimidation." Dr. Johnston, a mainstay at the CAS Summer Institute, presented practical strategies for principals and teachers for dealing with a growing problem in schools.

The afternoon featured an awards ceremony where several schools and individuals were honored for distinguished service to middle level education. The awards were:

- ★ a distinguished service award to Janice Grodzki from Washington Middle School in Meriden, a founding member of the Center for Early Adolescent Educators
- ★ CAS Middle Level Teacher of the Year, China Gates-Dillon, Timothy Edwards Middle School, South Windsor
- ★ CAS Middle Level Principal of the Year, Michael Rafferty, Old Saybrook Middle School
- ★ CAS Middle Schools of the Year: Cromwell Middle School, Carmen Arace Middle School in Bloomfield and Timothy Edwards Middle School in South Windsor

Mike Rafferty (r), principal of Old Saybrook Middle School and chair of the Middle Level Program Committee, receives the Principal of the Year Award from CAS President Tony Molinaro.



## . . . more middle school news

### Exemplary Middle School Programs

With all of the attention being given to education in the recent national election campaign, many principals and teachers are taking another look at their programs. There are two up-to-date resources that are available. The first is "Turning Points 2000 Educating Adolescents in the 21st Century" Based on current research and the experience of hundreds of middle schools, this volume provides in-depth information on the implementation of *Turning Points* principles in middle school education. The book is available from the publisher: Teachers College Press (800) 575-6566 or from [www.teacherscollegepress.com](http://www.teacherscollegepress.com). The book is also available locally New England League of Middle Schools. (800) 528-NMSA.

A quick reference comes from "How To Evaluate Your Middle School" by Sandra Schurr. Columbus, Ohio: National Middle School Association 1992. Here are her **Twenty Characteristics of Exemplary Middle Schools**:

1. a philosophy based on the unique needs and characteristics of the young adolescent;
2. educators knowledgeable about and committed to the young adolescent;
3. a balanced curriculum between cognitive (subject centered) and affective (student centered) needs of the young adolescent;
4. teachers who use varied instructional strategies;
5. a comprehensive advisor/advisee program;
6. interdisciplinary team organization at all grades;
7. a flexible block master schedule;
8. a full exploratory program;
9. both team and personal planning for all teachers;
10. a positive collaborative school climate;
11. shared decision-making in which the people closest to the "client" are involved in the decision-making process of the school;
12. a smooth transition process from elementary to middle school and from middle school to high school;
13. a high-quality extracurricular program including intramurals, interest based mini-courses, clubs, and social events;
14. a physical plant where teams are housed together for core classes and large areas for full team sessions;
15. a commitment to the importance of health and physical fitness for all students on a regular basis;
16. a commitment to regular involvement of families in the education of young adolescents by keeping them informed of student progress and school programs and by giving them meaningful roles in the schooling process;
17. a positive connection between school and the community through student service projects, business partnerships, and use of community resources within the school community;
18. consistent use of cooperative learning strategies in the classroom;
19. an emphasis on the use of higher-order thinking skills and hands-on instructional strategies; and,
20. empowerment of students whenever possible.

How does your middle school stack up against these standards?

*Reprinted from "Homelines," a NELMS publication*

CAS presents . . .

The Annual Middle Level Student Leadership Conference

### "Meeting the Challenge: Promoting Positive School Climate"

March 13, 2001

Quinnipiac University

Breakout sessions will include:

