



BULLETIN

The Connecticut Association of Schools
The Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference



Affiliated with: National Federation of State High School Associations • National Assoc. of Secondary School Principals • National Middle School Assoc. • National Assoc. of Elementary School Principals

VOL. 82 / NO. 5

FEBRUARY 2008

3 BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS TO AIR ON NEW CONNECTICUT SPORTS NETWORK 

In a groundbreaking venture, WFSB and CPTV have partnered to create the Connecticut Sports Network, which will feature the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) High School Basketball Championship games as its inaugural broadcast. On Saturday, March 8 from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., the CIAC girls' high school championship games will air on CPTV2, CPTV's digital broadcast channel. (Check local cable listings for channel positions). The following day, Sunday, March 9, all the girls' championship games will be re-broadcast on CPTV beginning at 6 a.m. WFSB will broadcast the boys' high school championship games on Saturday, March 15 beginning at 11 a.m. on its digital channel Eyewitness News Now (Check local cable listings for channel positions). WFSB will also broadcast the boys' L or LL championship game live on Channel 3 in prime time (exact time and game to be determined). All of the games will be streamed on the web at: www.ctsn.tv.

"Over the years, we've seen how sports can positively impact *continued on page 12*

MACY'S PROUD TO SPONSOR STATE CHEER AND DANCE COMPETITIONS

Macy's, the largest retail brand of Macy's, Inc. operating more than 800 locations nationwide, has announced a new partnership with the CIAC. Macy's will be sponsoring the Connecticut State Cheer and the Connecticut State Dance Competitions. The cheer event is scheduled for March 7-8, 2008 and the state dance is scheduled for March 8, 2008.



Macy's has a strong presence in Connecticut, operating 10 major department stores. Founded in 1929, with store roots dating back to 1830, Macy's now operates stores in 45 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, Guam and Puerto Rico. The Macy's organization, including the corporate foundation, employees and customers, support thousands of nonprofit organizations every year through special "give back" community initiatives. "Macy's believes strongly in giving back to the communities that support our stores throughout the year," said Macy's East Public Relations Director Kristen Esposito. "We are proud to team with the CIAC in sponsoring two of the fastest growing sports in Connecticut, team cheer and dance. These competitions are a wonderful opportunity to support the youth and young adults who are such important customers of Macy's."

Last year an estimated 2,400 students, from 113 teams competed in the 6 event divisions. Schools from around the state were represented in 2007. CIAC Assistant Executive Director Dave Maloney sees this partnership as an exciting step for these fast growing sports: "The Connecticut Association of Schools couldn't be happier to welcome Macy's to our team in support of our two most spirited high school organizations - cheerleading and dance!"

This year's cheer competition will take place at the New Haven City Wide Field House, located at Hillhouse High School in New Haven. The dance competition will be held at Branford High School. Teams, both girls and co-ed, will compete with a 2½-minute judged routine.

Kristen Esposito also stated, "As a committed partner of the American Heart Association's "Go Red For Women" movement, Macy's is pleased to have the opportunity to support young women engaged in heart-healthy activities such as cheer and dance. We wish all competition participants great success and health."

To find out more about Macy's, visit their website at Macys.com. Macy's Connecticut stores are located in Danbury, Enfield, Farmington, Manchester, Meriden, Milford, Stamford, Trumbull, Waterbury and Waterford.

Save The Date
3rd Annual Connecticut
Data Showcase
...to recognize and replicate our best practices



Day 1
Culture & Climate
Jane Bluestein, Ph.D.



Day 2
Leadership & Change
Brian McNulty, Ph.D.

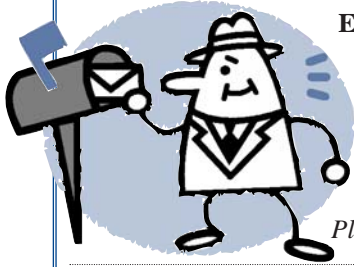
May 13 & 14, 2008
Crowne Plaza, Cromwell, CT
Sponsored by the Connecticut State Department of Education,
RESC/SERC Alliance and the Connecticut Association of Schools

New to Data? Already using Data? Come! Learn! Grow!
Differentiated Breakout Sessions & Facilitated Sharing Sessions!

Registration opens March 1, 2008
www.sdecafi.net

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>

Q. Dear Mailbag: Yesterday, one of the second graders in my school caused havoc by circulating a petition on the playground. She was protesting the "mean" treatment of animals in the zoo, and attached to her petition were several pictures of animal cruelty. While several of them did "sign" the petition (such as they could), many of her little classmates were crying, understandably upset by the images. I gently took the petition from her and called her mother. However, I was shocked when her mother attacked me, claiming that I had violated the free speech rights of this little girl. I suspect that the mother has the PETA agenda, but she does have me worried. Did I violate her daughter's constitutional rights?

- *Constitutionally Confused*

A. Dear Confused: Probably not. In general, students have a right of free expression at school as long as the speech does not cause substantial interference or material disruption of the educational process. Here, you had a legitimate concern about the petition, in that the attached images were upsetting to these young children. Given that concern, I think you did the right thing. However, in general I would intervene only where necessary. The courts have expressed some uncertainty as to the extent to which very young children have free speech rights in school, and you may not wish to be the test case.

Q. Dear Mailbag: One of the parents in my school is an Amway distributor, and he is always after me to buy some "wonderful" detergent that I don't want or need. Now, he is bugging me for the home addresses of the teachers in my school, because he wants to send informational packets to the teachers to see whether he can recruit any of them to join his network of distributors. My teachers would kill me if they found out that I had given their home addresses to this pest. Aren't home addresses confidential personnel file information?

-*Being Discreet*

A. Dear Discreet: The Freedom of Information Act provides that some home addresses are confidential - but only for a limited group that includes judges, prosecutors, public defenders and the like. Since the home addresses of school teachers are not on this list of exemptions, the parent has the right to the information. You could warn the teachers that you have provided the addresses, or you can provide the information and just keep your mouth shut. I vote for the latter. Your secret is safe with me.

Q. Dear Mailbag: One of the teachers in my school has what can only be described as a toxic personality. She is a real sourpuss at faculty meetings, always giving me attitude when she asks questions. Recently, however, I think she crossed the line. I have received several reports about how she often makes snide comments to her students about her colleagues. When I confronted her, she was all "who, me?" However, she got me thinking when she claimed that any such comments, which she did not recall, would be protected by the First Amendment. Do teachers have a free speech right to slam their colleagues in front of their students?

- *Ready to Rumble*

A. Dear Rumble: You are free to pick this fight. Teachers (and even administrators) have free speech rights. Generally, such speech is protected as long as it relates to a matter of public concern and it does not disrupt or otherwise interfere with school district operation. However, the United States Supreme Court recently clarified that statements public employees make in the course of their employment (e.g., parent-teacher conferences, PPT meetings) are not protected by the First Amendment. Here, this teacher is speaking to her students as a teacher, and it is not appropriate for her to speak ill of her colleagues. You have the right to set her straight and to take her on if she continues with such comments.

ct news & notes

■ Morgan Quinto Press, which has been ranking states and cities for 18 years, ranked Connecticut the 11th safest state in the country and the 10th "most livable" state.

