

WADA UPDATE

FEBRUARY 2024

[HTTPS://WWW.GOWADA.ORG/](https://www.gowada.org/)

EMPOWERING ENGAGEMENT: NAVIGATING KEY AMENDMENTS IN SCHOOL ATHLETIC PROGRAMMING

by Shawn Groshek, WADA President

WADA Members,

Over the past few months, I have had several intriguing conversations with principals, superintendents, and fellow Athletic Directors. Most of the conversations have revolved around the recently passed competitive balance issue. Even though, throughout the entire process of committee meetings, use of multiple media avenues to communicate information, video, presentations at conventions and meetings, PowerPoint and updated webpage, including member feedback portal with the WIAA website, the issues of “communication” and “lack of engagement” continues to come up.



Coming in April, the WIAA membership will vote on bylaws of School Athletic Programming, Use of Video Replay and Eligibility bylaw of Name, Image and Likeness (NIL). Whether you see these as non-issues or the next big issue with education-based athletics, please do your homework around these to ensure you are as informed about them as much as possible. An engaged membership is an informed membership. “I did not realize that is what it meant”, “It will not affect us”, “No one should have voted for this” are not the reactive responses we, as a WIAA member, can afford.

Whichever side of the Youth camps, Video Replay or NIL you are on, make sure you are educated, as well as have all or your questions answered about the issues. The recent uproar around last years' passed amendment (265-115) competitive balance has revealed to me, the lack of ownership around the process. As a voting member of the WIAA, you have the privilege and right to cast the vote that you believe is best for the membership of the WIAA and your school community. As well as your vote, you have a voice that you can use to talk with and discuss with the WIAA your concerns or issues with proposed amendments. The lack of people being informed about the new amendment, the lack of questions about the proposed amendment, then the surprise from the membership once the results were announced, showed some did not make an informed decision, nor included all necessary parties in prior communications.

I bring this up for the specific reason of the proposed amendments coming forth for the WIAA membership vote at the Annual Meeting. I want to press upon you the importance of being informed, communicating with all of those that would possibly affect and communicating with your administration. The proposed amendments come forth from the WIAA to us as Athletic Directors and we need to be the appropriate stewards and get the information to your principals, superintendents and school board members. Find yourself an audience with the important parties of your school community to discuss the proposed amendments and the ramifications on your school as well as with the entire state as a whole. If during this time, if you still have questions on the issues, contact WIAA directly, your WADA District Representative or fellow Athletic Directors within your conference or around the state or even yours truly to seek out answers.

I truly appreciate your attention to this as well as all of your efforts in leading your student-athletes, coaches and community forward.

#EnjoyTheJourney #BeTheRoleModel

Important Upcoming Dates

Wednesday, March 13, 1:30 pm
WIAA/WADA Workshop (Virtual)

Monday, April 1
WADA Scholarship Application Due

April
WADA Spring District Caucuses (Statewide)

Wednesday, April 24
WIAA Annual Meeting in Stevens Point



2024 MILWAUKEE BUCKS PERSEVERANCE AWARD RECIPIENTS SELECTED

Released February 5, 2024

Seven student athletes from across Wisconsin were recently selected as the 2024 Milwaukee Bucks Perseverance Award recipients. This is the fourth year for this prestigious award. Thanks to the generosity of the Milwaukee Bucks, Crisis Prevention Institute, The Bog, Safe Sports Zone, and the Wisconsin Athletic Directors Association, each recipient will receive a \$1,000 award. This award is given to Senior student athletes who have overcome adversity (physical, emotional, personal) to compete and or excel in interscholastic sports. They will be recognized at the March 17th Milwaukee Bucks vs. Phoenix Suns game.

2024 MILWAUKEE BUCKS PERSEVERANCE AWARD RECIPIENTS

BO VOLLRATH - FALL CREEK HIGH SCHOOL

ZOE CODER - WEST SALEM HIGH SCHOOL

EMMA DELANY - MARSHFIELD HIGH SCHOOL

MICHAEL TURNER - HARTFORD UNION HIGH SCHOOL

JACK EISENBROWN - MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL

CAEDEN KREIBICH - SOMERSET HIGH SCHOOL

JESSE LENYA - MADISON LA FOLLETTE HIGH SCHOOL



#OURPATHTOGETHER



ENHANCED SUPPORT: INTRODUCING THE RSCHOOLTODAY REQUEST FORM FOR WADA ATHLETIC DIRECTORS

As a special service for WADA Athletic Directors and their Assistants, rSchool has put together a simple google.docs form for Athletic Directors and Assistants to provide rSchoolToday change requests and feedback about problem areas in any of your rSchoolToday programs.