- ✧ Making a Difference
- ✧ Handling Bullying and Teasing
- ✧ Heroes Among Us

*Save the date and watch for registration materials  
in January*

### Shortage, continued from page 6

Finally, the most disturbing remarks came at the end of the meeting when one committee member made the statement that building level administrators were not trained as instructional leaders and that if we were to redefine the role of the principal - which I believe is absolutely necessary - it would require us to reeducate and/or train principals to become instructional leaders. Further, it was stated that principals were trained to serve only as building managers. As the executive director of an association which deals with school-based administrators on a daily basis, well over 1200 of them, I vehemently disagree with that statement. In fact, following the meeting I went back to my office and decided to do some informal research of my own since I am a firm believer that the present job structure does not permit principals the opportunity to serve as instructional leaders - not that they lack the training and experience to fill that role. I asked what we considered to be the best and most successful elementary, middle level and high school principals all over the state to respond to a few basic questions. First I asked them if the principal should serve as the instructional leader of the school. All but one responded that that was their primary responsibility. I then asked them if their present job allowed them to function as the instructional leader of their schools. Only 10% felt that they were able to function in that capacity. 90% felt differently and believed that the daily pressures of running their schools did not give them time to concentrate on leading instruction. 48% said that they served as instructional leaders much less than they would like or should in order to maximize student learning. Perhaps most importantly, the survey revealed that 97% of the respondents felt that they had the knowledge, training and experience to be the instructional leader of the school. And while I do not wish to take the time now to discuss the reasons for the discrepancy between wanting to serve as the instructional leader and not being able to do so certainly is not for a lack of training or ability. The survey clearly indicates that if we want principals to serve as instructional leaders, we need to show some leadership in redefining the role of the building level administrator.



## elementary school news

### CAESP Conference, *continued from page 1*

Special thanks are extended to the CAESP Program Committee co-chaired by Jose Olavarria, Principal of Pembroke School in Danbury, and Sue Driscoll, Principal of Eastford School in Eastford, for the many volunteer hours they spent organizing and managing this event. Wonderful opportunities like these are only made possible through the collaborative efforts of such thoughtful and caring educators.



Participants listen to Professor P. David Pearson's strategies for promoting comprehension among elementary students.



During the breaks, participants explored the exhibit booths.



Christine Parisi, *Success for All* Coordinator at Wintergreen Inter-district Magnet School, explains the merits of the program.

### News from the National Association of Elementary School Principals...

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■ NAESP has just added a new feature to its website which will allow visitors to keep apprised of ongoing federal legislation, communicate with their U.S. senators and representatives, follow key votes on Capitol Hill, and find contact information for local media organizations. NAESP members can sign up to receive NAESP legislative updates via e-mail. Visit <http://congress.nw.dc.us/naesp> for all your legislative needs!

■ Need a laugh? NAESP has also launched a site for educational humor! Visit [www.naesp.org/misc/edhumor.htm](http://www.naesp.org/misc/edhumor.htm) to hear jokes and read funny stories to which all educators can relate! Contribute a funny story of your own.

■ **Dan Hansen**, principal of Pleasant Valley Elementary School in South Windsor and Connecticut's 2000 National Distinguished Principal, was honored on Oct. 6th at an awards banquet in Washington, D.C. The National Distinguished Principals awards program is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP).

Dan believes that "for children, staff, and parents to open themselves up to their possibilities, they must belong to a community in which their voices are heard and valued." In the decade that Dan has been principal of Pleasant Valley, he has excelled at developing a school culture that values and celebrates the voices of all. The school's 540 K-5 students express themselves through a Talents Unlimited program, student council, literary magazine, a school-wide "mailbox" that welcomes children's writing samples, and lunchtime mini-concerts. The integration of the arts and the high level of family involvement at Pleasant Valley are exemplified in such programs as Classics in the Classroom and Art Goes to School, enrichment efforts supported by the school's 150 parent volunteers. Dan's educational leadership extends beyond his school. As district elementary science coordinator, he established a curriculum committee that revamped science instruction throughout South Windsor in line with national and state standards. He also has chaired South Windsor's School Development Council, a system-wide strategic planning group. Dan and his staff also modeled the Writing Continuum Folder, a tool to track individual student's progress in reading and writing skills that has been adopted by schools throughout the district. Dan received his BS and MA from UConn.



Dan Hansen receives the National Distinguished Principal Award from U.S. Secretary Richard Riley. NAESP Executive Director Vince Ferrandino introduces the honorees from the podium at right.



## ciac news

■ **Directions posted on CIAC website.** The CIAC has established a page on its website where visitors can access directions to all member high schools as well as all CIAC tournament sites. Visit the CAS-CIAC main page at [www.casciac.org](http://www.casciac.org) and click on the CIAC pull-down menu. There will be three "maps/directions" links, one provides directions to the central office, one provides directions to member schools, and one provides directions to tournament sites.

