Secondary School Athletic Administration Certification: State Oversights, Requirements, and Pressing Issues Athletic Directors Encounter

Christopher L. Gaddis
Western Kentucky University, chris.gaddis@owensboro.kyschools.us

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/diss

Part of the Educational Leadership Commons, and the Elementary and Middle and Secondary Education Administration Commons

Recommended Citation
http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/diss/48

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by TopSCHOLAR®. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dissertations by an authorized administrator of TopSCHOLAR®. For more information, please contact topscholar@wku.edu.
SECONDARY SCHOOL ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATION CERTIFICATION:
STATE OVERSIGHTS, REQUIREMENTS, AND PRESSING ISSUES
ATHLETIC DIRECTORS ENCOUNTER

A Dissertation
Presented to
The Faculty of the Educational Leadership Doctoral Program
Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, Kentucky

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

By
Christopher L. Gaddis

December 2013
SECONDARY SCHOOL ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATION CERTIFICATION:  
STATE OVERSIGHTS, REQUIREMENTS, AND PRESSING ISSUES  
ATHLETIC DIRECTORS ENCOUNTER

Date Recommended  August 28th, 2013

Randy Dees, Director of Dissertation

Karl Laves

Charlie Pride

Dean, Graduate Studies and Research  11/1/13
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Throughout my educational and professional years, I have been fortunate to have received encouragement and support from many people who have influenced my desire to continue to this point. Even though each and every one played a significant role in my life, a few of them played an integral part and had the most significant impact. Therefore, I wish to acknowledge these individuals and will go in order in which I met them in my life.

The first are my parents James L. “Buddy” and Lee Gaddis. I was the youngest of four boys and they always supported me in pursuing my interests and passions, but tried to impart the importance of education and finding an area of it where I liked, could excel, and be successful. Next, is my paternal grandmother, Gracie Gaddis. Although, she was born in 1902, when the focus on continued education was not as important, she was ahead of her time in already understanding the value. She always said no one can ever take away your education. I remember hearing that as a small child all the way into my adult years. I appreciate her wisdom she provided and have replayed her comment many times.

Then there is Linda Kingsley, who is now retired from the Owensboro Board of Education and was the High School English Department head. She was the mother of a childhood friend and turned into a supportive colleague, who has always seen something in me that I have not always seen in myself. At times throughout my career when certain opportunities have been presented, she has reached out to me and asked almost as a rhetorical question, “You are going to go for that, aren’t you?” When I told her I was planning to apply for the doctoral program, she was thrilled for me, and then said, “What,
can I do to help?” That is where I see her support most. She is always at the ready to help and many times does not give me the chance to ask because she has already offered.

Now we come to the mid 80’s when I started what at the time I did not know would be the first of three degrees I would earn from Western Kentucky University. One of the first people I encountered at Western was the man who is now known as Dr. Randy Deere. At the time he was an athletic trainer and I felt an instant connection to him. He is the kind of man you meet and know you can just be yourself. Little did I know at the time that twenty-seven years later I would be calling upon him to be the chair of my dissertation committee. His support throughout this process has been undying and sometimes when my interest was waning, he provided the encouragement I needed to keep on going. I am not sure if I am more appreciative of this or the fact we have renewed our friendship and had some good times throughout the process. He is a good man as a dissertation committee chair, but also as a long-time friend.

Then there is Dr. Tom Meredith, President of WKU when I was there. Dr. Meredith is the consummate professional and I remember being awed by his ability to circulate a room making those who he was talking with feel as if he and that person were the only two in the room. As a Spirit Master and one who attended events with him, I realized the special gift he had and that I needed to sit, back, watch, and absorb as much of it as I could. Throughout the years I have kept in touch with Dr. Meredith and he has always encouraged me to keep striving for more. I am anxious for this process to officially be over and share this accomplishment with him.

Another who stands out is Larry Moore, retired High School Administrator and former supervisor. He showed his confidence in my knowledge, skills, and abilities by
naming me the youngest Athletic Director at that time in the State of the Kentucky. This is in turn helped me improve my own confidence. Throughout the years he has always been there as a mentor to lend an ear and provide sound professional advice. I would be remiss not to mention those who served as members of my dissertation committee. Dr. Karl Laves and Dr. Charlie Pride provided tremendous insight and professional feedback throughout this journey. In addition, Mr. Bob Cobb’s statistical knowledge, assistance, and input were invaluable. The words of encouragement I received from these three gentlemen certainly exemplify the “spirit” of Western Kentucky University.

Finally these last four years would have never been possible without the love, support, and encouragement of my family, my wife, Cate, son, Walker, and daughter, Hampton, who was just a glimmer in our eye at the beginning of this process. Ironically, as I end my terminal degree in education, my son Walker begins his own journey and just entered kindergarten. As I have typed these words, I contemplate that there are really no words to express my heartfelt thanks to all of these individuals for the influence they have played, albeit unknown to them, in helping me achieve this terminal degree. I am eternally grateful to them.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION .......................................................... 1

Purpose of Study .................................................................................. 4

Theoretical Basis for the Study ............................................................ 4

Definition of Terms ........................................................................... 5

Rationale for the Study ....................................................................... 6

Problem Statement ............................................................................ 8

Research Questions ........................................................................... 8

Empirical Research Questions ......................................................... 8

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE ........................................... 10

Introduction ...................................................................................... 10

Historical Background ...................................................................... 11

Educational Leadership .................................................................... 12

Communication ................................................................................ 13

Similar Traits of Athletic Administrator and Building Principal .... 13

Organizational Effectiveness ........................................................... 14

Secondary School Athletic Administration .................................... 15

Fatigue and Burnout ........................................................................ 15

Strategic Planning ............................................................................ 16

Job Satisfaction ................................................................................ 18
Current Issues Facing Secondary School Athletic Administrators

Title IX

Qualified Coaches

Equal Athletic Opportunities for Students with Disabilities

Finance

Secondary School Athletic Administrator Certification

Recent Empirical Investigations

Summary

CHAPTER III: METHOD

Introduction

Participants

Measures

Pilot Study

Research Design

Procedures

Data Analysis

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

Characteristics of the Population

Results of the Data Analysis

Research Question One
The role of a secondary school athletic director is similar across the United States, although the required credentials for such a position vary immensely from state to state. The athletic administrator position was originally created to improve the oversight of the increasing demands of operating an athletic program. In the past, the number of sports and participants were much smaller than today. Because of this there has not always been a call for highly trained, educated, and experienced interscholastic athletic administrators.

In this study, state executive directors/liaisons for the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association provided information regarding their states demographic data, educational practices, and athletic director (AD) requirements. Finally, the state executive directors/liaisons were asked to rate ten of the most pressing issues facing athletic administrators today. Responding states were divided into one of three groups based upon the number of athletic participants in the state. Results were analyzed through frequency distribution.

Data indicated no significant differences among the three groups. Although 52.27% states reported athletic administrators are required to have bachelor’s degree, 41.86% indicated no certification of any kind is required to hold the AD position.
Furthermore, only 34.09% of states recognize a master’s degree in sports administration for a rank change/salary increase, and less than 25% require any continued education/professional development for athletic administrators.

The data seemed to indicate a need for states to begin to recognize the importance of educational and certification requirements for secondary school athletic administrators. The lack of uniformity across the United States regarding criteria used to seek and develop athletic administrators raises some concern. This inconsistency or lack of requirements indicates the need for refinement to enhance the professional integrity of secondary school athletic administration across the United States.
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Public school education has forever been a priority in the United States; and since the beginning of the 21st century and rise in the accountability of student success, education has become big business. There are many known contributing factors to the complexity of the educational process, and extracurricular activities are found to play a significant role contributing to the overall success of students (Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt, 2003). What once began as intramural activities in schools, interscholastic athletics has developed into a large-scale, professionally staffed operation. While the number of participants continues to rise, an increase also has been seen in the number of sanctioned sports being offered, staffing, facilities, and budgets. As an example, it is common today to see an interscholastic athletic program with an annual budget exceeding $100,000 and often seeking the support of corporate sponsorship to assist in the growth and future development of the program (Reeves, 2006).