To access the rSchoolToday Request Form on the WADA website, simply navigate to the [WADA Toolbox](#). The Request Form is conveniently listed as its own option in the toolbox menu on the left side. Please note that this form is exclusively for use by Athletic Directors and their Assistants.

Your questions and feedback are greatly appreciated! The rSchoolToday Team will review your issue and get back to you with questions, a response, or add it to their list for upcoming new features.

THE JON GORDON COMPANIES

Topic Expertise:
The Power of Positive Leadership
The Power of Positive Team
The Power of Positive Leadership for Teens
The Energy Bus

JADE GORDON
Speaker & Workshop Facilitator

CONTACT
PHONE: 904-881-4647
WEBSITE: www.jongordon.com
EMAIL: jade@jongordon.com

Jade Gordon knows the power of positive leadership principles better than anyone, as Jon Gordon's daughter, she was raised on them and knows the impact they can have.

That's why she is now on a mission to develop positive leaders and build great teams as a keynote speaker and workshop leader for The Jon Gordon Companies.

Jade has worked with companies such as Hanes, Reddy Ice, and Paysafe, many athletic programs including Harvard, Ole Miss, & Auburn, professional teams in the NHL and non-profits about leadership and teamwork. Jade is also a former athlete who helps athletes develop a winning and team first mindset.

Jade Gordon is a graduate of Clemson University with a degree in Communications. After college she moved to Los Angeles to pursue acting while working at Nobu Malibu, a World Famous restaurant. She learned the art of great customer service by loving and caring about the people she encountered daily.

She brings that same love and passion to her keynotes and workshops.

INVITATION TO EMBRACE POSITIVE LEADERSHIP: MEET JADE GORDON, INSPIRATIONAL SPEAKER

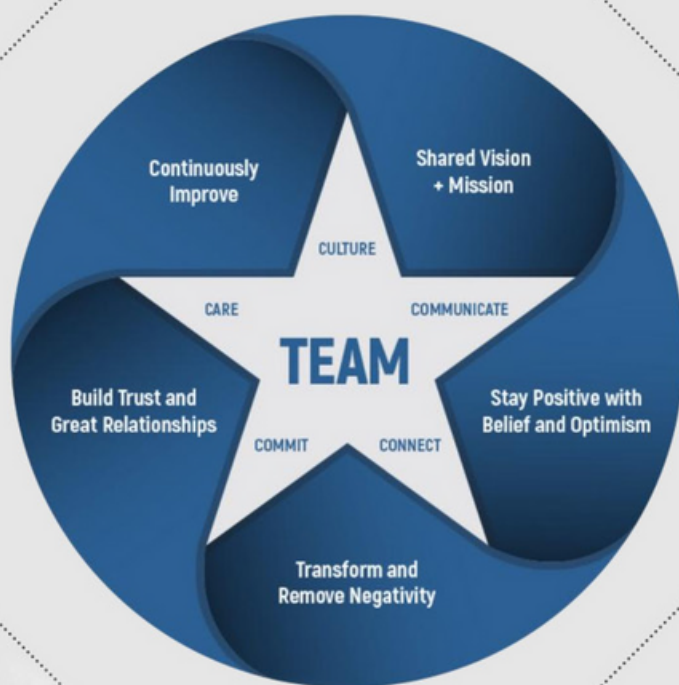
“I have had the pleasure of meeting Jade Gordon, daughter of world renowned motivational speaker, Jon Gordon. Jade has spent time under the tutelage and guidance from her father and has been an up and coming motivational speaker on the Power of Positive Leadership, Positive Teams and Positive Leadership for Teens. Attached you will find her information about the possibility of contacting her to come and speak with your coaches, students, student-athletes and community members. She is extremely excited about the possibility of coming into Wisconsin and spreading her positive leadership message.”

Shawn Groshek

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENTS, COACHES AND STUDENT ATHLETES WILL LEARN HOW TO

- ✓ Create a positive team culture fueled by a shared vision and greater purpose
- ✓ Activate the competitive advantage of positivity in day-to-day teamwork
- ✓ Generate team alignment and engagement
- ✓ Address and remove negativity for best team communication, connection, and cohesiveness
- ✓ Enhance team grit to overcome challenges and create solutions
- ✓ Build team trust and unity
- ✓ Foster team caring and inclusivity
- ✓ Drive continuous improvement
- ✓ Leave a team legacy of greatness

POSITIVE TEAM MODEL



"The Power of a Positive Team Workshop with the Jon Gordon Companies has been awesome for our coaches and staff. We've all noticed some amazing positive shifts. The activities, stories, and lessons shared have been instrumental in transforming our team. We're excited to continue our journey with Chad and the Jon Gordon Companies!"

