

2016 Maine Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association Spring Conference

Roundtable Discussion Questions & Answers

1. One of the greatest challenges facing today's athletic administrators is that there are many outside organizations, including club sports and recreational programs, that are competing with them for participants to fill roster slots. What are the trends that you have seen in your area of the state?
 - a. Losing students to year round sports
 - b. Bonny Eagle-In house club teams taking participants away from varsity sports
 - c. Carrabec-Hasn't been around long enough to see trends
 - d. Caribou-Skiing is the only sport impacted
 - e. Bucksport-kids work around both
 - f. Bangor area-Soccer year round. Younger levels are starting to develop lacrosse. AAU basketball doesn't seem to have as much impact as it did a decade ago.
 - g. For Northern county does not deal with AAU due to being so far removed.
 - h. There are times when games are postponed due to not having enough players.
 - i. Hands-off rule negatively affected
 - j. Lose contact with kids
 - k. Less athletes participating for school
 - l. Less numbers in school
 - m. AAU AYBL, college aspirations, indoor soccer year round.

What strategies have you used to retain participants in your programs under these circumstances?

- a. Bona Fide Team Rule
 - b. Iron Tiger/Eagle, Awards Nights
 - c. Character Awards
 - d. Small schools should allow 2 sports at the same time if numbers are needed,
2. The number of teacher-coaches in the United States has declined significantly in the last two decades. How has your school district met this challenge? What strategies have you utilized to increase your coaching candidate pool?
 - a. Get A.D.s on teaching hiring communities -- get principals involved with hiring teachers who are interested in coaching
 - b. Track percentages of teacher coaches
 - c. Double up coaches, sub-varsity are harder to fill;
 - d. More "outside of education" coaches, with all the added expectations of teachers-fewer of them choose to coach due to time

- e. Biggest concerns regarding “outside of education” coaches: communication with athletes and parents, organization of practices/program, supervision of practices/ program
 - f. How to fix: AD spending more time with coaches (short term), have coaches go to varsity practices and watch experienced coaches, professional development; clinics; workshops (long term);
 - g. How to increase candidate pool: call colleges to see if there are any young coaching candidates, call MFCA and other associations, & talk with other schools and colleagues.
 - h. Carrabec-Most coaches are teachers
 - i. Caribou-about half-ask people if they know anyone
 - j. Bonny Eagle-posts on Serving Schools, reaches out to local colleagues
 - k. Bucksport-about half, hard to find candidates
 - l. Middle school emphasis on rewards to coaching outside of the classroom
 - m. Demands on teachers have increased
 - n. Teachers have a lot of teaching responsibilities; most don’t want the hassle of coaching, parent coaches, stipends haven’t increased; teachers don’t want longer days, certification required, school board policy
 - o. “If all things are equal, hire a teacher.”
 - p. More difficult to get sub-varsity level
 - q. Pay coaches for the amount of liability
 - r. Specific sports are harder to find coaches for
 - s. Going to colleges to get collegiate athletes to coach sub-varsity levels (St. Doms)
3. How has the current Maine Principals' Association five-class basketball system impacted your conference and your school? Do you forecast a potential impact upon other activities? What do you see as the positive aspects of this change and areas that need to be addressed?
- a. Opened up “out-of-conference” games/opponents -- WMC plays KVAC and SMAA
 - b. Dexter-worked well -- allowed them to compete more effectively but also didn’t work because we lost traditional opponents
 - c. Houlton=boys team was a bit outmatched, girls team was good enough to compete in the next class up; impact on other sports
 - d. Sacopee Valley 0 some of the new classes/classification cut off numbers and hurt schools (e.g. going from a large class C school to a small B school)
 - e. Location of school plays a part (e.g. a school in Western ME with enrollment of 430 doesn’t have the same resources as a school on the coast near Portland with the same enrollment)
 - f. Appropriate balance
 - g. AA tourney schedule
 - h. Caribou-benefit was great for basketball, other sports will look at it

- i. Bonny Eagle-caused unique experiences, travel-wise; overall this system will be reviewed as a success after year one -- not sure the five class model fits the other sports due to number of teams in those respective sport
 - j. Competitiveness balanced out more especially on the girls side
 - k. Lucky with weather but the tourney will need to be looked at in terms of condensed schedules
 - l. Heal point issues
 - m. Gate was a disaster
 - n. All tournaments west of Augusta
 - o. Not recommended to expand to other sports
 - p. 5 class-great for small schools
 - q. Heal point value change was good -- we think other sports will look at 5 class
 - r. Elimination of preliminary, 1-16 all state for (AA)
 - s. Great opportunities for schools to make tournament.
4. Changes in available technology have resulted in social media playing a major role in the daily lives of students. Accompanying these improvements are challenges faced by schools, particularly when it is related to issues such as inappropriate communication between students and/or cyberbullying, each of which can impact schools. What measures have you taken to educate students about the appropriate use of social media? How have you embraced social media tools to promote your athletic program?
- a. Made our job easier but more difficult
 - b. Pre year social media seminars
 - c. Facebook police, information and positivity
 - d. Athletic Facebook page for all sports
 - e. Staying current with social media tools
 - f. Caribou-struggles with technology
 - g. Bonny Eagle-Uses it a lot
 - h. Meet the Coaches Night wants to do one with a speaker to educate about cyber issues, does twitter
 - i. Carrabec-not a lot of technology in place now, looking to add
 - j. Bucksport-discusses issues early, uses Facebook and website; every orientation it is covered, impacts school day, they are held accountable; group texts make life easier; education on social media, social media can create drama, technology can make things easier if used properly, can make life difficult when there are problems
 - k. Conferences-need more of this, online (Google, Internet) information so available, networking.

5. Today's world of interscholastic athletics requires an athletic director to be knowledgeable about a wide range of subjects. What steps have you taken to ensure your own professional development to stay current with trends in the field?
 - a. Recognize three-sport Varsity athletes at the end of the year
 - b. Attend MIAAA conference and other professional development opportunities
 - c. Call a colleague
 - d. Online opportunities (i.e. Master's degree, course work)
 - e. Informal discussion groups
 - f. Mentoring program with experienced ADs working with newer AD's
 - g. Update MIAAA website...upload presentations and documents from MIAAA onto the website
 - h. Conferences and LTI courses
 - i. Come to conference and take classes
 - j. League AD meetings
 - k. Professional classes
 - l. Networking with other AD's and collaborating to share ideas about common practice
 - m. This conference is a prime example of this
 - n. Read, read, read
 - o. LTC courses
 - p. MIAAA conference
 - q. Athletic administration magazine
 - r. National conference
 - s. Being at MIAAA conference: taking LTC classes; networking and talking to others that do the same work as you do; conferences-need more of this
 - t. Online (i.e. Google, internet)...information is so available