As with other educational leaders, the duties of secondary school athletic administrators certainly have increased as programs and student participation numbers have grown. Findings from the High School Athletics Participation survey conducted by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) show that participation in high school sports increased for the 23rd consecutive year in 2011-12. Credit for this continued growth is primarily given to the increase in several girls’ sports offered and the participation generated by the new sports. Sports participation for the 2011-12 school year reached an all-time high of 7,692,520, an increase of 24,565 from the previous year. The value of high school athletic programs in an education-based
setting continues to be significant, since more than 55% of students enrolled in high schools participate in athletics. Based on the same participation survey, which has been compiled since 1971 by the NFHS through numbers received from member associations, an additional 33,984 girls participated in high school sports that year, also a consecutive increase for the past 23 years (Monaghan, 2012).

Some directors of athletics believe they are members of a profession, while others who are more cautious or critical in their evaluations would prefer to temper their appraisal and deem themselves part of an emerging profession. Although many times taken for granted, leadership is a necessary quality in the field of athletic administration. Often getting caught up in the multitude of day-to-day tasks involved in their jobs, athletic administrators rarely have an opportunity to focus on their own leadership skills. Knorr (2012) posited that athletic directors have the ability to set the tone for the entire department from dress to ethical conduct. Athletic administrators are not immune to being informally evaluated by members of their staff; therefore, careless performance is noticed and often encourages others to follow suit. Athletic directors, similar to other leaders, must model strong mental and moral behaviors on a continuous basis, while at the same time be willing to evaluate their own behaviors through their career as an administrator.

Athletic directors are known for attempting to accomplish multiple tasks in an afternoon. Many transform from teacher or assistant principal into an athletic director at the end of the school day and try to succeed in working with kids, mentoring coaches, handling administrative tasks, communicating, and relating with parents. Therefore, the questions continue to surface as to what qualifications should be required for such a
position and, furthermore, how should the job be evaluated. Bryant (2012) stated that, considering the wide range of duties of the typical athletic administrator, it would be nearly impossible to create a one-size-fits-all evaluation tool for this position from one school district to another. Furthermore, the job is often evaluated the same as a full-time administrator. Athletic directors often find themselves in a unique and lonely position. Often, the person evaluating the athletic director most likely has never done the job. Furthermore, determining the objectives of the position and knowing who to listen to are difficult, given the many expectations from different constituencies including: parents, teachers, coaches, administrators, students, and members of the community (Bryant, 2012).

Cohen (2012) reported that, while considering all the uncertainties facing Americans on a daily basis, parents still are looking for activities for their children and others are looking toward college. It is known throughout the world of athletic management that focusing on attracting and retaining participants, creating safe programs, and finding the financial support to maintain a quality program during tough times are the best solutions for an athletic program to survive through the period of uncertainties.

This investigation primarily concentrated on the professional preparation of interscholastic athletic administrators. Specifically, this study identified and analyzed those qualifications secondary school athletic administrators must possess in the future to be successful in the position, as student participation numbers have reached a record of over 7.5 million in the United States. State executive directors/liaisons for the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association were asked to complete an online
survey to gather demographic data depicting the certification requirements for athletic administrators in their particular state. The degree of professional preparation of athletic directors was identified as one of the key factors in the administration of a functional athletic program.

**Purpose of Study**

The purpose of this study was to highlight the qualifications, both educational and experiential, for secondary school athletic administrators, as well as identify topics of growing importance to interscholastic athletics. By identifying qualifications, the researcher hoped to provide information to each state department of education and/or athletic association to enable them to self-assess their own high school athletic director qualifications. The intent of this study was to present a detailed picture of the different states’ requirements, but not to question any one particular model. It was the researcher’s intention to provide information as an initial step for further research and theory building. By conducting an in-depth descriptive study, state executive directors/liaisons of the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association will be provided evidence that can be used to measure their own requirements to enhance the professional integrity of athletic administrators within their own respective state.

**Theoretical Basis for the Study**

Increased participation, staff, facilities, and budgets in secondary school athletics across the United States have been targeted for over two decades, identifying the need for more well qualified athletic administrators. Despite these changes and resultant pressures, historically little has been done to better prepare athletic administrators to manage this new level of demands on the position (Hall & Bradwin, 1989).
This research looked at how requirements for athletic administrators differ from state to state and whether there is any correlation between the number of programs/participants and the state’s certification requirements. One concern that continues to be raised is the cost of maintaining an interscholastic athletic program. Despite the magnitude and problems of administering today’s interscholastic athletic programs, the specific qualifications for the top position have never been spelled out. What qualifications must a successful interscholastic athletic director have, and should these qualifications vary in different situations? Recent literature lacks information on how an inspiring athletic administrator can best be trained prior to assuming the position, nor does the literature indicate the existing qualifications of interscholastic athletic directors. The National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association has realized the uniqueness of an athletic director’s duties and the need to require specialized professional preparation. The researcher anticipated that these recommendations would contribute to the further development of certifications and graduate professional programs for athletic administrators.

**Definition of Terms**

The following definitions and explanations were used as a frame of reference throughout this study.

*Administrator* refers to the individual whose function is to manage the organization.

*Certification* is the professional designation earned to assure qualifications for a job.

*High School* refers to grades 9 through 12.
**Interscholastic Athletic Administrator** is the individual responsible for the total organization and direction of a high school athletic program.

**Interscholastic Athletics** refers to the high school level.

**NIAAA** is the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association.

**NIAAA State Executive Director** is the individual from NIAAA who serves as the representative from their state.

**NIAAA State Liaison** is the individual from NIAAA who serves as the representative from their state.

**Rationale for the Study**

The research of Stier and Schneider (2000b) focused on high school principals’ expectations of their athletic directors. In the early 1960s the athletic director (AD) position was created to improve control over the increasing demands of operating an athletic program. Today these demands include, but are not limited to personnel, scheduling, finance, working with other school administrators for direction, clerical, alumni, and fund raising. Overseeing interscholastic athletic competition has evolved into a challenging task that requires more skills, training, and experience. Now, more than ever, the person leading high school athletics is being closely scrutinized (Hoch, 2002). Early researchers focused solely on intercollegiate athletic directors and the roles and responsibilities at that level. However, the demands and challenges of the secondary school administrator have increased with time, causing schools to respond by expanding the job description for the athletic director (Whisenant, Miller, & Pedersen, 2005). The data in this research regarding principal expectations of the athletic director was collected through surveys distributed to principals across the country. The findings consisted
mainly of various job descriptors of athletic directors, as well as their responsibilities.
The results revealed a large variation in roles and responsibilities assumed by the athletic
director. The variation in roles creates the need for these extremes to be analyzed and balanced. Not only did athletic directors’ responsibilities cover a wide range of duties when the comparison was done, but the principals’ expectations were broad as well. The results showed a large portion of responsibilities were managerial, yet most athletic directors viewed organizational ability and written communication as their weakest skills. The ability of a single individual to effectively manage all of the duties alone is highly unlikely. The field of athletic management has grown in complexity so quickly; limited research has been completed in this area. One may easily see that the limitations of this study are the lack of data showing how principals perceive effective athletic administrators as compared to the success of the program. The role of a high school principal has changed considerably in the 21st century, turning that position from a manager to an instructional leader. Other positions within the school, such as athletic director, have changed as well (Stier & Schneider, 2000b).

As the role and responsibilities of secondary school athletic administrators begin to be reviewed, the educational requirements for the profession are reviewed as well. The research of Schneider and Stier (2001) examined the recommended educational requirements of high school athletic directors. The objective of this study was to determine the type of educational experiences that interscholastic athletic directors should possess. Secondary school athletic programs have grown and developed and now play a major role in the overall educational process. The oversight of interscholastic athletic competition has developed into a complicated career, requiring greater skills and training
from the director (Steir & Schneider, 2001b).

**Problem Statement**

This investigation identified and analyzed the qualifications of secondary school athletic administrators in the United States. An electronic survey served as the means for gathering demographic data that identified employment as well as certification requirements. The qualifications and employment requirements of secondary school athletic directors were identified and analyzed to show what types of characteristics best qualified a person to direct a secondary school athletic program.