Eddie George | Head Coach - Tennessee State University

"After doing The Power of Positive Leadership Workshop with our Athletic Department, Coaches and Staff, we felt the next step was to bring the Jon Gordon Companies back to work with all of our teams and student athletes. The Power of a Positive Team Workshops with Chad and Jade have been a great addition for Stephen F Austin Athletics. The engagement and practical examples and applications were critical to connecting with our student-athletes. With so many challenges facing college athletics today, having the Jon Gordon Companies as a partner and trusted advisor has been a competitive advantage for our entire Athletic Department as we continue to grow and develop our culture and vision."

Ryan Ivey | Athletic Director, Stephen F. Austin State

"As a Head Coach, I am always looking for better ways to connect with my players and build a more connected team. The decision to bring in Chad Busick from the Jon Gordon Companies to do Power of a Positive Team Workshops has been a game changer for our coaches, players and team."

Candace Moats | Women's Volleyball Head Coach, Indiana Wesleyan

OUR TRAINING TEAM



Jon Gordon
14x Best-Selling Author



Chad Busick
VP of Athletics,
Workshop Leader



Jade Gordon
Culture and
Confidence Coach



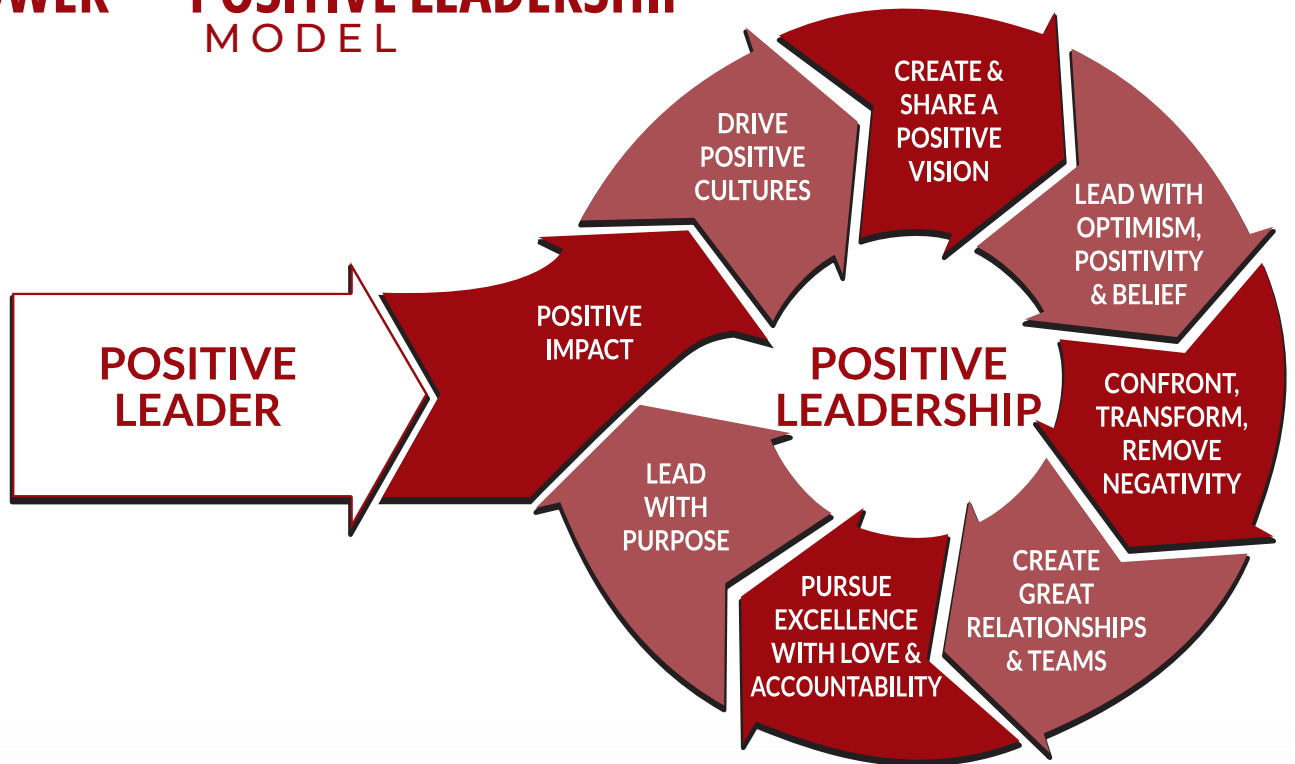
Rennie Curran
UGA Hall of Fame,
Leadership Coach