■ **NCAA website provides sports med info.** The NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports has an outstanding website for those interested in sports sciences information. Visit [www.ncaa.org/sports\\_sciences/](http://www.ncaa.org/sports_sciences/) to access information on such topics as sports medicine, emergency plans, injury surveillance, and drug testing.

■ **Why kids quit sports.** Some 30 million kids ages 4 to 14 are involved in organized sports in the U.S. Many programs are low-key, encourage all skill levels, and remain fun to kids. Yet, according to the National Alliance for Youth Sports, a countervailing trend has youngsters dropping out of organized sports, some 70% by the time they reach 13. Among the reasons: no fun, too much pressure, angry coaches, and embarrassment over their parents' zeal.

■ **Dangers of officiating continue.** Officials at the National Association of Sports Officials (NASO) became so concerned about the hazards of officiating at youth events that they now offer a \$3 million assault insurance package to their members. Fourteen states now have laws that place sports officials in a special category like police or firefighters.

■ **NASSP opposes amateurism deregulation.** The NASSP Board of Directors voted unanimously to oppose the current amateur deregulation proposals being considered by the NCAA (*see Nov. BULLETIN*).

### Participation in Unified Sports® Brings Rewards

*By Gerry Mucci, Coach, Stratford High School*

Two Stratford High School teachers and six of their students have shared in a number of rewarding activities as a result of their involvement in the Connecticut Unified Sports® Program. Diane DeStefano, a special education teacher, and Gerry Mucci, the adapted physical education teacher, have been coaching the Stratford/Bunnell Unified Sports® teams since their inception ten years ago. Recently, the Stratford/Bunnell unified soccer team was asked to put on an exhibition during half-time of the M.A.A.C. women's soccer finals held at Fairfield University. It was an eye-opener for all spectators to see how well all the students interacted and the effort that was put forth. In addition to the exhibition, Mrs. DeStefano, Mr. Mucci, and Jason DelGardo (one of their students) were guest speakers at the M.A.A.C. women's soccer finals banquet. Jason spoke about the effect Unified Sports® has had on him, and the two teachers spoke on the importance of Unified Sports® in the lives of their students.

Gerry and Diane have not only been actively involved in coaching their teams, they were instrumental in writing the rules for their own division. After weeks of practice, their unified soccer team competed against teams from around the state at a recent tournament held at New Canaan H.S. This activity provided an excellent opportunity to establish friendly relationships and interaction among the special and regular education population. It also provided an opportunity for our special athletes to be part of an athletic team.

*Editor's note:* The letter printed below is one of many such letters we have received in response to the disbursement of endowment funds to member schools this fall.

Michael H. Savage, CAS

October 24, 2000

Dear Mr. Savage,

How great it was to open an envelope from CAS and find a check for \$100.00! CAS oversees so many programs that it is easy to forget the CIAC endowment fund. I am delighted that our school is a member of an organization that invests its funds wisely and returns a portion of that fund to its members. Thomaston will certainly put the money to good use to support our athletic programs and other student activities. We appreciate the many things CAS does for our school as well as your generosity.

Sincerely,

*Robin G. Willink, Principal, Thomaston H.S.*

November 20, 2000

On behalf of the Athletic Department at Plainville High School, I wish to compliment the athletes, parents, and most especially the students who were in attendance at the Haddam- Killingworth vs Terryville State semi-final volleyball match held at Plainville H.S. on Thursday, Nov. 16, 2000.

The enthusiastic support shown by your students toward their volleyball team throughout the entire match was wonderfully refreshing. In fact, there is no doubt in my mind that their continuous encouragement pumped up the players after they lost the first game of the match and helped to shift the momentum in Terryville's favor thereafter.

My assistant and I, as well as several members of our volleyball squad were amazed and perhaps a little bit envious of how everyone who was at the game from Terryville supported their team without being discourteous or rude to the opponents or to the game officials. The behavior and exuberance of all your fans were exemplary and they are to be congratulated along with the athletes who played a marvelous match.