**Research Questions**

This study was conducted to determine the employment requirements and pressing issues for secondary school athletic administrators within the United States and how they vary from state to state.

**Empirical Research Questions**

1. What state organization is the governing body for secondary school athletics?
2. Are there required “sports administration” academic preparation programs?
3. Are there any state employment requirements for athletic administrators?
4. Do states require any continued education for athletic administrators?
5. What are the demographic profiles of present athletic administrators?
6. What are the topics of growing importance to interscholastic athletics?

In the following chapter, the author provides a thorough literature review regarding the qualifications and employment demographics for interscholastic athletic administrators. Many of the pressing issues secondary school administrators face today
have been identified through this literature review.
CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to highlight the qualifications, both educational and experiential, for secondary school athletic administrators, as well as identify topics of growing importance to interscholastic athletics. An individual must possess a deep knowledge of educational leadership, profession related responsibilities, certifications, and current issues for athletic directors to fully understand the role of secondary school athletic administrators (Bruno, 2012). Several aspects concerning secondary athletics and the role of the athletic administrator will be reviewed within this chapter. The historical background of athletic administration and how the roles and responsibilities have evolved over the past 20 years also will be discussed. Interscholastic athletic departments now serve the largest number of students participating in nonacademic programs. Thus, as participation in athletics continues to increase, the role and responsibilities of the high school athletic administrator also increases. In addition, as student participation continues to increase and athletic programs on the secondary level operate more as a business, it has become increasingly necessary for athletic administrators to possess certain qualifications to successfully fulfill this role. Historically, the leadership requirements of those programs have not increased proportionally (Monaghan, 2012). Further, the criteria used in the selection process for an athletic director often does not include or evaluate what is truly needed for an individual to be successful in the position, regardless of the responsibilities.

The final portion of this review focused on current issues identified as challenges faced by athletic directors today. One issue is Title IX compliance, which creates
monitoring of program equity requiring opportunities to be provided for female athletes (Bonnette, 2012). Also the challenge is present relative to hiring more non-faculty members to coach on the high school level. While this is positive, it also requires athletic directors to ensure they have the knowledge of public schools, which is unnecessary for the teacher-coach (Austin, 2013). In addition, the current expense of operating a successful athletic program has caused many AD’s to reach out to the community for financial support (Forsythe, 2012). One other issue that has recently received national attention is providing athletic opportunities for students with disabilities (U.S. Department of Education, 2013). These issues, along with others, will be examined closely and in greater detail. While the role and responsibilities of the 21st century athletic administrator have expanded, the need for professional development and qualifications also has grown.

**Historical Background**

The position of a secondary school athletic director originated well over 60 years ago, and the number of sports and participants has grown overwhelmingly since that time (Williams & Miller, 1983). What was once a program of few offerings and primarily for male students has expanded to the point that it would be difficult to find an evening during the school year without an activity taking place. William and Miller (1983) found the player to coach to administrator career path is often the one taken to become a secondary school athletic director. Zeigler (1979) suggested that, when an athletic director comes from only one of the areas of coach or administrator, it is possible they lack the knowledge in the other area and have a limited understanding of the overall position.
The need for a highly skilled athletic director has not always been such an issue. The early growth of high school sports began in New England private schools on a very low level in the early 1800s, while formal competition for boys began on the secondary level in the late 1890s in the state of Michigan (Stier & Schneider, 2001a). It was in the state of Michigan where the first athletic association was established. This historical step was taken in 1920 when the National Federation of State High School Athletic Association was established. Then, in 1969, the position of athletic director came into its own when the National Association for Sport and Physical Education created the National Council of Secondary School Athletic Directors (Stier & Schneider, 2001a). Although athletic directors can be found serving on many levels, the essential elements of the position remain the same. The formal training of athletic directors can be linked to the efforts of Dr. James G. Mason, who initiated the first program leading to a master’s degree in sport management/athletic administration at Ohio University in 1966 (Stier, 1999).

Hall and Bradwin (1989) conducted an investigation to determine whether individual states had any requirements for secondary school athletic administrators. At the time of this study, Oklahoma was the only state that had such standards; furthermore, 53% responded that there was no need for such requirements for high school athletic directors.

**Educational Leadership**

The topic of leadership has captured the attention of the lay person, as well as the researcher, for decades. While everyone in the work place has certain attributes they look for in their leader, the leader’s superiors may hold contrasting expectations. Leaders are
often viewed as those who influence the activities of the organization toward the achievement of the goal, and the ability to carry out responsibilities in an effective way is determined by demonstrated leadership behavior (Watkins & Rikard, 1991). Watkins and Rikard (1991) also investigated whether differences existed between the leader behavior of athletic directors, as they described them, and their behaviors, as described by their coaches and administrators. The findings of this study strongly indicated that coaches viewed the leader behavior of the athletic director different than those held by the athletic directors and administrators.

**Communication**

The term *leadership* often can have different meanings and be used when describing power, authority, management, administration, and supervision. However, in research the term is viewed on a more narrow perspective to better characterize the topic of study (Soucie, 1994). Educational leaders need to be good communicators because they continually interact with employees, parents, and students, as well as other members of the community. Leaders can generate more open communication by practicing deep listening skills, respecting others, not making assumptions, and voicing personal truths (Young, Edmonson, & Slate, 2010).

**Similar Traits of Athletic Administrator and Building Principal**

A study by Young et al. (2010) was conducted by interviewing secondary school principals across the country and generating results based on their findings. Their work explored the leadership traits of school administrators, as well as the impact the traits had on the administrator’s effectiveness. Those same characteristics were used to examine the effectiveness of the athletic administrator based on the opinions of secondary school
administrators. Researchers found the defining traits of an effective athletic administrator were the same as a building principal, with no differences.

Research in the field of athletic administration is limited. Riemer and Chelladurai (1995) pointed out that the absence of literature should be expected, since the lack of sustained research interest in sports leadership is in sharp contrast to the heated discussions in the media and among fans about athletic leadership. Certainly, a considerable gap exists between the importance assigned to athletic leadership and the effort to understand it.

**Organizational Effectiveness**

As noted in the case of leadership, no common definition of organizational effectiveness can be found. Chelladurai (1987) explained that the construct is a complex and controversial one, and it is therefore difficult to measure. The approach to assessing organizational effectiveness often presents the problem of deciding what or whose goals to examine. Organizations may have a set of goals that drive the operation, but the members may have goals of their own. This is why it often is difficult for a researcher to measure an organization’s effectiveness without incorporating the thoughts of all the stakeholders. Leaders are perceived to be the agents who determine the success or failure of an organization. In athletics, coaches’ and administrators’ jobs often are on the line for the lack of success, as they are held accountable through their power and influence over outcomes. Leadership is a continuous learning opportunity and can be rewarding, but the demands and expectations are high (Soucie, 1994).
Secondary School Athletic Administration

A closer examination of the individuals leading these programs seems appropriate with the growth of competitive sports in recent decades at the high school level. The research of Stier and Schneider (2002) examines the following questions:

- Exactly what kind of person is needed for such a position?
- What are the roles or expectations of the AD at the high school level?
- What type of person should assume the title and the responsibilities of Director of Interscholastic Athletics?

Findings indicate there was agreement between athletic directors and principals in terms of expectations for future athletic directors and specific qualities, attributes, and characteristics. Stier and Schneider (2002) also pointed out the importance of remembering that the fundamental elements of an athletic administrator’s position remain essentially the same regardless of the school size they serve, the geographic location, or even collegiate or secondary school level. The athletic director is looked upon for the direction of the program as well as overseeing each aspect or element of the athletic program.