Thomas Williams
USC All-American, NFL Veteran,
Team Development Coach

For more information, contact us at: athletics@jongordon.com

THE POWER OF POSITIVE LEADERSHIP MODEL



WAYS TO ENGAGE

A

POSITIVE LEADERSHIP TRAINING

- We come to you and deliver a full-day training for leaders in your organization.
- You and your leaders come to one of our public training events.

B

TRAIN-THE-TRAINER

- We come to you and conduct a TTT program for the trainers in your organization. (4 trainers minimum)
- Your trainers come to one of our public TTT events to be certified.
- If you are an independent trainer not affiliated with an organization, you come to a public TTT event to be certified.

Visit PowerofPositiveLeadership.com for our upcoming public training and TTT events.

Talent Development Checklist for The Power of Positive Leadership Training

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|------------------------|
| • Positive Leadership | • Optimism & Cultivating Positive Beliefs | • Team Building |
| • Positive Communication | • Creating Unified & Connected Teams | • Vision Clarity |
| • Culture Building | • Empathetic Interaction | • Emotional Resilience |

STAYING CONNECTED: MENTORING AND GROWTH IN EDUCATIONAL-BASED ATHLETICS

By Jeremy Schlitz, CAA, WADA Past President

Hello all:

Wanted to give an update on the work and resources of our mentoring program and a reminder we can all use these resources to help us no matter how many years we have been leading in the educational based athletics sphere. We are never too experienced to learn new things.

The following was my opening message to our mentor and mentee groups for use this month in small groups but is a good reminder for all of us and I know we all need connection and mentoring to keep us positively serving our students and coaches, may be good to use in a meeting or gathering:

This is always a tough month, the drudgery of winter sets in to so many and the intensity of emotion and winter sports coincide. This means take some time to laugh and share your best/worst funniest first year stories... if you can't laugh at the absurdity we may need to reframe some things for you in the AD world.

The NIAAA mentoring committee meets monthly and we share different approaches, tools, and ideas to help educate and connect new ADs to the resources and supports that will make those initial years as easy as possible. As mentor coordinator I take those resources and try to I think that all of us benefit from these refreshers, reminders, and encourage all of us to join the SportsYou pages related to mentoring and resources along with our new WADA mentorship group channel, access code 8CSA-EM8E.

This year we have shifted the WADA mentor program to be more of a cohort model to help build connections and networks for ADs within their first two years in collaboration with a veteran AD to help share information and in some cases lead monthly meetings. If you would like to get involved as a mentor lead in the future please reach out, I have found it to be a great way to recharge and remind myself of why we do what we do and build community. I also encourage you to create similar programs within your departments for coaches to connect in this cohort model and let your new coaches build these relationships and the veterans help share the culture. If you would like frameworks or ideas for this please let me know and I will share out past agendas and models.

Would love to have some of our experienced ADs share with our mentor groups, I would love to get you connected if that interests you. March's topic is "what did we miss" so after winter tournaments are behind you look for some time to connect and talk about surviving the first two seasons and what you want to remember, forget, and change for next year.

#EnjoyTheJourney #BeTheRoleModel



QUALITIES OF SUCCESSFUL ATHLETIC DIRECTORS

by Tom Shafranski, WIAA Assistant Director



Over the years, many people have asked me what are the qualities that make a successful Athletic Director? Well, this can be a fairly complicated question that seems to get more and more complicated every year; however, it does not have to be. Please allow me a brief moment to provide a simple explanation:

With issues like equity, diversity, inclusion, gender discrimination, identity, sexual misconduct, parental involvement, social media, violence, mental health and COVID-19, continuing to be a part of the contemporary, controversial high school sports world, it is easy for Athletic Directors to fall victim to the complexities of sport management in today's high schools. Years ago, when we dealt with far more simple issues like getting fields ready/lined for a game, making sure checks were written for officials and giving them to them upon arrival for a contest, we could never have imagined issues of this nature dominating the high school sports scene of today.