■ A report released in December by the state's Office of Policy and Management predicts that between now and 2030, Connecticut's population will grow 8.3 percent, less than a third of the nation's projected 29.2 percent growth. Only the 65 and older group will grow — by 70 percent. The number of 18- to 64-year-olds will decline slightly, 0- to 17-year-olds more. Connecticut has already lost a higher percentage of 25- to 34-year-olds since 1990 than any other state. Experts attribute this "exodus" to the state's high housing costs. Connecticut's home costs have risen 70 percent since 2000. Even as home prices fell virtually everywhere else in 2007, they still inched up in Connecticut, by 1 percent through November. As David Fink, policy director for the Partnership for Strong Communities, noted, "With 43 percent of Connecticut teachers now over 50 and planning to retire in the next 10 to 15 years, where will towns find replacements if they can't afford to live here?"

**FLANAGAN
GRANTS
ARE BACK!**



CAS is pleased to announce that Big Y World Class Market® is again funding the Flanagan Memorial Grants Program, sponsored by the Connecticut Student Activities Conference (CSAC). Big Y will award funds to school programs that encourage leadership, community service, or the development of academic, artistic, or communication skills in students. Applications have been mailed to all schools and can be accessed online at www.casciac.org/pdfs/FlanaganApplicationPDF.pdf. The deadline is Friday, February 29, 2008. Winners will be notified in April and the awards will be presented at the Flanagan Awards Reception at CAS on May 7, 2008. For additional information, contact Dave Maloney at 203-250-1111, ext. 3936 or dmaloney@casciac.org.

cas news & notes

ON THE HORIZON . . .

■ TEACHER EVALUATION SERIES

The Connecticut Principals' Center is pleased to again offer a series of professional development workshops for school administrators focusing on teacher supervision and evaluation. The series consists of five workshops, each of which addresses a component of the supervision and evaluation process. The Teacher Evaluation Series is designed to provide administrators with an opportunity to fulfill the requirements of the amendment to the Connecticut General Statutes which mandates the completion of 15 of the required 90 hours of continuing education in the area of teacher evaluation. Administrators may register for the series of 5 workshops (Workshop 1 is closed) or for individual sessions.

■ THE BREAKTHROUGH COACH

Despite those New Year's resolutions, are you continuing to work 60, 70 or more hours a week and still not getting into classrooms enough? Want to work less, play more, and still get the job of an instructional leader done in a reasonably normal week? Sounds like you're ready for The Breakthrough Coach (TBC) - and he's returning to CT for the seventh time on May 13 & 14, 2008. CAS and Cooperative Educational Services (C.E.S.) are collaborating to bring this popular workshop to southwestern CT for the first time. The event will be held at C.E.S. in Trumbull on May 13 & 14, 2008. Participants will learn how to:

- work a 40-50 hour week, while increasing organizational productivity and efficiency;
- observe classroom instruction for at least 2 full days each week;
- be reenergized in the role of "Instructional Leader;"
- employ best practices for working with the school secretary;
- prepare their organization to produce significant increases in student achievement.

Register now at www.casciac.org/register/

Save the date!

Principals' Summer Institute

Change Leadership:

*Improving Instruction and
Developing a Shared Vision of Good Teaching*

June 24 ~ June 26, 2008

**Heritage Resort & Conference
Center, Southbury**

For more information, visit:

<http://www.casciac.org/pdfs/SavetheDate07-08-Draft.pdf>

national news & notes

■ According to the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA), the percentage of English Language Learners (ELLs) in U.S. public schools rose almost 61% between 1995 and 2005, although the overall student population growth was only 2.6%. Twenty-three states saw triple digit growth in that same time period; and, 11 of those states saw increases of more than 200%. Data from the 2003-2004 Schools and Staffing Survey conducted by the U.S. Department of Education (2006) indicated that of the 44% of teachers who taught ELLs, only 14.1% had eight or more hours of training in how to instruct ELLs in the preceding 3 years. (NAESP Research Review, January 2008)

■ Despite high program costs, the number of U.S. schools offering at least one International Baccalaureate (IB) program is increasing significantly. Eight hundred schools offered IB programs in 2007 compared to 572 schools in 2006. Proponents of the IB program believe it better prepares students to compete in a global market by providing a demanding internationally oriented curriculum focused on teaching critical thinking skills. About 90% of U.S. schools that offer IB programs are public and about 30% receive Title I funds. (Education Week, October 31, 2007)

■ According to recently released U.S. Census data, more parents are reading more to their children and placing extra restrictions on their television viewing than they did 10 years ago. (Christian Science Monitor, November 2, 2007)

■ An Associated Press review of birth numbers dating to 1909 found the total number of U.S. births was the highest since 1961, near the end of the baby boom. An examination of global data also shows that the United States has a higher fertility rate than every country in continental Europe, as well as Australia, Canada and Japan. Experts believe there is a mix of reasons: a decline in contraceptive use, a drop in access to abortion, poor education and poverty. There are cultural reasons as well. Hispanics as a group have higher fertility rates -- about 40 percent higher than the U.S. overall. And experts say Americans, especially those in middle America, view children more favorably than people in many other Westernized countries. To many economists and policymakers, the increase in births is good news. The U.S. fertility rate -- the number of children a woman is expected to have in her lifetime -- reached 2.1. That's the "magic number" required for a population to replace itself. Countries with much lower rates -- such as Japan and Italy, both with a rate of 1.3 -- face future labor shortages and eroding tax bases as they fail to reproduce enough to take care of their aging elders. But the higher fertility rate isn't all good. Last month, the CDC reported that America's teen birth rate rose for the first time in 15 years. The same report also showed births becoming more common in nearly every age and racial or ethnic group. Birth rates increased for women in their 20s, 30s and early 40s, not just teens. They rose for whites, blacks, Hispanics, American Indians and Alaska Natives. The rate for Asian women stayed about the same.

... more national news & notes

■ School districts across the country are rapidly resegregating, and this is a trend that has become even more pronounced in the wake of court cases dismantling both mandated and voluntary integration programs, reports Amanda Paulson in the *Christian Science Monitor*. The country's most segregated schools are located in the big cities of the Northeast and Midwest, while the South and West offer minority students a bit more diversity. About one-sixth of black students and one-ninth of Latino students attend schools that are at least 99 percent minority. In big cities, the two groups are nearly twice as likely to attend such schools. While resegregation trends have been taking place for some time, Gary Orfield, the co-director of the Civil Rights Project, says the latest trends are worrisome because the U.S. Supreme Court recently struck down several voluntary integration programs.

■ The Education Trust has released the latest edition of its annual report, "The Funding Gap," finding that many states spend less money in school districts that educate English language learners (ELLs), low-income students and students of color, than more affluent districts. In fact, the funding gap between high- and low-poverty districts grew between 1999 and 2005 for 16 states. In Vermont, for instance, the gap grew by more than \$2,000 per student, even as the state was under a court order to provide equitable funding to poorer districts. Also, in eight of the 16 states where the gap grew, high-minority districts received at least \$1,000 less per student than districts with lower percentages of minority students. Still, during that same time frame, 10 states increased funding equity by decreasing the gaps between their high- and low-poverty districts. Connecticut was one of those 10 states.

“Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted...but to weigh and consider.”