Fatigue and Burnout

A successful and well run athletic program has the ability to boost spirit and raise the energy and enthusiasm in a school. Without detracting from the school mission, an athletic program can link the community to the school as well as provide leadership and experiences for athletes (Hoch, 2000). By adding teams and participants, the duties and responsibilities of the athletic director have increased. As teams and participation increases, so does the number of coaches, buses, officials, and schedules, causing the
budget to be stretched even further. Hoch’s (2000) research focused on understanding and assisting the athletic director. The increased demands on such a position were quickly validated. Today, the trend is to schedule and play more games, which means more hours, increased pressure, and more responsibility for crowd control. While programs develop, more parent communication is needed, along with fundraising and public relations efforts. Hoch (2000) also made some recommendations for principals to assist in preventing athletic director fatigue and burnout:

- Decrease their teaching load or make it a nonteaching position
- Provide office equipment to make athletic director tasks easier
- Increase athletic director’s salary
- Allow athletic director to work flexible hours
- Hire an administrative assistant for the athletic office
- Show appreciation
- Ask the AD what can be done to help them (p. 44-45)

**Strategic Planning**

Stier and Schneider (2001a) focused on the leadership traits of athletic directors as compared to other educational leaders. One particular leadership strategy that has dominated school administrators is strategic planning. Effective academic programs of a school should reflect the district’s strategic plan; and, likewise, this plan should be the guide for secondary school athletic administration as well. Planning is only the first step, while creating processes to implement the plan are equally vital. For example, the development of a school budget is one of the most critical areas for a school administrator that requires such a plan and process. Athletic programs often are one of
the first to be reviewed for cuts when budget considerations are made, which means this should be a focus of large importance for AD’s as well (Cohen, 2012).

The school environment provides continuous decision-making opportunities, some of which can place mounting pressure on the decision maker. The types of situations encountered by athletic directors are not unlike those faced by principals, while some of the problems require additional information to be able to take action. Others situations may be addressed by simply following policy. Some problems can be so complex that the lack of time for decision-making may cause a constraint in the process. Finally, administrators often are faced with situations where incomplete information exists, thus creating complexity and uncertain outcomes. As previously identified, it is important for the educational administrator to be a strong communicator because of those with whom they continually interact (Stier & Schneider, 2001a).

Stier and Schneider’s (2001b) comparison study was completed by interviewing secondary school principals across the country and generating results based on those findings. This work explored the leadership traits of school administrators, as well as the impact the traits had on the administrator’s effectiveness. Those same characteristics were used to examine the effectiveness of the athletic administrator based on the opinions of secondary school administrators. The study indicated the defining traits of an effective athletic administrator also were specific to a building principal. The fact that data was collected from only school principals, rather than a cross section of educational professionals, could be considered a limitation in this study.
Job Satisfaction

Case (2010) examined the nature and scope of school athletic administrators and their roles and responsibilities. The ways in which these responsibilities are accomplished has become an increasingly visible part of the education system. As a result, more pressure has been placed on the person responsible for the athletic department. According to Case (2010), athletic directors in Virginia are aware of this and view stress tolerance as their most important leadership task. The job of athletic director is so comprehensive and time consuming that the ability to be driven by personal motivation was one of the most necessary skills. Case chose to use a questionnaire to survey athletic administrators in the state of Virginia. Researchers have established that leaders influence climate and atmosphere through their attitudes and actions (Case, 2010). The quality of the atmosphere within the athletic department is an important consideration for principals, athletic directors, and superintendents, because both climate and leadership behavior are strongly associated with job satisfaction for educators. Furthermore, Case (2010) reported that athletic directors perceived themselves as having more interpersonal relationships with head coaches than the head coaches actually perceived. These differing perceptions lead to tension in working relationships between coaches and athletic directors. These tensions prevent the creation of a shared vision, which adversely impacts the climate of the organization.

Case (2010) also examined the impact that athletic directors had on the job satisfaction of coaches in their department. The researcher found significant differences in co-worker satisfaction between the male and female coaches. Athletic directors are vulnerable to feelings of isolation that can be caused by school district bureaucracy;
therefore, they need to find ways to overcome this isolation and establish a shared vision within the department that focuses on the overall mission of interscholastic athletics. Every athletic administrator position is different, with most being a reflection of the students and community served. Historically, physical education programs have served as a training ground for future administrators (Bryant, 2012). Over time, however, the athletic director’s position has developed into an administrator, and the one in this position is the primary person who ultimately determines the success or failure of the program.

Several traits have been analyzed concerning secondary athletics and the role of the athletic administrator. One such aspect was leadership, which included the examination of organization and planning, decision making and problem solving, communication, and evaluation. Further, education qualifications were evaluated, along with the high school principal’s expectations regarding the athletic administrator position. Although the general scope of the role of athletic director is similar across the country, the required credentials for such a position vary immensely from state to state (Bryant, 2012).

**Current Issues Facing Secondary School Athletic Administrators**

**Title IX**

Current athletic administrators are charged with providing equivalent opportunities for all student athletes, as a result of Title IX. This statute is of particular interest to schools who receive federal funding, because it requires balanced program offerings and expenditures regardless of gender. Many accredit the all-time high female
participation numbers in high school athletics to this landmark legislation (Stevens, 2012).

The Title IX statute, established in 1972, did not mention athletics and sex discrimination in athletics. Extracurricular activities surfaced as the proposed regulation came before Congress in 1974. Following published regulations, Congress heard testimony, fearing this would end college sports as they were known. The regulations, however, were revised and adopted on July 21, 1975, stating, “reasonable provisions regarding the nature of particular sports” (Bonnette, 2012, p. 3). High school and college athletic programs were granted an adjustment period until 1978 to comply with Title IX. Even though very few athletic programs receive federal funding, Congress later passed the Civil Rights Restoration Act in 1988, stating that all programs at an educational institution are covered by Title IX when any one program receives federal funding (Bonnette, 2012).

The Office of Civil Rights developed a three-part test, which remains today as a guide for athletic programs to measure the level of Title IX compliance.

- Test One – Provide male and female students with interscholastic participation opportunities at rates substantially proportionate to their respective rates of enrollment
  
  Or

- Test Two – Demonstrate a history and continuing practice of program expansion for the underrepresented sex

Or
• Offer every team for the underrepresented sex for which there is sufficient interest, ability, and competition in the school’s normal competitive region.

(Bonnette, 2012, p. 27)

Title IX applies to all types of athletic programs including interscholastic, intercollegiate, club, and intramural programs. Often misunderstood, Title IX does not require equal funding for boys’ and girls’ programs or teams, but it does require equivalent opportunities, benefits, and services for female and male students (Bonnette, 2012).

**Qualified Coaches**

Today, more than ever, schools are receiving coaching applicants from other professions for openings that occur each year in schools. Due to the current economic climate, it is rare for schools not to have annual coaching position vacancies. Athletic administrators are charged with pursuing a professional process when hiring those positions in schools (DiColo & Mitzel, 2012).

Expected to be the case across the United States, the percentage of coaches who are teachers in the state of Ohio is in decline (Austin, 2013). As more states are allowing non-teachers to coach, the number of applicants is increasing. The increase in applications, however, does not occur without obstacles for the athletic administrator. This new dynamic has created more responsibilities for administration, as they are now welcoming the non-teacher into the school environment (Austin, 2013). Schools have their own administrative policies often driven by state laws and district policies, thus charging athletic directors to be teachers of the non-teacher coach. This new generation of coach often has the expert knowledge of the sport but lacks the background of the
administrative side of coaching. Therefore, Austin identified the following topics to discuss with non-teacher coaches:

- Communication – The coach should know the athletic director will be contacting them daily.
- Arrival Time – Athletes are not allowed to be unsupervised. Coaches must adhere to practice and event schedule.
- Purchasing – Explain the process of seeking prior approval from the athletic director for all purchases.
- Paperwork – Paperwork must be properly maintained.
- School Policies – Provide a coaching handbook.
- Team Rules – Athletic director must review all team rules and ensure they coincide with school policy.
- Emergency Procedures – Educate coaches on school emergency procedures.

(Austin, 2013, p. 24, 26)

Although all these areas are of great importance, taking time to first welcome the new non-teacher coach into the school and making that individual feel valued as a staff member of the entire school community can serve as a catalyst in their professional development as an interscholastic coach (Austin, 2013).

**Equal Athletic Opportunities for Students with Disabilities**

One of the most pressing issues facing athletic departments in public schools today is assuring equal access to athletic activities for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities have the right, under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, to an equal opportunity to participate in their schools’ extracurricular activities, including club,
intramural, and interscholastic (U.S. Department of Education, 2013). A 2010 report by the U.S. Government Accountability Office found that many students with disabilities are not afforded an equal opportunity to participate in athletics and, therefore, may not have equitable access to the health and social benefits of athletic participation including socialization, improved teamwork and leadership skills, and fitness (U.S. Department of Education, 2013).