Terryville teams and their fans are more than welcome to come back to Plainville any time.

Sincerely,

*John Zadnik, Athletic Director, Plainville H.S.*

*At its November meeting, the Clinton Board of Education unanimously adopted the following resolution in support of the CIAC.*

**"The Clinton Board of Education endorses the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) as the sole oversight body for interscholastic athletics in Connecticut. This includes oversight of rules for student eligibility developed and enforced by the CIAC, standards of play, and tournament organization.**

**The Clinton Board of Education opposes all efforts by the Connecticut General Assembly (singly, in groups, or as a body) to interfere with the CIAC as it fulfills its responsibilities and functions."**

## ciac news

### Athletic Association's Age Rule Doesn't Violate Disabled Student's Rights

A learning-disabled student who was barred from playing high school sports because he is 19 years old has lost his bid for a federal injunction that would have allowed him to play in a Thanksgiving Day football game against his school's arch-rival.

Joining Luis Cruz as a co-plaintiff in the suit was the Ridley School District, which alleged that the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association was violating Cruz's rights under three different federal laws by strictly enforcing its age rule.

But U.S. District Judge Ronald L. Buckwalter said that an injunction is an "extreme" remedy and that Ridley and Cruz had not proven that there will be any "irreparable harm" if he is barred from competitive play. Buckwalter said he himself often "warmed the bench" while a member of a high school football team and that he still got a lot out of the experience. Since Cruz can still practice with the team and suit up for games, Buckwalter said he could not see any "irreparable" harm.

Attorney Arthur Levy argued that Cruz's advanced age as a high-school senior is a direct result of his learning disabilities but that he was not violating PIAA's rule that bars playing in more than eight semesters.

And Cruz would not give Ridley High School an unfair competitive advantage, Levy said, since he is just 5-foot-2 and 135 pounds and is not a star player in any of the sports he plays. Levy argued that PIAA's age rule should bend in Cruz's case since a federal law -- the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act -- protects his right to participate in extracurricular activities.

Under IDEA, all disabled students have an IEP or "individualized education plan." In Cruz's case, the suit says, his IEP specifically mentions that he should participate in sports because he "has become friends with many of the team players" and sports fulfill "his need for socialization."

The PIAA's lawyer argued that it would be impossible to grant exceptions to the age rule since it would require extensive investigations into whether the older student would give his team an unfair advantage. Such an investigation, he claimed, would have to look at the abilities of all the students on the older player's team as well as the abilities of all the students they are likely to compete against.

Throughout the four-hour hearing, Judge Buckwalter kept pressing witnesses about whether Cruz would be able to participate in sports on some level even if the PIAA age rule bars him from competitive play. In the end, Buckwalter said he found that Cruz's teachers and coaches will still be able to implement his IEP even though he can no longer compete. The wrestling team, he said, competes in non-PIAA freestyle meets that Cruz can join, and Cruz can run with the track team during practices and as an "exhibition" runner at meets.

Buckwalter also said Ridley could allow Cruz to play in the Thanksgiving game and simply allow the PIAA to declare the game a forfeit afterwards. To the players, the win happens on the field, the judge said, and they probably wouldn't be bothered by a technical forfeit.

In his closing argument, Levy said Cruz was being denied a "free and appropriate public education." But Buckwalter cut him off, saying, "He's not being deprived of anything he's entitled to." Buckwalter insisted that Levy explain how Cruz would be irreparably harmed if he were limited to practicing but not competing. Levy said there was a significant difference in the self-esteem that a player gets from actually playing in an official game. But Buckwalter, remembering his own bench-warming days, said, "There's a difference, but there's no guarantee that anyone is going to get that. How does that harm a person? I mean, it's a disappointment, but ..." Levy pressed his point, saying Cruz's IEP clearly says he should "participate" in sports -- which includes competitions. But Buckwalter said the school's IEP team must simply meet again to modify the IEP now that an "outside organization," the PIAA, has imposed an impediment. For now, Buckwalter said, Cruz can still suit up for games and enjoy "the thrill of hearing the crowd cheering and the thrill of being on the bench with his buddies."