- Francis Bacon
Philosopher/Statesman/Essayist

Pay-for-student performance gains traction, impact still a question

Adding fuel to a recent trend, the Baltimore school system plans to pay high school students who improve test scores up to \$110 each. Under the plan, students who failed at least one section of the state exit exam will earn \$25 for improving test performance by five percent. If they improve an additional 15 percent, they will get \$35 more, and 20 percent improvement on top of that earns \$50 more. While funding for a similar pay-for-student-performance plan in New York City comes from private donors, the Baltimore plan will draw dollars from the settlement of a dispute over a federal audit. In all, the system will spend \$935,622 on student incentives, which comprises part of a \$6.3 million plan to help struggling students pass the Maryland High School Assessments. Down I-95 a bit, 40 students in the Fulton County (Ga.) school system will be the first to try the "Learn & Earn" program, in which students will get paid to attend after-school tutoring programs. Students will receive approximately \$8 an hour and be eligible for bonuses if their grades improve. The program is funded by a local nonprofit foundation and intends to determine if paying students to study will improve classroom attendance, grades and test scores. To that end, an unrelated recent study by C. Kirabo Jackson, a professor of labor economics at Cornell University, found that when students and teachers in disadvantaged Texas public schools were offered up to \$500 for each passing Advanced Placement (AP) score, participation and scores rose. Though the cash awards were limited to AP tests, student achievement was not. Comparing college-entrance-exam scores at schools before the program and three years afterward, the study notes an average 33 percent net increase in students scoring above 1100 on SAT or 24 on the ACT. This gain was above increases that the schools would have expected to see otherwise. Move over textbook companies. Apparently, there is another burgeoning big business growing within schools. (Source: PEN Weekly *NewsBlast*, 1/25/08)

The growth of youth service and civic engagement

• **Youth volunteering rates in the U.S. are at an all-time high:** In 2005, more than 83% of college freshman reported that they had volunteered during high school, the highest rate since the survey began in 1984. The increase has been fueled in large part by a more than doubling in volunteering by older teenagers (16-19) since 1989, from 13.4% to 28.4%.

• **Youth voting surged in 2004 and 2006:** Concurrent with this long-term growth in youth service is a sharp increase in voting: 47% of young people ages 18-24 voted in 2004, up from 36% in 2000. Their share in the electorate also grew from 7.8% to 9.3% between the two elections. Moreover, in the last presidential election, young people voted at the highest rate in a decade and cast more votes than in any other election since 1972.

Why are kids not reading more?

TVs, iPods, text messaging, and video games are the primary reason for a rapid decline in pleasure reading among American youth. But schools also must shoulder some of the blame, according to a new report by the National Endowment for the Arts. The report, [To Read or Not to Read: A Question of National Consequence](#), says reading comprehension skills are eroding among teens and young adults. Statistics show that young people ages 15 to 24 read 10 minutes or less a day on average, and less than 25 percent of 17-year-olds read almost every day for fun.

The consequences, the report predicts, will be decreased academic performance, fewer job prospects, less civic participation, and long-term declines in social well-being. Dana Gioia, chairman of the endowment, said the emphasis schools are placing on improving skills and getting students ready for tests does not nurture an appreciation for reading.

"This functional approach to reading," he said during a conference call with reporters, "is not adequate to instill a lifelong love of the subject... People who read outside of school or work volunteer at twice the rate of those who don't; they are three times more likely to participate in the arts; they earn higher wages; they are twice as likely to exercise; and they vote at one and a half times the level of people who don't read."

For a copy of the report, visit www.nea.gov.

(Reprinted from the *American School Board Journal*, Jan. 2008)

legal news & notes

■ The U.S. Department of Education says it will ask all active judges on the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals to rehear a Jan. 7 three-judge panel ruling in favor of school districts in three states and the nation's largest teachers' union who argued that schools should not have to comply with requirements of the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) that aren't funded by the federal government. The panel, in a 2-1 decision, said NCLB fails to provide clear notice as to who bears the additional costs of compliance. The court majority found statutes enacted under the spending clause of the U.S. Constitution must provide clear notice to the states of their liabilities if they accept federal funding under those statutes. "We think we have a very strong case," said Education Secretary Margaret Spellings. "We don't believe *No Child Left Behind* is an unfunded mandate." Spellings said that if the appeals court decision were to stand, it could undermine efforts to improve education. Plaintiffs include the Pontiac, Mich., school district and eight districts in Texas and Vermont, along with National Education Association affiliates in several states. They claim federal funding is not keeping pace with additional mandates required by *No Child Left Behind*, requiring schools to pay from local and state sources to keep up. (NSBA Legal Clips, February 7, 2008)

■ The U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit (ME, MA, NH, RI, P.R.) has ruled that a Massachusetts school district's refusal to allow parents to opt their elementary school children out of lessons aimed at teaching tolerance for same-sex marriage did not violate their own or their children's rights to free exercise of religion or due process. Tonia and David Parker sued school officials in Lexington after their son brought home a book from kindergarten that depicted a gay family. Joseph and Robin Wirthlin joined the suit after a second-grade teacher read *King and King* to her class. The fairy tale tells the story of two princes falling in love. Both families claimed school officials violated their due process rights as parents to teach their own morals to their children. They also asserted that their children's exposure to pro-homosexuality messages violated both the children's and their own rights to free exercise of religion. Along with declaratory relief and damages, they sought a court order allowing parents to opt their children out of any lessons, classroom presentations, or discussions "the intent of which is to have children accept the validity of, embrace, affirm, or celebrate views of human sexuality, gender identity, and marriage constructs." The U.S. district court granted the school district's motion for summary judgment, citing "the state's interest in preventing discrimination, specifically discrimination targeted at students in school..." The First Circuit affirmed, although on different grounds. (NSBA Legal Clips)

No College degree required

What do Microsoft founder Bill Gates, Oracle CEO Larry Ellison and entertainment mogul David Geffen have in common? Huge bank accounts and no student loans. These industry leaders are some of the most successful people in business, and none of them has a college degree.

The belief that you need a college education to have a well-paying and rewarding job is quickly fading. A four-year degree definitely has its benefits in the business world, but it's not the only path to a successful career.

In fact, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, eight of the 10 fastest-growing occupations through 2014 don't require a bachelor's degree. And these jobs, which include health technology, plumbing, firefighting and automotive repair, are less vulnerable to outsourcing. After all, if a fire breaks out, you need the fire department to be a few blocks away, not halfway around the world.

While the educational requirements for many good jobs have risen, many occupations still don't require a four-year degree. Several of these positions require vocational training or an associate degree. All of them require some on-the-job training or an apprenticeship.

Here are 25 of the top-paying jobs that don't require a four-year degree and their average salaries, based on data from the BLS and CBSalary.com:

1. Air traffic controller: \$102,030
2. Funeral director: \$79,517
3. Operations manager: \$77,839
4. Industrial production manager: \$73,000
5. Transportation manager: \$72,662
6. Storage/distribution manager: \$69,898
7. Computer technical support specialist: \$67,689
8. Gaming manager: \$64,880
9. First-line supervisor/manager of police and detective: \$64,430
10. Nuclear power reactor operator: \$64,090
11. Computer specialist: \$59,480
12. First-line, non-retail supervisors/manager: \$59,300
13. Nuclear technician: \$59,200
14. First-line supervisor/manager of fire fighting and prevention worker: \$58,920
15. Real estate broker: \$58,720
16. Elevator installer and repairer: \$58,710
17. Sales representative, wholesale and manufacturing, technical and scientific products: \$58,580
18. Dental hygienist: \$59,790
19. Radiation therapist: \$57,700
20. Nuclear medicine technologist: \$56,450
21. Power plan distributor and dispatcher: \$57,330
22. Fashion designer: \$55,840
23. Ship engineer: \$54,950
24. Detective and criminal investigator: \$53,990
25. Commercial pilot: \$53,870

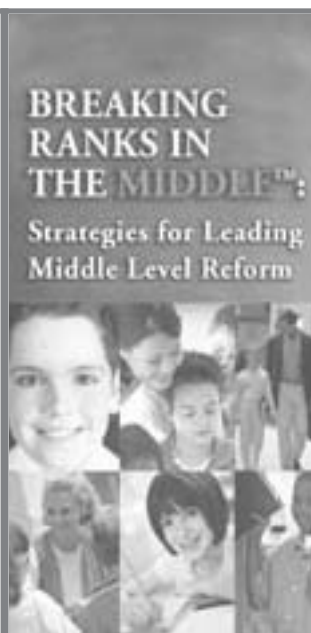
(Reprinted from the *Hartford Courant*, January 2008)

B.R.I.M.