In addition, Hyper-Competitiveness is now often identified as the biggest problem in youth sports. Young athletes often feel immense pressure to win at all costs, and this focus on winning can lead to a stressful and unenjoyable experience. The emphasis on winning can also discourage student-athletes who may not excel in a particular sport from even participating, as they fear they won't measure up. (Sports Management Research Guide, Sept. 13, 2023)

Sources across the web identify qualities like integrity, self-awareness, courage, respect, compassion and resilience as top qualities for an Athletic Director to have. The Center for Creative Leadership goes on to further indicate that leaders should be learning agile and flex their influence while communicating the vision, showing gratitude, and collaborating effectively.

My perspective of really good, successful ADs remains far more simplistic:

1. Maintain the Golden Rule—treat others the way you wish to be treated! This helps ease tensions and conflict, fosters trust, and improves your effectiveness. Creating a culture of respect is about more than just the absence of disrespect. Respectfulness can be shown in many ways, but it often starts with showing you truly value others' perspectives and are making an effort to build belonging in the athletic program—both are crucial components of supporting equity, diversity and inclusion.
2. The ability to maintain and be the person with the highest level of character in the school district—overseeing coaches to make certain not only the rules of each sport along with your school's code are upheld, but, also making certain that all student-athletes are being treated equitably on our school teams. Reinforcing the importance of honesty and integrity to coaches at all levels is known to be vital for those charting the course and making countless other significant decisions for their school and athletic program.
3. Truly CARE about your staff and student-athletes! Compassion is perhaps the most powerful and important acts of leadership. It is far more than just showing empathy or even listening and seeking to understand—caring leaders act on what they learn. After someone speaks up about something, they won't feel truly heard if their leader doesn't then take some type of meaningful action on the information. This is the core of successful leadership, and it helps to build trust, increase collaboration, and decrease turnover across organizations.

Know that according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the position of "Athletic Director" may expect a 17% growth from 2021 to 2031. Many of these new positions include new and Assistant AD positions and other sports management related positions. This is a rate much faster than the average field is currently experiencing and may result in 5,100 additional roles in the field across the country. (June 7, 2023)

Understanding this simplistic approach along with the growth in our field, it is extremely important for today's Athletic Director to always maintain a positive perspective demonstrating the enjoyment of being the leader of their athletic program—no matter the obstacles placed in front of them. In this day and age, it is more important than ever for AD's to always believe and show they are "living the dream" so that their school's athletic program has a truly successful leader.

NETWORKING FOR A COMMON PURPOSE

by Jamie Sims on January 24,2024



Our state is composed of hundreds of athletic directors that lead education based athletic programming in our public and private school districts. One of the goals within the WADA organization is to attract and retain qualified Athletic Directors, with a focus on directors of color in hopes of enhancing the diversity within education based athletic leadership. With that charge, our Networking and Recruiting Representative has connected with identified Athletic Directors across the state to foster a brave space for fellowship, sharing experiences, and diving deeply into ways in which our organization can better support Athletic Directors across our state. We hosted the first meeting with our minority Athletic Directors last fall and will be taking time to connect again in late February 2024. Despite age, color, or gender we all strive to provide equitable and thriving programming, and we often face resistance and challenges in our daily work. The primary goal with these brave spaces for connection and fellowship is to learn of some of the barriers that we all may face and collaboratively work together to problem solve if and when possible. WADA and the WIAA are committed to ensuring that all of our leaders, student athletes, and department staff are supported to ensure that their experience in education based athletics is one of significance.

Cultivating a culture of Significance!

Is my leadership Significant for my staff, students, and school community? A Significant leader within education based athletics is one that consistently leads with purpose and passion in building authentic and trusting relationships among their staff and with their student athletes. Being significant in the eyes of those we serve can supersede wins, losses, and program success. Yes, we all strive to be successful as leaders within our programs, but one thing we all know to be true as significant leaders is the importance of having positive influence and impact and leveraging that to acquire success for your students, staff, and programs beyond the scoreboard. Significant leaders are challenged to ask oneself, “Is what I’m doing both Honorable & Responsible”? Being a significant leader is a journey that yields opportunities to have impact as well as influence in the lives of others. A significant leader knows and understands that leadership comes with sacrifice and a cost, as University of Georgia Head football coach Kirby Smart notes:

The cost of leadership means:

1. You will have to make hard decisions that negatively affect people you care about.
2. You will be disliked despite your best attempts to do your best for the most.
3. You will be misunderstood and will not always have the opportunity to defend yourself.

This is the charge that we as athletic administrators have when it comes to leading with significance within our schools, districts, and communities.





To Our
Sponsors!