*(From an article by Shannon P. Duffy, The Legal Intelligencer, Nov. 17, 2000)*

### WOMEN IN SPORTS CONFERENCE: The Message is Clear

By Ann Malafronte, Unified Sports® Director



Chris Dailey, Associate Head Coach, UConn Womens Basketball, signed autographs after her keynote address.

Speaking to a full audience of nearly 500, softball Olympian Danielle Henderson gave a clear message, "Follow your dreams." The C.I.A.C.'s Women in Sports Committee, in partnership with the State Department of Education, hosted its third Sports Career Conference for high school women on November 13, 2000 at the Waterbury Sheraton.

Danielle told the young women who were present of her lifelong dream to play professional softball and described her journey to fulfill that dream. She urged the students to work hard, stay committed, and never give up on their goal.

Following Danielle's remarks, the participants selected three sport career panels to attend, hearing from women sports professionals in careers such as marketing, journalism, medicine, law, officiating, administration, coaching, psychology and facility management. Each panel provided information on preparing for a career in that field, on career options that are available, on how to obtain internships and mentoring opportunities, and on how to network. Each panel provided opportunities for questions and answers.

UConn Women's Basketball Associate Head Coach Chris Dailey was a huge draw as the luncheon speaker. She spoke to the young ladies about the career opportunities that are now available to women because of Title IX and about the emergence of interest in women's sports. However her most important message was the importance of contributing as part of a team. She used Stacy Hansmeyer and Paige Sauer as examples of how a player never knows when or if her role will change and how important the acceptance of that role is to the success of the team as a whole. Chris described "the spirit" of Marci Czel as being an integral part of UConn's team. She urged the athletes who were present to look at their contributions to the team, not in terms of points scored or even impact on the court, but in terms of making the team better for their part. The sharing of UConn "team stories" made our group feel special for having the opportunity to know Chris a little better and gain some personal insight into the players that we all admire from afar.

ciac news

FALL 2000 TOURNAMENT RESULTS

■ GIRLS FIELD HOCKEY

	<b>Champion</b>	<b>Runner-up</b>
Class L:	Cheshire	Simsbury
Class M:	Pomperaug	New Canaan
Class S:	Granby	Shepaug

■ BOYS SOCCER

	<b>Champion</b>	<b>Runner-up</b>
Class LL:	Guilford	Fairfield
Class L:	Wethersfield	Newington
Class M:	Avon	Lewis Mills
Class S:	Granby	Valley Reg.

■ GIRLS SOCCER

	<b>Champion</b>	<b>Runner-up</b>
Class L L:	Simsbury	Glastonbury
Class L:	Wilton	Farmington
Class M:	Suffield	Avon
Class S:	Granby	Tourtellotte

■ GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

	<b>Champion</b>	<b>Runner-up</b>
Class L:	Fairfield	Stamford
Class M:	Sheehan	Foran
Class S:	Gilbert	Terryville



Pomperaug beat New Canaan 3-2 for the Class M field hockey title.

■ BOYS CROSS COUNTRY

	<b>Champion</b>
Open:	Danbury
LL:	Danbury
L:	Ridgefield
MM:	Ledyard
M:	Woodstock
SS:	Griswold
S:	Thomaston

■ GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY

	<b>Champion</b>
Open:	Fitch
LL:	NFA
L:	Fitch
MM:	E.O.Smith
M:	Joel Barlow
SS:	Coginchaug
S:	Wheeler



Class L Boys Cross Country Championships at Wickham Park in East Hartford

■ GIRLS SWIMMING

	<b>Champion</b>
Open:	Greenwich
LL:	Greenwich
L:	Cheshire
M:	Branford
S:	Darien

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## caad news

Items submitted by John Novakowski, CAA, Supervisor of Athletics, Bristol

## Legal Issues By Dr. Richard P. Borkowski

Even though a coach may occupy a volunteer position, he or she can still be held to the same liability standards as a paid coach. Volunteers can be sued and so can the schools that use them.