Reserve your spot for "Breaking Ranks in the Middle" training on April 28th & 29th at the CAS Conference Center.

Take advantage of the opportunity to be trained in this nationally recognized program that is aligned with Connecticut's secondary school reform initiative that stresses Rigor, Engagement and 21st Century Learning.

A brochure and registration are available at www.casciac.org For additional information contact Earle Bidwell at ebidwell@casciac.org





Commissioner of Education Dr. Mark McQuillan addressed a standing room-only crowd at the CAS Conference Center on January 23rd. High school principals from around the state listened attentively as he summarized the recommendations put forth in "The Case for Secondary School Reform in Connecticut." Members of his staff and the state board of education were also on hand to answer questions and solicit feedback on the proposals for secondary school reform. The session was one of several listening forums being held around the state.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE SET FOR MARCH

By Dave Maloney, Assistant Executive Director

Connecticut Association of Student Councils (CASC) Executive Director Sarah Jones is pleased to announce a great opportunity for high school students - an overnight leadership conference at Wesleyan University on March 28 & 29, 2008.

Along with a dedicated advisory board, Jones has been working on a leadership curriculum anchored in civic engagement. Though still in the writing process, the underlying themes of the project empower high school students to identify issues in their respective school communities and take steps to address and resolve them.

"Students who learn about democracy in their social studies courses, but who fail to see it practiced in the real world are getting the wrong message. What I've seen thus far truly excites me because the new curriculum is an approach to civic education that is real and authentic," notes Dave Maloney, CAS Assistant Director.

In the widely recognized high school reform package "Breaking Ranks: Strate-

gies For Leading High School Reform," six of the thirty-one recommendations relate to student voice and school climate issues. The March conference will advance these initiatives through interactive, team-building learning activities. Since the heart and soul of the conference planning committee has been student focused and driven, the energy level throughout the two day conference should be "off the charts."

Students returning to their respective schools after the leadership conference should have a plethora of "kick-start" approaches to leading 21st century high schools. From ice-breakers to school climate initiatives to potential action plans to new found friendships, the event has something for everyone, regardless of experience. If your school is looking for ways to improve communication, run a good meeting, set real goals, or just re-enforce what you already have in your student activity program, be sure to register early for this popular event.

Register online at www.casciac.org/slregister.shtml.

CAS OFFICERS: 2007-2008

President.....Michael Rafferty, Old Saybrook M.S.
 President-Elect....V. Everett Lyons, Bristol Eastern H.S.
 Vice President (H).....Donald Macrino, Waterford H.S.
 Vice President (M)....David Russell, John Winthrop M.S., Deep River
 Vice President (E).....Katharine Bishop, Daisy Ingraham School, Westbrook
 Treasurer.....Janet Garagliano, Jonathan Law H.S.

CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF

Michael Savage.....Executive Director
 Earle Bidwell.....Asst. Executive Director
 Regina Birdsell.....Asst. Executive Director
 Michael Buckley.....Director, Principals' Center
 Dennis Carrithers.....Asst. Executive Director
 Matt Fischer.....Director of Information Services
 J. Robert Ford.....Director of Development
 Paul Hoey.....Assoc. Executive Director
 Dr. Robert Lehr.....CIAC Executive Staff
 E. Patricia Llodra.....Asst. Executive Director
 Ann Malafronte.....Director of Unified Sports®
 David Maloney.....Asst. Executive Director
 Karen Packtor.....Editor, Asst. Exec Director
 Louis Pear.....Asst. Executive Director
 Joseph Tonelli.....Director of Officials

THE BULLETIN

Published monthly except July, August and Sept. by the Connecticut Association of Schools at 30 Realty Dr, Cheshire, CT, 06410. Phone: 203-250-1111. Subscriptions to the BULLETIN are a membership service; subscription costs are \$5.00 for senior high schools; \$1.00 for middle level and elementary schools; \$1.00 for associate and retired members. Third class postage paid at New Haven, CT. Permit #561. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to -- BULLETIN, 30 Realty Dr, Cheshire, CT 06410.

CONNECTICUT JOINS THE AMERICAN DIPLOMA PROJECT

By Dennis C. Carrithers, Assistant Executive Director

Connecticut's discussion on the "The Case for Secondary School Reform" is important, timely, and relevant. Given the global competition graduating (and non-graduating) Connecticut students will face during the course of their lives, it is most appropriate that Connecticut educators, taxpayers, and citizens are scrutinizing proposals to change graduation requirements and reform schools.

In fact, we do not have to look to the rest of the world for comparing student requirements and achievement, as compelling as that is. We need only to look at other states to see what has been adopted already. Some nineteen states have increased their state-wide graduation requirements. According to the American Diploma Project (ADP) sponsor, Achieve, Inc., states have joined this network to align what students are expected to do with expectations for higher education and work preparation.

The state board of education and Governor Rell have committed Connecticut to join the American Diploma Project, making it the thirtieth state to do so. While there is not a mandatory design project for joining ADP, each state does agree to collaborative efforts to focus on requirements and standards. Member states agree to pledge support for the four basic goals of the project, which are:

- aligning high school standards and assessments with the knowledge and skills required for success after high school;
- requiring all high school graduates to take challenging courses that actually prepare them for life after high school;
- streamlining the assessment system so that the tests students take in high school also can serve as readiness tests for college and work; and,
- holding high schools accountable for graduating students who are ready for college or careers, and holding postsecondary institutions accountable for students' success once enrolled.

Looking at the website of Achieve, Inc. is instructive for putting Connecticut's proposals in perspective. The states that have already adopted new requirements have legislated from 18 to 26 credits for graduation. Five states specifically included distinct world language requirements. Fifteen states require mathematics through Algebra II to graduate and seven states mandate mathematics beyond Algebra II, including Minnesota which requires probability and statistics.

Connecticut's proposals that feature end of course assessment (EOC) is also in keeping with national trends. According to an Ohio study, thirteen states use EOC exams, and fifteen more are planning to do so. States that have used graduation exit examinations are moving toward EOC exams with the belief that separate assessments in core courses align best with the development of 21st Century skills and provide multiple assessment opportunities. States are also collaborating on the development of these assessments. For example, nine ADP states are developing an end of course exam in Algebra II. Arkansas, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island formed the consortium initially and a number of other states are in the process of joining.

Not surprisingly, Connecticut and other states are looking beyond the specific details of number of credits, course requirements and types of assessment. Those details are in the context of essential considerations of support for students, teacher recruitment, professional development, leadership, and costs, to name just a few challenges. Simply increasing requirements does not guarantee rigor or achievement.

Given the attention and energy so many states are devoting to what their high school graduates should be able to know and do, Connecticut's discussion over the next several months merits the best thinking and input if the state students are to be well-served. Having the benefit of the ADP network of states provides resources and collaboration that puts Connecticut's work in perspective to similar efforts around the country.

EDUCATION FUNDING MUST REACH OUR SCHOOLS

By David Larson and Robert Rader

NOTE: This Op Ed piece was sent to the Hartford Courant and to each member of the Connecticut General Assembly.

Recent state-by-state comparisons of test scores and other data indicate that Connecticut's number one ranking has started to slip. Whether that is because Connecticut's students are not doing as well as in the past or whether other states are "catching up" is hard to determine.