The Office of Civil Rights recently issued guidance detailing school districts’ legal obligations to provide students with disabilities equal access to athletics activities. The information provided clarified existing law and encouraged school districts to improve and expand upon athletic opportunities for students with disabilities.

- Under Section 504 regulations, a school district is required to provide a qualified student with a disability an opportunity to benefit from the schools district’s program equal to that of students without disabilities.
- A school district may not operate its program or activity on the basis of generalizations, assumptions, prejudices, or stereotypes about disability generally, or specific disabilities in particular.
- A school district is required to make reasonable modifications and provide those aids and services that are necessary to ensure an equal opportunity to participate.
- Students with disabilities who cannot participate in the school district’s existing extracurricular athletics program, even with reasonable modifications or aids and services, should still have an equal opportunity to receive the benefits of extracurricular athletics (U.S. Department of Education, 2013).
School administrators and athletic directors are now charged to work with students, families, community and advocacy organizations, athletic associations, and other interested parties to ensure that students with disabilities are provided an equal opportunity to participate in extracurricular athletics (U.S. Department of Education, 2013).

**Finance**

Millions of dollars are allocated to interscholastic athletics to support programs; however, with rising operation costs, programs essentially work with less funding (Forsythe, 2012). Few athletic administrators are prepared to deal with money issues from a budget and finance aspect unless they have had previous experience as a school administrator. This lack of experience is finding athletic administrators unable to make sound financial decisions, which in turn creates a more difficult process (Forsythe, 2012).

In a time of financial crisis, some public schools are eliminating athletic programs to reduce expenditures. Ironically, athletic programs, which are often thought of as the place in the school that teaches lifelong values, account for only one to two percent of a total district budget (Forsyth, 2012). The athletic administrator is the one often seeking ways to generate additional funds when budgets are reduced. Corporate sponsorships, booster clubs, and even athletes paying to play are becoming the norm for economic support as the cost of uniforms, equipment, and officials continues to rise (Forsythe, 2012). Thus, generating additional revenue is yet another responsibility the 21st century athletic administrator has to address.
Secondary School Athletic Administrator Certification

The National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA) was formed in 1977 to promote the professional growth of athletic administration by providing educational programs to the membership (NIAAA, 2012). Through the Leadership Training Institute (LTI) and the Certification Program, athletic administrators can obtain four levels of accredited certification from the NIAAA:

- Registered Athletic Administrator
- Registered Middle School Athletic Administrator
- Certified Athletic Administrator
- Certified Master Athletic Administrator

Training and certifications were developed to prepare athletic administrators to function more efficiently and professionally within the local school and community. Training in leadership offers what is best practice today and will better prepare the administrator to offer quality programs for students. Courses are designed to enhance the daily operations of the athletic department and improve the program and better the students, school, community, and professional organization. The certification process offers an opportunity for AD’s to continue a program of professional growth and development (NIAAA, 2012).

As mentioned earlier, the first sports management program was established in 1966; however, it was the mid-1980s when significant proliferation in curricular development was observed (Stier & Schneider, 2000a). In 1986 the National Association of Sport and Physical Education established a Sport Management Task Force to initiate the process of developing curricular guidelines for a rapidly expanding professional area.
The major goal of the Stier and Schneider study was to acquire credible and meaningful data concerning sport management undergraduate curricular content. This study involved surveying undergraduate program leaders, as well as practitioners working in 10 different areas of sport business. The researchers found significant differences between the respondents representing undergraduate programs and those representing all ten segments of the sport industry. These differences were evident in the degree to which the respondents felt the content areas should be part of the undergraduate professional preparation programs of future employees in the sport industry (Stier & Schneider, 2000a).

Undergraduate Content Areas:

- Socio-Cultural Dimensions in Sport
- Management and Leadership in Sport
- Ethics in Sport Management
- Marketing in Sport
- Communications in Sport
- Budget and Finance in Sport
- Legal Aspects of Sport
- Economics in Sport
- Venue and Event Management in Sport
- Governance in Sport
- Field Experience in Sport Management (Stier & Schneider, 2000a, p. 59)

A similar study was completed the same year by Schneider and Stier (2000), focusing on graduate sport management curriculum programs. Even though the
investigation was much like the one examining undergraduate curricular content, the results seem to support the suitability and appropriateness of almost all of the 10 content areas recommended for inclusion within the graduate curriculum for professional preparation programs in sport management (Schneider & Stier, 2000).

Graduate Content Areas:

- Socio-Cultural Dimensions in Sport
- Management and Leadership in Sport
- Ethics in Sport Management
- Marketing in Sport
- Communication in Sport
- Financial Management in Sport
- Legal Aspects of Sport
- Research in Sport
- Venue and Event Management in Sport
- Field Experience in Sport Management (Schneider & Stier, 2000, p. 140).

Recent Empirical Investigations

As the role and responsibilities of secondary school athletic administrators begin to be reviewed, the educational requirements for the profession also are being reviewed. Schneider and Stier (2001) examined the recommended educational requirements of high school athletic directors. The objective of their study was to determine the type of educational experiences that interscholastic athletic directors should possess, as recommended by their high school principals. When consideration is given to the overall impact of a secondary athletic program, today’s athletic director is a very important
position. Today, attention is given to qualities, competencies, and skills of those who assume this leadership role (Schneider & Stier, 2001).

The oversight of interscholastic athletic competition has developed into a complicated career requiring greater skills and training from the director. The researchers questioned high school principals to determine and recommend what they thought were the most appropriate informal and formal education for high school athletic directors. The method for this study was a national survey of principals from both public and private high schools. They were asked 19 questions relating to education and/or achievements. The respondents’ ratings also were gathered on proposed sport management core content areas recommended by the Sport Management Program Review Council. The majority of principals responded that an athletic director possessing a baccalaureate degree was important. Half the principals reported that possessing a master’s degree was important. Less than 3% of the principals surveyed felt that the athletic director needed to have administrative certification; however, 49% deemed professional reading on a consistent basis very important. The overall findings of the Schneider and Stier (2001) study indicated a need to inform and educate those high school principals about the value of course content areas designed for those individuals who assume the role of interscholastic athletic directors. Therefore, a difference was identified between the principal’s view on important educational factors for athletic administrators and those from colleges and universities who have established and endorsed the core content areas. Even though this study generated some great, as well as useful findings, it had some limitations. The data collected was solely from the opinions of high school principals, leaving the opinions of others undiscovered.
Much can be found on the traits of effective school leaders, as well as their roles and responsibilities. However, when that same research focus is applied to the arena of sports managers, it is unchartered ground with an opportunity for more research.

**Summary**

The primary focus of this literature review was the look at the overall perception, roles, and responsibilities of secondary school athletic administrators. Although the general scope of the role of athletic director is similar across the United States, the required credentials for such a position vary immensely between states. The athletic director position was originally created to improve the oversight of the increasing demands of operating an athletic program; however, the number of sports and participants were initially much smaller than reported today. The responsibilities assumed by athletic directors have increased exponentially, partly because of the tremendous growth in the number of sports being offered for both boys and girls, as well as the ever-increasing number of participants. Based upon these findings, a need exists for more highly trained, educated, and experienced interscholastic athletic administrators.

Researchers have revealed how the suggested roles and responsibilities are viewed by the athletic director. As secondary school athletic participation and the number of sport offerings have increased, so has the justification for more competent administrators who to oversee these programs. This review provided a number of important facts concerning athletics and athletic directors. In the 1970s the AD position went from a role of responsibility for daily operations to a more professional status. Since that time, state and national organizations have been developed to support this profession, serving as an avenue for networking as well as to deliver professional
development opportunities. In recent years the development of degrees and certifications in secondary athletic administration have surfaced, and eventually could serve as a framework for employment requirements for athletic administrators in the future. The core content recommended for a degree or certification includes socio-cultural dimensions, management and leadership, ethics, management, marketing, communications, budget and finance, legal aspects, economics, facility management, governance, and field management.