Therefore, those in charge of the volunteer coaches have a duty to inform and instruct them in how to do the job. An administrator or coach must screen, orient, train, and supervise the volunteer. The best technique is to place volunteer coaches with experienced head coaches. The worst scenario is placing an unprepared volunteer in charge of a team.

Volunteer coaches should never be asked to do something they have not been trained to do. And, when possible, they should be given the same training as all other coaches -- from CPR and first aid to teaching proper techniques and preventing sexual harassment.

Volunteer coaches should also be informed of their legal responsibilities when working with student-athletes.

Here are the key points to go over:

- ❑ Because coaches are working with children, they are held to an even higher standard of care than a reasonable, prudent person. Coaches must be reasonable, prudent professionals. They must know more than the average person about what is or is not correct. For example, the average person may not be expected to know CPR, but a coach should be knowledgeable in this area.
- ❑ Foreseeability is a major factor in determining if you did or did not meet your professional standard of care. This is another term for common sense. Is it foreseeable that a problem could occur if there is no one lifeguarding at a pool?
- ❑ Coaches must supply athletes with appropriate equipment for the task at hand.
- ❑ The coach must be knowledgeable about the activity being taught, and the activity must be appropriate for the group.
- ❑ Coaches must be careful not to mismatch athletes during games, scrimmages, or competitive drills.
- ❑ Athletes must be prepared and conditioned for the specific activity they are asked to perform.
- ❑ When appropriate, athletes must be warned about the risks of the activity.

There is also a non-legal aspect for bringing a complaint against a coach and school. That is anger. If parents feel the coach did little to prevent their child's injury and is not sympathetic to the child and family, the possibility of litigation will increase.

Meeting your legal duties lowers the chance of being sued and players being hurt. That's what's called a true win-win situation.

*Richard P. Borkowski, EdD, CAA, is a retired athletic administrator who has served as a sport safety consultant and "expert witness" in the field of scholastic liability for the past 35 years.*

Reprinted from Athletic Management, Oct/Nov 2000

## Getting Online, Step-by-Step

Let's assume that you have access to a computer -- whether it's at home, in the office, or at the library -- and you also know the basics of operating it, such as turning it on, using the Internet, either by modem or a local area network (LAN), and you have a "browser" program such as Netscape Navigator or Microsoft Internet Explorer installed on your PC.

Start the process of getting online by opening your browser program. In the address or location box, type in the address of the site you'd like to check out; it usually begins with "http://www." and is followed by the more specific site name, such as "amazon.com" or "nfhs.org". Once the site's home page address is displayed in your location box, hit your "Return" button and wait for the site to appear on your screen. Once the page has completely downloaded, you can click on links (they're usually underlined words) with your mouse to access other pages on the site. When you're finished, simply type in a new address to visit another site.

There are several ways to get hands-on training to become more familiar with the Web: you could buy a book or a magazine aimed at novice Web surfers; you could enlist a more knowledgeable staff member or student; or you could take a class at a local college or adult-education center. *(Source: ETI 2000)*

## Tricks of the Trade:

- ◆ Some small dents can be removed from wood floors by covering the dent with a damp cloth and pressing with an electric iron.
- ◆ When dragging an infield, always start and stop in the same place. This will prevent low spots from developing.
- ◆ As an alternative to sweeping under bleachers, lift the hinged skirt boards below the first row and use a leaf blower to move debris forward from under the system.
- ◆ To prevent damage to synthetic gym floors, place sheets of Masonite in line with the paths of retractable bleacher systems' wheels.

**Another Resource:** The nonprofit Risk Management Center in Washington, D.C. has published a very good booklet titled, "No Surprises, Controlling Risks in Volunteer Programs," by Charles Tremper and Gwynne Koslin. It can be ordered by calling (202) 785-3891.

## ... more caad news

**Juggling E-Mail Issues** (Reprinted from *INTERNET SUPPLEMENT*)

**D**id you know that most e-mail messages are about as secure as those written on post cards? Or that your employers could probably go through your e-mail messages anytime they desired?