Whatever the reason, we, as well as our associations, are dedicated to increasing higher student achievement and ensuring that Connecticut gets back to our earlier rankings.

There is much happening in public education in the state which will, we believe, lead to better results, although some of these initiatives will take years to accomplish. For example, the increased investment in preschool, an initiative that has the support of the governor, the legislature and the education community, will pay off in better results, especially for those priority districts in which the investment will be greatest. Increased student attendance at magnet schools, more emphasis on science and math and the increased focus on reading will also pay off in the long run. Our high schools are also getting another look and we hope that whatever the ultimate changes are, they will result in ensuring that our students graduate (at higher rates) and be able to successfully compete in the global marketplace of the future.

We are concerned that there is a perception that the increase in education funding during the last legislative session has been enough to enable our districts to make the changes in curriculum and programming that will lead to better results. A survey conducted by the Connecticut Association of School Business Officials and CAFE indicated that very little of the increased funding ever reached our school systems. In most cases, the local education budget was adopted by the municipality prior to the legislature passage of the state budget in July. Budget increases at the local level ranged from less than 1% to over 8%. In virtually every case, these increases met the "minimum budget requirement" contained in the legislation. The money ended up largely going to other municipal services or for real

continued on page 8

Funding, continued from page 7

property tax relief.

In only one of the 54 districts which responded did the municipality appropriate additional funds to the board of education and in that case the funds were targeted to replace boilers!

Because of this, the hard work of the governor and the legislature did not lead to the results that were desired. As we enter the new budget season for school districts, it is important that the state keep its eye on the ball. If there are to be increased mandates on school districts, it is critical that the funding to pay for them reach the districts.

As we undertake these important new initiatives and work to get better outcomes, the resources to accomplish these aims must end up in our schools. Anything less and we will continue to achieve results that are less than what the citizens of Connecticut expect and deserve.

David Larson is executive director of the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents. Robert Rader is executive director of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education.

The 46th Annual Connecticut Association of Schools' Scholastic Chess tournament was held at Travelers Insurance Company in Hartford on Saturday, January 26th. The event was directed by Frederick Townsend of the Connecticut Chess Foundation (203-879-2009). To view a list of the trophy winners in each tournament section, visit:

http://www.casciac.org/pdfs/2008_Chess_Winners.pdf

Mark your calendars!

**The CAS 56th
Annual Meeting**

May 8, 2008

Thx 4 th email (LOL)!!!!

Old School Grammar and Punctuation Rules Still Apply in the New School of Electronic Communication.

The advent of electronic communications has been as much a blessing as it has a curse. (The good news: you've got mail. The bad news: you've got it 24 hours a day, seven days a week, any day or night!) Thanks to the proliferation of e-mail, instant messaging and text messaging, the English language and the written word are constantly under attack.

Remember that the written word, whether in a handwritten letter, e-mail or telephone text message, is still a form of communication from one person to another. That said, all of the standard rules of grammar, punctuation and common usage still apply; only the medium has changed. It is also a reflection of you and your school/district.

Here are some tips for e-mail writing that principals might want to keep in mind before clicking the "send" button:

- Start your e-mail off with a salutation. Leave the "Yo, Phil" or "Hey, Alice" to personal or private communications. Then skip a line and start the body text of the e-mail.
- Use the shift key liberally! E-mail has encouraged some bad writing habits, including the use of all lowercase letters from "hello" to "sincerely".
- Conversely, never use all caps. It may save you time, but the reader is left with the impression THAT YOU ARE YELLING AT THEM.
- Give your exclamation point key a rest!!!! Avoid over-using punctuation marks to underscore an idea.
- Know when to use contractions. Acceptable contractions include you're for you are, isn't for is not and it's for it is.
- RUOK? AFAIK! LOL! (Are you OK? As far as I Know! Laugh out Loud!) And you thought learning a foreign language was hard! Steer clear of those new instant-messaging abbreviations.
- Always close the e-mail with a complimentary closing. Unless you are on a first-name basis with the recipient, always use your first and last name in a signature, including your title and a phone number.
- Whenever possible, have someone proofread your e-mail. This is a good habit to adopt even for the shortest of messages. At the very least, set the spell check preference on your e-mail program so that it will check your messages before they hit your outbox.
- If no one is available to proof your e-mail, read your e-mail out loud. You'll be surprised at how often you can catch those annoying little errors just by reading your writing out loud.

Communication is an integral part of school leadership. Adhering to the conventions of English usage will help ensure your message is delivered clearly and concisely, without letter errant keystrokes or obscure acronyms distract from the task at hand.

(Source: Public Relations Society of America / Reprinted from *NHASP Newsnotes*, December 2007)

middle school news

MIDDLE LEVEL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE SCORES HIGH MARKS

By Earle G. Bidwell, Assistant Executive Director

A record number of students and advisors spent a productive day at Quinnipiac University on January 15th at the Middle Level Student Leadership Training Conference entitled "Making Acceptance Acceptable." Judged by the evaluations, they learned a great deal from almost fifty presenters from all over the state. When asked which part of the conference they found most valuable, the responses were varied. Many were impressed with teamwork activities led by Upward Bound Associate Director Jennifer Buckley who introduced them to twenty other students with whom they would work throughout the day. For others it was the large group skits and anti-bullying plays presented by the Canton High School's "Esteem" or Glastonbury's "Smith School Players." For other it was the wide array of quality break-out sessions that taught them about Unified Sports, students with disabilities, peer pressure, acceptance and respect.

Advisors were also given opportunities to participate in roundtable discussions led by Mansfield Assistant Superintendent Fred Baruzzi and distinguished retired principal Tom Heffernan. The topics were relevant and timely as they were submitted and led by the participants themselves. Following this session, they attended another entitled "Using Blogs to Augment Student Leadership" presented by Smith Middle School teacher Rob Rose. Mr. Rose shared strategies for safely utilizing students' interest in blogging to enhance leadership opportunities and skills.

A new feature to the conference this year was a final "next steps" session designed to assist school groups in developing action plans to implement new learning back at their home school. The groups were challenged to reflect on what they learned about acceptance and respect, initiatives already in place at their school and how their school might be different as a result of the conference.

Finally, all were encouraged to apply for the Arthur Director Annual Leadership Award named for the founder of Connecticut Lighting Centers who is a longtime friend to education and whose company continues to provide financial support for the middle level leadership conference. A plaque and cash award will be presented in the fall to the school that best personifies the goals of the conference.



Advisors learn about blogging.



Team-building activities were a highlight of the day.

elementary school news

NINTH ANNUAL ELEMENTARY ARTS BANQUET

By Lou Pear, Assistant Executive Director

On February 4th and 5th, the Aqua Turf Club was once again filled with energy and excitement as CAS celebrated the artistic achievements of Connecticut's elementary school students. Representatives from 120 schools across the state joined in this celebration as we recognized 240 talented young boys and girls. These students were selected on the basis of their artistic talents as well as their leadership and scholarship qualities. In addition to the award recipients, principals, teachers, parents, grandparents and siblings were in attendance to express their pride and appreciation of each child's hard work and accomplishment. Throughout the evening, students were treated to a delicious dinner buffet and were encouraged to take part in a variety of art-centered activities including dancing, balloon sculpting, face painting, visual arts practice and caricature renderings. Students were presented certificates of accomplishment by their principals and their art teachers and then were treated to an exciting and creative magic show by our very own Bob Hale, Jr., principal of Westbrook High School.

On behalf of our sponsor, Liberty Mutual Insurance Company and the support of the Crayola Company and Powerstation Events, congratulations to all of our 2008 arts awards recipients. You are to be commended on jobs well done. Good luck in your future endeavors.