Overall, due to the limited publications on this topic, further research on the educational and certification requirements for effective interscholastic athletic administrators should be conducted. Also, the lack of uniformity across the nation regarding criteria used to seek and develop athletic directors raises some concern. This inconsistency in requirements also provides justification for future research to be conducted.
CHAPTER III: METHOD

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to highlight the educational and experiential qualifications, of secondary school athletic administrators. Also, the researcher wanted to identify topics of growing importance in interscholastic athletics. This chapter outlines the research methodology of the study, beginning with a description of the participants and how they were selected. The study’s research design is explained with specific details as well as the pilot study used to confirm the reliability of the instrument and to validate the data collected. To measure the general research questions, attention is drawn to specific data analysis.

An unpublished survey was developed to measure certain demographic information, state requirements, and pressing issues current athletic administrators face (see Appendix F). State executive directors/liaisons of the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association were surveyed by means of an electronic questionnaire administered through SurveyMonkey.com, which included questions regarding the demographics of individual state athletic programs and the educational requirements of the administrator who leads those programs. These questions were designed to rate identified issues that currently present challenges to athletic administrators. The central research question was as follows:

Research Question: What are the employment requirements and pressing issues for secondary school athletic administrators within the United States, and how do they vary from state to state?
Participants

For this study, 51 participants (secondary school athletic administrators) were selected based on their standing and position as a NIAAA state director/liaison. Required research prospectus materials were submitted February 2, 2013, to the Western Kentucky University Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval. The IRB approval was granted February 6, 2013, with no known risks to participants (see Appendix A).

Subjects were selected based on their membership within the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA) and their standing office within their respective state athletic administrative organization.

The NIAAA enhances and promotes educational values of interscholastic athletics through the professional development of its members in the areas of education, leadership, and service. This professional organization has a working relationship with state athletic administrator and state and national athletic/activity associations. The duties of a state executive director/liaison of the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association include, but are not limited to, serving as their state athletic director association’s highest ranking leader and representing that state in the NIAAA organization. These administrators act as the voice of their individual states on the national level pertaining to secondary school athletic administration. Likewise, these executive directors/liaisons communicate national information back to their respective states. The 51 state executive directors/liaisons, including the District of Columbia, were selected for this study because of their knowledge of their respective state’s interscholastic athletic programs and demographic information.
Measures

An unpublished, 14 question survey was developed to collect data electronically and was administered through Survey Monkey. Each question was designed to gather data that would provide the necessary information to answer the following empirical questions:

Empirical Question 1: What state organization is the governing body for secondary school athletics?

Empirical Question 2: Are there required “sports administration” academic preparation programs?

Empirical Question 3: Are there any state employment requirements for athletic administrators?

Empirical Question 4: Do states require any continued education for athletic administrators?

Empirical Question 5: What are the demographic profiles of present athletic administrators?

Empirical Question 6: What are the topics of growing importance to interscholastic athletics?

The NIAAA endorsed the questionnaire and distributed the survey link from the NIAAA office in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Pilot Study

Prior to administering a pilot survey, each question was examined by experts in the field to assess the content validity through item analysis. The following individuals were to assess question validity selected based on their knowledge of secondary school
athletic administration: the Executive Director of the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association, Associate Executive Director of the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association, Commissioner of the Kentucky High School Athletic Association, and Executive Director of the Kentucky High School Athletic Administrators Association. These professionals were asked to review each of the questions and provide feedback based on their interpretation of the question’s strength and clarity.

Another purpose of the pilot survey was to assess each question for a measure of validity and reliability. A test-retest was conducted to assess question construct for validity and reliability. The researcher selected 26 athletic directors in Kentucky to participate in this pilot survey. Following the research approval from the WKU Institutional Review Board, an initial email was sent to the pilot group requesting their help completing the pilot survey. The correspondence explained in detail that the selected group of Kentucky athletic directors would be receiving an email seeking their participation in an online pilot survey regarding secondary school athletic administration. Furthermore, it was disclosed that the survey was designed to be administered to state executive directors/liaisons. The researcher clearly stated that their participation would assist in providing validity and reliability for the research instrument. The following week, a web-link accessing the pilot survey instrument was emailed to the selected group of athletic directors (see Appendix C). After two weeks the survey was resent to the pilot group as a method to check the validity and reliability of each question.
Research Design

A correlational design will be used to describe the statistical association between variables. The researcher chose to assign the respondents to one of three groups based on the size of interscholastic athletic participation in each state. The design allowed the researcher to assess any association between secondary school athletic administrator requirements, demographic profiles, and pressing issues based on the size of student athlete participation.

By identifying a range of educational and experiential qualifications required of athletic administrators across the United States, the researcher would be able to provide needed information to state departments of education and/or state athletic associations to allow them to internally assess their own high school athletic director qualifications. The intent of this study was to present a detailed picture of different state requirements, rather than to question any one particular model.

Procedures

The research process was initiated by first filing an application requesting approval of investigation from the WKU Institutional Review Board. Once approval was granted, the data collection process was begun. Subjects were first contacted by email from the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association office seeking their participation in an online survey and responding with answers that best depicted the demographics of athletic administrators in the state for which they serve as executive director/liaison (see Appendices D & E). The participants were sent a second email from the NIAAA office providing the Informed Consent document and the link to the electronic survey instrument administered through SurveyMonkey.com (see Appendix F).
Participants were asked to read the Informed Consent prior to proceeding to the survey, as it explained the research and survey in detail, as well as the intended use of the data collected (see Appendix B). Once they elected to participate, subjects were directed to Question #1 on the survey to confirm they had read the Informed Consent and were choosing to participate in this survey.

**Data Analysis**

The general research question is addressed through the six empirical questions, which served as focus points in the initial design of the survey. Each item on the survey instrument relates back to at least one of these empirical questions. As an example, survey items asked what governing body in each state oversees secondary school athletic administration, the academic requirements for secondary school athletic administrators, and profiles of current athletic directors. The data from these items gave the researcher a general idea of the various administrative structures across the United States, as well as other information to be used in a comparative analysis with the data collected.

Part two of the survey instrument collects data focusing on current issues facing secondary athletic administrators. Ten areas were initially determined as pressing issues and were used in this portion of the survey. Participants were asked to reply by rating each topic based on its perception in their state. This Likert scale data was used to perform a comparison analysis with the demographic data collected from the first part of the survey. The comparison analysis allowed the researcher to review the data for any trends that may be present between states of similar size in student participation, as well as the number of sports offered.

This chapter has explained the research methods within this study including
participants, survey instrument, research design, procedures, procedures, and data analysis. The following chapter will analyze the results from the data collection process.
CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to highlight the educational and experiential qualifications for secondary school athletic administrators, as well as to identify topics of growing importance to interscholastic athletics. The central research question for this study was: What are the employment requirements and pressing issues for secondary school athletic administrators within the United States, and how they do vary from state to state? More specifically, there are six research questions that address the central question:

1. What state organization is the governing body for secondary school athletics?
2. Are there required “sports administration” academic preparation programs?
3. Are there any state employment requirements for athletic administrators?
4. Do states require any continued education for athletic administrators?
5. What are the demographic profiles of present athletic administrators?
6. What are the topics of growing importance to interscholastic athletics?

Using the SAS 9.3 software program, data were analyzed for the number of participating athletes, athletic administrator requirements, and pressing issues in athletic administration. The data and findings of this study are presented in this chapter. First, the descriptive data are reported, including the number of interscholastic athletes in each state, the demographic profiles and requirements of athletic administrators across the United States, and current pressing issues for athletic administrators. Second, the means and statistical analysis procedures are discussed to answer the six research questions of the study.
Characteristics of the Population

Fifty-one subjects (representing all 50 states and the District of Columbia) were selected to participate in this study based on their standing as a secondary school athletic administrator and their position as a National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA) state director/liaison. Forty-four NIAAA state directors/liaisons chose to respond to the survey.

The backgrounds of the participating interscholastic administrators ranged from those who represented a state with as few as 54 high schools in the state athletic association to as high as 1,527. Participants represented states with as few as 275 to as many as 757,850 student athletes (see Table 1). Furthermore, the demographic analysis revealed that the participants represented states that offered as few as 8 and as many as 32 male and female sanctioned sports (see Table 2).