E-mail has become a part of everyday life for most athletic directors, but its ease of use leads many people to overlook some of its possible pitfalls. Privacy, security, and appropriate use are all areas of concern for those who use or manage e-mail systems, and the law has been slow to address these areas.

In some cases, employees have been fired for misusing their e-mail accounts, and even Microsoft was tripped up during its anti-trust case by old e-mails that were obtained by the Justice Department. And just as the 2000 football season opened, three high school coaches in suburban Seattle were suspended from their teaching and coaching jobs for as long as three weeks for using school computers to view and forward e-mail with sexually explicit photographs.

Athletic directors certainly do not need to know how their e-mail system works, anymore than they need to know how the engines in the school buses work. But they do need to know about the policies and procedures that govern its use.

Fortunately, most schools that have an e-mail system also have an e-mail policy in place. If this is the case at your school, you should learn the policy, follow it, and preach it to your staff. And if there is no e-mail policy in place, you might want to consider developing one for your department.

The first area of concern is privacy. In most cases, employers have the right to monitor their e-mail systems. But before you start looking through an assistant coach's e-mail box to see if he's been passing plays to the opposition, remember that most e-mail policies spell out how much privacy employees can expect and detail procedures for accessing other people's e-mail. In addition, any action of this type could have a serious effect on department morale and create unintended tensions.

When it comes to the privacy of your own e-mail, the safest approach is to assume that anyone else can read it. In fact, for those employed by public institutions, your e-mail may be covered under public records laws.

Even if you are assured complete privacy through an e-mail policy, the reality is that such a policy ends the minute you hit the "send" button. An e-mail message can be forwarded by its recipients with a few keystrokes, extending its audience far beyond what was first intended. And it's much easier to misaddress an e-mail message than an envelope -- more than one errant message has ended up in the wrong hands because of a misplaced mouse click.

Along with privacy concerns, security can be an issue. Anyone with sufficient computing skills and ill intent can intercept almost any e-mail message as it passes through numerous servers en route to its destina-

tion. Some people encrypt sensitive messages, but encryption programs can be cumbersome to use, take time to learn, and may not be allowed on some systems.

Another security issue involves the permanence of e-mail messages. Although it may seem that something written on paper will be around longer than a collection of bits and bytes, the truth is, when you delete an e-mail, it is only removed from your own computer. It can, and probably will, live forever. Most e-mail systems are backed up on a regular basis in case of a problem with the system, and these backups are often retained for long periods of time. So even if you delete a message from your e-mail box, there's probably a copy of it somewhere else. The bottom line: for sensitive messages, e-mail is probably not the best choice.

You may also want to think about appropriate use issues around this new form of letter writing. Most e-mail policies limit use to work-related activity. Most also prohibit offensive or illegal material. While the work-related provision may not be vigorously enforced, be especially careful about forwarding jokes and other non-business e-mail. That joke you laughed so hard at on the tee with your friendly foursome won't seem as funny when it's in black-and-white as part of a legal brief. Rule of thumb: If you wouldn't print it and post it on a company bulletin board, don't send it to anyone.

Keep in mind that the informality and immediacy of e-mail can make one forget proper communication skills. For example, it can be awfully tempting to quickly reply in-kind to a nasty message, but most of the time, it's better to reply only after you've calmed down and collected your thoughts.

Another reality of e-mail is that, unlike phone or face-to-face communication, words alone have to carry the message. There's no laugh there to indicate you're joking or sympathetic look to soften the blow of bad news. Choose your words wisely, and if you want to indicate the mood of your message, there are some generally accepted symbols called emoticons that can help, although some people view them as frivolous. For example, <G> or :( indicates you're sad. For most messages, though, the safest route is to make sure you say exactly what you mean and leave no room for misinterpretation.

As e-mail use has exploded, so has the contents of most people's inbox. To make sure your message is noticed, pick your subject line carefully. Mass e-mailers have done this with their advertisements, so subject lines like "Read This Now" or "Important!" might be ignored. Instead make sure it's clear what your message is about and why the reader should care. "North-South game time changed" will work better than "New time." This is doubly important if your e-mail address is made up of something other than your name, since some people are wary of e-mail from addresses they don't recognize.