... more elementary school news

PRINCIPALS' CONVERSATIONS ABOUT: *Preparing our students for the New Science CMTs*

By Regina Birdsell, Assistant Executive Director

The CAS Elementary Professional Studies Committee ended the 2007 year with a series of CMT Science workshops. On December 3, 5 and 10, 2007, science workshops were held at CAS in Cheshire, McKinley School in Fairfield and Daisy Ingraham School in Westbrook. Over two hundred principals and teachers attended these sessions, hosted by principals Dale Bernardoni and Kathaerine Bishop.

The presenter, Elizabeth Buttner, the Connecticut State Department of Education Consultant in K-8 science, engaged principals and teachers in conversation about the rewards and challenges associated with preparing students for statewide science assessments.

Liz explained that in March of 2008, new CMTs will assess elementary and middle school science. The elementary science CMT assesses learning expectations for grades 3 through 5 described in the 2004 Core Science Framework. The middle school science CMT assesses Framework learning expectations for grades 6 through 8. Her presentation emphasized that the best preparation for these cumulative assessments is for districts to have a comprehensive K-12 science program aligned with the state standards for scientific inquiry and science knowledge.

Liz provided specific information about the format, contents and types of questions on the new science CMTs. The audience learned about the relationship between the state-developed curriculum-embedded performance tasks and questions on the science CMT. The powerpoint included sample questions, and Liz engaged the audience in discussing classroom practices that enable students to successfully answer those questions. In an activity focused on expectations for short written response questions, Liz had participants write their own answers to a question about electric circuits, and audience members learned how to create their own item-specific scoring rubrics similar to those used by CMT scorers.



CSDE's Elizabeth Buttner leads principals in a discussion on the new Science CMTs.

The CMT Blueprints that describe the test format and score reporting, along with Liz's powerpoint presentation, are posted at the science homepage of the CSDE website, www.sde.ct.gov. The just-released CMT Science Assessment Handbook is posted there as well.

A full dinner followed the presentation, and Liz answered questions and provided guidance about instructional time, math-science-literacy connections, and effective teaching strategies. Liz emphasized that a sound K-8 science program nurtures students' interest and excitement for learning science by doing science.

Elizabeth Buttner works with school districts in Connecticut helping them align curriculum and instruction with the state standards and assessments.

You are invited to nominate...

- ★ An outstanding elementary level educator as
CAS Elementary Educator for 2008-2009

and/or

- ★ An outstanding elementary school as
CAS Outstanding School of the Year 2008-2009

Complete information on the CAS Elementary Awards is available online at www.casciac.org

SAVE THE DATE

- March 17th - Environmental Awareness Day**
Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT
- March 18th - Parent Volunteer Recognition Banquet**
Aqua Turf, Southington, CT
- April 25th - Secretaries Seminar**
Waters Edge Resort and Spa, Westbrook, CT
- May 13, 14 - Third Annual Connecticut Data Showcase**
Crown Plaza, Cromwell, CT
- May 14th - Marine Science Day**
University of Connecticut, Avery Point, Groton, CT
and Connecticut River Museum, Essex, CT

. . . more ciac news

CT Sports Network, *continued from page 1*

the lives of Connecticut viewers," said Jerry Franklin, President and CEO of CPTV. "Through this unique partnership and the cooperation of the CIAC, we are incredibly pleased to be able to showcase the talents of our exemplary athletes. It's a win, win for everyone involved."

Klarn DePalma, Vice President and General Manager of WFSB added, "It's the mission of both Channel 3 and CPTV to serve the community with local content. Our viewers have asked us to bring these games into their homes and we are proud to make that happen."

The creation of the Connecticut Sports Network comes on the heels of the highly rated and successful CIAC State High School Football Championships that aired on CPTV in December 2007. According to Franklin, the response from the community was overwhelmingly positive. "Viewer e-mails poured in from across the state supporting the coverage, and the message was loud and clear that Connecticut residents want more of this type of sports coverage," said Franklin. "We are now proud to be partnering with WFSB on the Connecticut Sports Network. Together, we hope to eventually provide viewers with the best in local high school and collegiate sports available across the state," said Franklin.

CIAC Executive Director Mike Savage thanked Channel 3 and CPTV for their vision in creating the Connecticut Sports Network. "We are grateful for this opportunity to broadcast the many achievements taking place on Connecticut's high school playing fields each and every day - achievements that the public can now witness, share in and celebrate," said Savage.

CIAC HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP GAME SCHEDULE

Girls - March 8 on CPTV2

(games will be re-broadcast on March 9 on CPTV beginning at 6 a.m.)

- Class M: 11 a.m.
- Class S: 2 p.m.
- Class LL: 5 p.m.
- Class L: 8 p.m.

Boys - March 15 on WFSB

- Class S: 11 a.m.
- Class M: 2 p.m.
- Class LL/L doubleheader: 1st game at 6:15 p.m.; 2nd game at 8:15 p.m. *(order of games to be determined after semifinals)*

GOLF COACHES ANNOUNCE PRE-SEASON CLINIC

By Dave Maloney, Assistant Executive Director

A golf clinic in February? Exactly. On behalf of the golf committee, newly appointed chair, Tom Giard, Principal of Tyler Middle School, Montville, has announced that, "The CIAC Golf Committee, in partnership with the Connecticut State Golf Association (CSGA) and the Connecticut Professional Golf Association (CTPGA), is pleased to offer a pre-season clinic that promises to be top notch." All boys and girls coaches are invited to this NO COST event on **February 28th** at CIAC headquarters in room C2 from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

The evening will be divided into three modules - 2008 USGA rules for golf, teaching techniques, and physical fitness exercises. "There are significant rule changes and edifications of the "Rules of Golf" for the 2008 season, according to CSGA Executive Director, Ron Drapeau. Our session with coaches should prove valuable in assisting them with preparation for the upcoming season." Dr. Alan Reznik will facilitate the module on fitness tips, drills and exercises. Dr. Reznik is a noted orthopedic specialist in

the area of golf fitness and has assisted many players in improving their game with his calculated approaches to the golf swing. The final module will feature some tips in the all important fundamental area for coaches to add to their start-up practice plans.

The clinic is just the beginning of a new partnership - The Connecticut Golf Alliance - formed by CSGA last year to explore ways to improve golf in the nutmeg state. CIAC assistant director Dave Maloney, a member of the alliance, noted, "the free handicap program for high school students is a welcome opportunity; especially for the kids who are not members of clubs. The alliance is contemplating many other initiatives for players at all levels of the game that should prove exciting."

For more information about these offerings log onto www.csga.com and/or the CASCIAC web-site, www.casciac.org. Registration is required for the clinic: either on line or download / mail / fax to CIAC headquarters, 30 Realty Drive, Cheshire, 06410, fax: 203-250-1345.

NEW UNIFIED SPORTS® DVD AVAILABLE!



The new Unified Sports® DVD is ready and available for schools to borrow. The DVD is a powerful tool that will help schools to recruit new members or to initiate a Unified Sports® team for the first time. We are very proud of the final product and want to share it with you!

Contact Ann Malafronte or Bob Deasy for a copy for your school. Our staff would be happy to present the DVD at a gathering of teachers, parents or students at your school. Contact us by phone at (203)250-1111 or by email at amalafrente@casciac.org or rdeasy@casciac.org.

"Changing attitudes. Changing lives."