Table 1

Demographics of member schools and student athletes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>( N )</th>
<th>( M )</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of member schools in each state</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>381.65</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>1,527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of student athletes in state</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>93,335.18</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>757,850</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2

Demographics of sanctioned female and male interscholastic sports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>( N )</th>
<th>( M )</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of female sports</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>13.02</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of male sports</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>12.77</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results of the Data Analysis

Research Question One

The first research question for this study was: What state organization is the governing body for secondary school athletics? The survey instrument contained one question that corresponded to the governing body of secondary school athletics. Participant responses followed multiple choice items ranging from (1) state government, (2) state department of education, (3) state athletic/activity association, (4) state athletic association within the state department of education, and (5) other.

A frequency analysis procedure was used to answer this research question. The results for Question One revealed 84.09% of the respondents reported that the state athletic/activity association is the governing body for secondary school athletics in their state. Furthermore, 11.36% reported that their state athletic association was governed within the state department of education. These two organizational structures together made up 95.45% of the responses (see Table 3). Therefore, based upon the data reported, the trend for state oversight of secondary school athletics is the sole responsibility of the state athletic associations.

Table 3
Demographics of governing bodies of secondary school athletics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State athletic/activity association</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>84.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletic association within the state department of education</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Question Two

The second research question for this study was: Are there required “sports administration” academic preparation programs? The survey instrument contained two questions that corresponded to academic preparation programs required for secondary school athletic administrators. Participants were first asked, “Does your state require athletic administrators to have any of the following certifications?” Responses were based on multiple choice items ranging from (1) teaching certification, (2) school administrator/educational leadership certification, (3) NIAAA certification, (4) does not require any certification, and (5) other. Second, participants were asked, “Does your state recognize NIAAA certification for salary increases?” The response choices were either (1) yes or (2) no.

A frequency analysis procedure was used to answer the second research question. The results for Research Question Two, survey question #1 (“Are there required “Sports Administration” academic preparation programs?”) showed that 19 of 43 states require athletic administrators to hold teaching certificates, and 18 of the remaining states require no certification (see Table 4.1). Therefore, based upon the data reported, 25 respondents (58.13%) indicated that some level of educational certification was required for secondary school athletic administrators. The results of Question Two (“Does your state recognize NIAAA certification for a salary increase?”) revealed 43 of the 44 (97.73%) participants indicated their state does not recognize NIAAA certification for a salary increase (see Table 4.2).
Table 4.1

Demographics of required certifications for secondary school athletic administrators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching certification</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>44.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School administrator/educational leadership certification</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIAAA certification</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not require any certification</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>41.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE. Seven respondents used the “Other” category to expand on their initial response, hence causing the frequency to exceed 44.

Table 4.2

States that recognize National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association certification for a salary increase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>97.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Question Three

The third research question for this study was: Are there any state employment requirements for athletic administrators? The survey instrument contained two questions that corresponded to state employment requirements for athletic administrators.

Participants were first asked, “What are the minimal educational requirements for a high school athletic administrator in your state?” Participants were asked to choose from the following multiple choice items: (1) none, (2) high school diploma, (3) 60+ college credit hours, (4) bachelor’s degree, (5) master’s degree, and (6) other. A frequency analysis procedure was used to determine that 52.27% of all participating states reported that a bachelor’s degree was the minimal educational requirement for
athletic administrators in their state (see Table 5.1). Therefore, based upon the data received, the majority of respondents (25 of 44) indicated that their states required a college degree (either bachelor’s or master’s degree).

Second, respondents were asked, “Does your state recognize a master’s degree in sport administration for a rank change/salary increase?” The response choices were either (1) yes or (2) no. A frequency analysis procedure was used to determine that 65.91% of the respondents’ states did not recognize a master’s degree in sports administration for a rank change/salary increase (see Table 5.2). Consequently, in a comparison of Tables 5.1 and 5.2, the majority of states (56.85%) require a college degree; however, only two states (4.55%) recognize a master’s degree in sports administration for a rank change/salary increase.

Table 5.1

Demographics of the minimal educational requirements for a secondary school athletic administrator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school diploma</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>52.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s degree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.2

States that recognize a master’s degree in sports administration for a rank change/salary increase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>34.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>65.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Question Four

The forth research question was: Do states require continued education for athletic administrators? The survey instrument contained one question that corresponded to any required continued education for athletic administrators. Participants responded by answering either (1) yes or (2) no. A frequency analysis revealed 29 (65.91%) of the states responding do not require any continued education/professional development for athletic administrators (see Table 6).

Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>65.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Question Five

The fifth research question was: What are the demographic profiles of present athletic administrators? The survey instrument contained one question that corresponded to the demographic profiles of the present athletic administrator. Considering that athletic administrators have multiple responsibilities and job descriptions, participants were given combinations of job responsibilities most commonly held by athletic administrators: (1) athletic administrator only, (2) athletic director/district responsibilities, (3) school administrator/athletic director, (4) athletic director/coach, (5) teacher/athletic director, or (6) teacher/coach/athletic director. Based on their best estimate, participants were asked to reflect as close as possible the overall number of
individuals assigned as athletic administrators in their state. A frequency distribution revealed 22.58% of all athletic administrators also teach and coach. Furthermore, 22.40% of athletic administrators serve as a school administrator as well (see Table 7).

Therefore, based upon the data collected, 84.93% indicated athletic administrators across the United States have multiple job responsibilities along with serving as an athletic administrator.

Table 7

| Demographics of common job combinations of secondary school athletic administrators |
|------------------------------------------|------|------|
| Responses                               | N    | %    |
| Athletic administrator only             | 40   | 15.07|
| Athletic administrator/district responsibilities | 40   | 6.21 |
| School administrator/athletic director  | 40   | 22.40|
| Athletic director/coach                 | 40   | 15.03|
| Teacher/athletic director               | 40   | 18.71|
| Teacher/coach/athletic director         | 40   | 22.58|
| Total                                    | 100  | 100.00|

Research Question Six

The sixth research question was: What are the topics of growing importance to interscholastic athletics? According to experts in the field, a number of topics have been identified nationally as of growing importance to interscholastic athletics. Therefore, this survey contained 10 pressing issues currently faced by athletic administrators: (1) ensuring awareness in athletes of the dangers associated with hazing/bullying, (2) obtaining new resources to offset athletic budget shortfalls, (3) increasing the awareness in athletic programs as to the influence of social media on interscholastic athletics, (4) ensuring that all athletic programs are in compliance with Title IX regulatory guidelines, (5) ensuring that students with disabilities consistently have opportunities to participate in athletics equal to those of other students, (6) ensuring that all athletic staff receive
appropriate and ongoing safety training, (7) having emergency management plans in place that ensure public safety at athletic events, (8) increasing the role of state association’s oversight in middle school athletics, (9) elimination of athletic participation fee (i.e., “pay to play”), and (10) putting in place guidelines that help ensure only qualified and well-screened personnel are hired as athletic staff. Using a five-point Likert-type scale, participants were asked to respond to each of the pressing issues by rating its importance in their state: (1) not at all important, (2) somewhat important, (3) neutral, (4) important, and (5) very important. To better understand the impact of these issues, the researcher grouped the participants into three groups based on the number of student athletes in their state (small = 1-7,000; medium = 7,001-84,000; large = 84,001+). An Analysis Of Variance (ANOVA) was performed on each of the 10 issues to determine if differences in ratings existed between the groups. No significant differences in ratings were found for any of the 10 issues. Furthermore, the analysis revealed the level of importance of each topic was consistent across the three groups (see Tables 8.1 – 8.10).