. . . more ciac news

CIAC ADDS TO ATHLETIC PROGRAM EVALUATION CHOICES

By Dr. Robert Lehr, CIAC Executive Staff

The CIAC Athletic Program Evaluation has been patterned after the New England Association of Schools and Colleges evaluation. Although the CIAC evaluation is not as lengthy as its NEASC counterpart, it does involve an in-depth look at a school's athletic program. The objective of the CIAC evaluation is to have a team of experienced administrators and athletic directors examine a school's athletic program self-study, visit the school, process all of the information available and ultimately present the school with a report that will recognize and commend the athletic department's accomplishments as well as provide suggestions for improvements to the program.

Currently ten schools are set to have a CIAC athletic program evaluation team visit them. This number has grown from two evaluations that were completed in the 2006-2007 school year. Opportunities remain for schools to participate in the evaluation during the 2008-2009 school year. The entire process takes approximately six months to complete.

In addition to the Athletic Program Evaluation, the CIAC has developed an Individual Sports Survey for its member schools. This addition to the Athletic Program Evaluation model is available to athletic directors and/or principals to use in one of two ways. One method is to ask the schools' coaches to provide the survey to their respective athletes to complete. The coaches would then use the survey for their own professional growth. A second way to use the Individual Sports Survey would be for a school's athletics director to administer the survey to all of a school's teams after each season is completed. The results could be used to commend an individual coach's strengths and to identify areas in need of improvement. Only student-athletes will be queried in this survey.

For more information on the Athletic Program Evaluation or the Individual Sports Survey, contact Paul Hoey (phoey@casciac.org) or Bob Lehr ([rllehr@casciac.org](mailto:rlehr@casciac.org)) at the CIAC offices. There is no charge for either of these services.

Ever wonder how high school sports rules are made?

Bill Riccio, editor of the West Haven Voice and long-time football and baseball official, offers us a glimpse of the processes and procedures behind National Federation sports rules revisions.

This past weekend, this writer was in Indianapolis for the annual National Federation Football Rules Committee meeting. Each year representatives from 48 of the 50 states as well as the District of Columbia get together to review the rules of high school football. Two states, Massachusetts and Texas, still play under the NCAA code, something Connecticut did until the 1978 season. I represent the National Federation Officials Association, meaning that - theoretically anyway - I represent every high school official in the country. I said it was theoretical, and it lasts for four years. This is the second of that four-year term.

How I got on the committee is a story unto itself. Former Notre Dame Athletic Director Joe Tonelli called me one May evening and put the proposition to me to join the committee. Somehow Connecticut was asked to choose the officials' rep from District I, encompassing New England (except Mass.) and NY and NJ. He asked; I accepted.

Tonelli likes to call me the "rules guru" in football. It's not a title I relish. It sounds kind of nerdy and technical. Those who know me know my passion for the rules of the game are based not on technical knowledge, but intent. I like to know what a rule intends to accomplish. That curiosity has stood me in good stead over the years.

At any rate, with the appointment made and confirmed by NFHS officials, I went to my first meeting last year. It was daunting. I was appointed to two committees, the Equipment Committee and the Manual Committee.

Throughout the months prior to the meeting, various state associations similar to the CIAC forward rules proposals. In those proposals are the rules to be modified, their proposed wording and the rationale for making the change. This year, more than 40 proposals were sent to us in the month before the January 19th meeting.

Committee chairmen meet on Friday afternoon and go through the procedures and agendas they will be assigned. Each of the four standing committees, of which the Equipment Committee is one, are assigned an equal number of proposals to vet in 2 committee sessions.

There are 3 general sessions. The opening session is Saturday morning, and there is one after the first round of committee meetings. This second general session is where a report of what was discussed in committee during the vetting process is brought before the body. The remaining proposals are voted on during the final session Sunday.

This year 20 proposals survived, none will affect the game visibly. Then there is a second committee session. Here committees talk about Points of Emphasis, or issues they couldn't get to in the first session.

The Manual Committee, which puts out an officials' book on positioning and coverage of various plays, meets after the last session. This year we convened right after the final general session and spent the next 3-hours-plus going through more than 40 of our own proposals for revising how the game is officiated. Again, we culled through the proposals and most failed for lack of a motion. There were about 20 changes made, and officials, let alone fans will not notice most.

I have to admit, I'm not a traveler, and have only flown four times in my life, the first being this past summer. As I said to someone, "There'll be a rosary bead in one hand and a dry martini in the other." There was no dry martini, unfortunately, but the idea that I was more than 5 miles above the Earth did prompt a bit of prayerful soul-searching.

Overall, it's a great experience and one I shall treasure always. Fans should know that the sport is in good shape and those who are entrusted to keep it secure take their jobs very seriously. While most of the passion comes from the south and west when it comes to football, the eastern districts, too, are concerned not only with the integrity of the game, but the safety of the more than 1 million student-athletes that play.

It's a very draining experience, very intense. But for two days a year, people interested in high school athletics come together and safeguard a game that brings learning and enjoyment to youngsters.

That makes it all worthwhile - including the #^&* plane trip.

. . . more ciac news

PREP SPORTS SHOULD BE A JOY, NOT A JOB

By Kelsey F. Twist

Reprinted from *The Baltimore Sun*, January 29, 2008

For 18 years, between ages 5 and 22, I lived in a jersey. Sometimes it was green, sometimes purple; usually it was red. From clinic soccer at Lutherville-Timonium Recreational Council to Division I lacrosse at Stanford, I lived to compete.

Now, two years after hanging up my cleats, I am able to step back to examine the game from a different angle.

I coach high school JV girl's lacrosse and spent this past summer coaching an elite-level club team. My players hailed from eight strong public and private school programs.

While coaching, I often stop to consider my high school career at Roland Park Country School. I mostly remember face paint, spirit parades to Bryn Mawr, and tossing the ball around after practice until we couldn't see it any longer.

I do not remember stress fractures, personal trainers, and lacrosse tournaments during basketball season, hiring a recruiting specialist to help me get into college, or paying outrageous dues to play on a club team. I am left to ask: What happened to high school sports in the six years I've been gone? When did being a high school athlete become a job instead of a pastime?

I talk to many athletes and parents who believe playing a sport is the golden ticket to college. Don't get me wrong; I understand what a powerful tool athletics can be in admissions and scholarship. With college tuition at many schools rising over \$40,000, it's no wonder parents and athletes are desperately striving for scholarships. But at what cost?

Today, I see athletes who look tired, injured and worn out - and they're 15. Any honest Division I athlete will tell you she commits about five hours a day, six days a week, to her sport, and more when she's injured. Talk with any athlete who is tough enough and loves the game enough to practice 30 hours a week, 40 weeks a year, for four years, and I guarantee he was not burned out in 10th grade.

I coach several good high school athletes. They compete at that level and thrive there, but I know they are not physically or mentally prepared to enjoy playing at the elite college level.

Too many of these athletes, and their parents, refuse to see Division III, club or intramural programs as an acceptable next step. Because these athletes do not get the recruiting letters they want, parents send them to personal trainers, sign them up for additional club teams and ask high school coaches to write more letters.

In an attempt to help their children succeed in college sports, parents are sabotaging them. When will someone draw the line? In the spring, I spend 10 hours a day teaching and coaching high school athletes. I can see the pressure, physical exhaustion and stress weighing on them. I can hear the fear and anxiety in their voices when they talk about sports.

At 18, there was nothing I would rather do than play lacrosse (or basketball or field hockey) against Bryn Mawr. I lived for the thrill of competing, and so did my teammates. The energy before those games was absolutely contagious. It didn't matter the season because we were all playing for the pride of our school and our love of the sport. No one was thinking about how this game was going to help her college career.

When are athletes, parents and coaches going to realize that the best athlete is the athlete who loves to play? She is fresh at the beginning of each season and has a healthy body that is fit but not overworked.

No club team or personal trainer can replace an athlete's love for his or her sport. It is that passion, that drive, that desire that bodes success. Sadly, I see that light quickly dying in the eyes of young athletes.

Kelsey F. Twist teaches and coaches at Roland Park Country School and elsewhere. As a student, she was named The Sun's Female High School Athlete of the Year and the U.S. Lacrosse High School Player of the Year. Her e-mail is kelseytwist@gmail.com.

The Connecticut High School Girls' Basketball State Championship Luncheon

FRIDAY, MARCH 7, 2008



**11:30 A.M. - 1:30 P.M.
Aqua Turf Club, Plantsville**



INVESTORS IN CT YOUTH



- ★ AT&T ★
- ★ Baden Sports ★
- ★ Bearingstar™ Insurance ★
- ★ Big Y Supermarkets ★
- ★ Coca Cola ★
- ★ CT Lighting Centers ★
- ★ CT Sun ★
- ★ Dove Soap ★
- ★ Dick's Sporting Goods ★
- ★ eEsMarts ★
- ★ Grynn & Barrett Studios ★
- ★ Horace Mann ★
- ★ IGA / Bozzutos ★
- ★ Konica ★
- ★ Liberty Mutual ★
- ★ Macy's ★
- ★ Martin Screen Printing ★
- ★ McDonald's ★
- ★ NBC-30 ★
- ★ Nationwide Insurance ★
- ★ N.E. Fitness Distributors ★
- ★ Pfister Energy ★
- ★ PureTech Water ★
- ★ Rawlings ★
- ★ Spalding ★
- ★ Subway ★
- ★ Teachers' Insurance Plan ★
- ★ U.S. Army ★
- ★ U.S. Marine Corp ★
- ★ Waterbury Republican-American ★
- ★ Westfield Corporation ★
- ★ Wilson Sporting Goods ★

24 CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF ATHLETIC DIRECTORS

th Annual Athletic Directors Conference

Thursday and Friday, March 27-28, 2008 ♦ Rocky Hill Marriott

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Thursday, March 27, 2008:

8:00 - 11:00 a.m. CIAC Workshop - *Mike Savage, Executive Director*
 12:00 - 1:30 p.m. Luncheon / CAAD General Meeting -
Chip Dorwin, CAAD President
 2:15 - 3:15 p.m. General Session - *Greg Dale, Duke University*
 4:00 - 5:00 p.m. Workshop Session
 5:15 - 6:15 p.m. Social Hour
 6:15 - 9:00 p.m. Awards Banquet
 9:00 - 11:00 p.m. President's Reception

Friday, March 28, 2008:

8:00 - 9:30 a.m. CAAD Annual Breakfast - *David Pease*
 9:45 - 11:45 a.m. CAAD Coaching Education Modules
By CAAD State Faculty
 12:00 - 1:30 p.m. Coca-Cola Buffet Luncheon and CAAD Closing
 Meeting

CEU'S WILL BE AWARDED EACH DAY

2008 C.A.A.D. AWARD RECIPIENTS

*Distinguished Service Award Recipient From
 Inside the Field of Athletic Administration*
JEFF SUNBLADE, AVON HIGH SCHOOL

*Distinguished Service Award Recipient From
 Outside the Field of Athletic Administration*
GEORGE DeMAIO, WELI

NIAAA State Award of Merit
**JOE CANZANELLA, NEW HAVEN PUBLIC
 SCHOOLS**

Meritorious Service Award
**MARTY SPARANO, W.F. KAYNOR
 TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL**

PRE-REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Early Bird Conference Registration

Name _____
 School _____
 Town _____ Zip Code _____
 Telephone () _____
 Spouse's Name _____

Payment enclosed is to cover:

Registration: CAAD Member -- \$100 _____
 Non-member -- \$200.00 _____
 Spouse -- \$60.00 _____

Spouse's Name (if attending): _____

Total Enclosed -- \$ _____

Jersey Size (men's sizes): S M L XL XXL

Make checks payable to: **CAAD**

Return to: Judy Sylvester
 30 Realty Drive
 Cheshire, CT 06410

No one-day fees ♦ No refunds after March 12, 2008
Conference gift not guaranteed after March 1st

Hotel Registration

Group: Connecticut Association of Athletic Directors

Name _____
 Mailing Address _____
 Telephone () _____
 Spouse's Name _____

Arrival Date: _____
 Departure Date: _____

Credit Card #: _____

VISA MC American Express
 Expiration date: _____

Check one: 2 Double Beds King Bed
 \$89 per night Plus 12% tax

Send this form along with check or credit card # to:
Rocky Hill Marriott
 100 Capital Boulevard
 Rocky Hill, CT 06067
 Attn: Laurie Quinn

Room Rate NOT guaranteed after March 12th

CONNECTICUT DELEGATION ATTENDS 38th ANNUAL NIAAA CONFERENCE

By Fred Balsamo, Director, Connecticut Coaching Education Program

More than thirty-four athletic administrators and their spouses from Connecticut traveled to Nashville, Tennessee, December 14-18, 2007, to attend the 38th Annual Athletic Directors Conference co-hosted by the National Federation of High Schools and the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association. Participation in these national conferences is one of the most professionally rewarding opportunities one can experience. I have attended the past twenty-seven consecutive conferences and each time I always manage to bring back some important aspect of athletic administration in addition to enjoying the culture and ambiance of the location.

As always, the conference offered inspirational words from keynote speakers in addition to many "nuts & bolts" workshops. The opening general session featured Murray Banks who was Vermont's teacher of the year in 1982 and competed in the Ironman Triathlon Competition in Hawaii in 1984. The closing general session featured Dr. David Janda who is an orthopedic surgeon from Michigan and founder of the Institute of Preventive Sports Medicine. There were thirty-five breakout workshops offering a wide range of topics from facilities construction and communication strategies for parents to student exit assessment evaluations.

Of course, the biggest highlight for the Connecticut delegation was attending the

awards luncheon to witness Paul Mengold from Amity High School receive the prestigious NIAAA Distinguished Service Award (DSA). Paul was one of eight administrators from the entire country recognized with a DSA.

One of my favorite aspects of the conference is the exhibit hall, where participants can spend time with the many vendors and explore new and different products. There were over 250 booths to visit with many giving out various gifts and surprises.

Besides attending the general sessions, the workshops and the many other functions provided, one of the most important benefits of this conference is the ability to network with the many people from different parts of the country. It is great to see colleagues from around the USA as well as Connecticut and to bond with them, sharing the different aspects of our job over a cup of coffee or a meal.

Of course there is some free time to take advantage of the many sites. The Opryland Hotel where the conference was held is an attraction in itself. It spans acres and has many floral atriums and waterfalls. Many of us took a short trip to the Grand Ole Opry in downtown Nashville to get a taste of some original country music and then to sample the local cuisine. It is these good times with good friends which create lasting memories one never forgets.



The Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center, Nashville, TN

The annual conference is always in December and throughout my career has been an inspirational "jolt in the arm" to proceed through the long winter season and endure the many nights out away from my family. The state of Connecticut is fortunate to have had as many athletic administrators attend and bring back information over the years. I would highly recommend that every athletic administrator try to attend at least one national conference. Those who do will be hooked and will no doubt be regular participants for years to come. Next year's conference will be in San Diego, CA, December 13-16, 2008. In 2009, we will be in Dallas, TX, December 12-15 and, in 2010, at the Orlando World Marriott, December 11-14. Plan on it!