### Table 8.1

**Ensuring awareness in athletes of the dangers associated with hazing/bullying**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Small</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Large</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 8.2

**Obtaining new resources to offset athletic budget shortfalls**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Small</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Large</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8.3  
*Increasing the awareness in athletic programs as to the influence of social media on interscholastic athletics*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Small</th>
<th></th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th></th>
<th>Large</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.4  
*Ensuring that all athletic programs are in compliance with Title IX regulatory guidelines*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Small</th>
<th></th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th></th>
<th>Large</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.5  
*Ensuring that students with disabilities consistently have opportunities to participate in athletics equal to those of other students*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Small</th>
<th></th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th></th>
<th>Large</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.6  
*Ensuring that all athletic staff receive appropriate and ongoing safety training*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Small</th>
<th></th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th></th>
<th>Large</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.7  
*Having emergency management plans in place that ensure public safety at athletic events*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Small</th>
<th></th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th></th>
<th>Large</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8.8

*Increasing role of state association's oversight in middle school athletics*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Small</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Large</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.9

*Elimination of athletic participation fees (i.e., “pay to play”)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Small</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Large</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.10

*Putting in place guidelines that help ensure only qualified and well-screened personnel are hired as athletic staff*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Small</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Large</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Groups are based on the number of athletes in the state. Small = 1-7,000; Medium = 7,001-84,000; Large = 84,001+.

**Summary**

These findings were based on the six research questions regarding the employment requirements and pressing issues for secondary school athletic administrators within the United States and how they vary from state to state. Descriptive statistics were used to assess a comprehensive view of the United States and what state organizations are the governing bodies for secondary school athletics. Also, assessed were academic preparations, employment requirements for athletic administrators, demographic profiles of present athletic administrators, and current topics of growing importance to interscholastic athletics. A series of frequency analyses were
used to assess the various state departments of education and athletic/activity associations. It is the author’s intent that this data would enhance the professional integrity of athletic administrators within their respective states. Chapter V will discuss these findings, draw conclusions, and make recommendations for future study.
CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

This chapter presents a summary of the purpose, research design, and procedures as well as a discussion of the findings of this study. The researcher also addresses the limitations of the study and recommendations for future research.

The purpose of this study was to highlight the educational and experiential qualifications for secondary school athletic administrators, as well as identifying topics of growing importance to interscholastic athletics. The central research question for this study was: What are the employment requirements and pressing issues for secondary school athletic administration within the United States and how they vary from state to state? Specifically six research questions addressed the central question:

1. What state organization is the governing body for secondary school athletics?
2. Are there required “Sport Administration” academic preparation programs?
3. Are there any state employment requirements for Athletic Administrators?
4. Do states require any continued education for Athletic Administrators?
5. What are the demographic profiles of present Athletic Administrators?
6. What are the topics of growing importance to interscholastic athletics?

A correlational design was used to describe the statistical association between variables. The instrument used was an unpublished survey developed to measure certain demographic information, state requirements, and pressing issues current athletic administrators face. Data were descriptive in nature and analyzed using SAS 9.3 software program. The final number of participants represented 44 of the 51 states including the District of Columbia.
Discussion of Results

Research Question One

The first research question for this study was: What state organization is the governing body for secondary school athletics? The findings of this study revealed the majority of secondary school athletic/activity associations in the United States operate independently from other governing bodies within the state. This overwhelming trend of independence allows the focus to be on the mission and goals of interscholastic athletics without the input of other outside governing agencies.

Research Question Two

The second research question was: Are there required “Sport Administration” academic preparation programs? The results revealed no trend regarding any certification requirements for secondary school athletic administrators. Even though 44.18% of the respondents report that their state requires athletic administrators to hold a teaching certificate, 41.86% do not require any certification. The National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association offers various levels of athletic administrator certifications to aid in the professional development for its members. The NIAAA certification process has been developed around a vigorous curriculum, including specific courses designed to educate secondary school athletic/activity directors in their responsibilities. However, even with this available resource, only one state of 44 responded that their state recognizes the NIAAA certification for a salary increase.
Research Question Three

The third research question was: Are there any state requirements for athletic administrators? The findings of this study revealed that the majority of states responding do require secondary school athletic administrators to hold a minimum of a bachelor’s degree. It is worth noting that, if an athletic administrator were to hold a master’s degree in sports administration, only 34.09% of the states reporting would recognize that degree for rank change/salary increase. Again, the researcher finds it troubling that, in a time where higher education and professional degrees are at the highest level in history, less than half the states in the country fail to see the importance of highly qualified secondary school athletic administrators.

Research Question Four

The forth research question was: Do states require any continued education for athletic administrators? Findings revealed that minimal attention is given to the importance of continued education/professional development for secondary school athletic administrators. One of the 10 pressing issues facing athletic directors today is “ensuring that all athletic staff receive appropriate and ongoing safety training.” The researcher finds it interesting that the same level of professional growth has not reached a point of concern regarding the continued education for the administrative leadership of athletic programs.

Research Question Five

The fifth research question was: What are the demographic profiles of present athletic administrators? Results revealed an overwhelming majority of secondary school athletic administrators in the United States have other job responsibilities combined with
athletic administrator duties. It is interesting to note that, as the demands on athletic
directors continue to increase, including the pressing issues that have been discussed, the
multi-tasking athletic director continues to be the trend. Only 15.07% of all athletic
directors in the country have the sole responsibility of the oversight of the athletic
program. While presently there is a clear student to teacher ratio in schools, it is evident
a similar correlation does not exist for secondary school athletic administrators.
Considering that the number of participating interscholastic athletes in the United States
has increased for 23 consecutive years, the researcher notes the lack of attention given to
athletic administrators. As the number of participants rise, the amount of events, budgets,
coaching staffs, and liability increases as well. Failing to recognize the responsibilities,
as well as time associated with an increase in participation, is a detriment to secondary
school athletic administrators.

**Research Question Six**

The sixth research question was: What are the topics of growing importance to
interscholastic athletics? The findings revealed that 8 of the 10 pressing issues were
viewed as “important” or “very important” by all participants. Topics ranging from the
dangers associated with hazing/bullying, Title IX compliance, budget shortfalls, and
emergency management plans all received equal importance across the United States
regardless of the number of participants in the state.

**Conclusion**

The purpose of this study was to highlight the educational and experiential
qualifications for secondary school athletic administrators, as well as identify topics of
growing importance to interscholastic athletics. The results of the data revealed a large
majority of state athletic/activity associations serve as the governing body of secondary school athletics. A frequency distribution showed that less than 50% of states have no required certifications for athletic administrators to serve in that capacity; however, over 50% require a bachelor’s degree, and only 34.09% recognize a master’s degree in sports administration for a rank change/salary increase. While considering that the majority of states require athletic administrators to have a college degree, only 22.73% require any continued education/professional development. Regarding the job description of the athletic administrator, 44.98% have other duties outside the athletic office. Finally, no significant differences were found between states when using the number of student athletes in each state as a comparison to the current pressing issues faced by athletic administrators.

Even though the responsibilities of a secondary school athletic administrator have increased over time, and the expectations for such a position have risen to the level of school principals, the recognition of the importance of professionally trained athletic directors is certainly in need of development. The findings of this study add to the existing literature and research on secondary school athletic administration, and the opportunities to expand the research on this topic are endless.

**Limitations**

Some limitations should be acknowledged while interpreting the results of this research. First, the data collected was gathered from only one representative from each state. The participants were asked to respond to the survey based on how each answer best depicted their state relative to their professional knowledge as a state director/liaison for the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association. This limitation
offers a margin of error considering the size of some states and the knowledge level of the respondents. Even though the participants are the highest ranking athletic administrator in their state, several survey questions requested responses that may have required some research on their part.

Finally, designing a survey to gather data nationally from individual states can be a challenge. Each state’s secondary school athletic/activity association operates independently, which results in a broad range of organizational structures and professional terms used in the field of interscholastic athletics. These differences could have possibly caused confusion when participants were responding to a survey designed to gather data from across the United States.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

Based on the results of this study, the researcher presents three recommendations. First, the results reveal a deficiency in educational requirements for secondary school athletic administrators. Although 23 (52.27%) states report that a bachelor’s degree is required of athletic directors, 10 (22.73%) report no educational requirements are needed. Furthermore, 29 (65.91%) do not recognize a master’s degree in sports administration for a rank change/salary increase. Further study is recommended on the reason states are failing to address the value of enhancing educational requirements for secondary school athletic administrators and/or the need of NIAAA certification.

This research reveals that continued education/professional development for secondary school athletic administrators has received minimal attention. Twenty-nine (65.91%) states reported that no continued education/professional development is
required for athletic directors. Further research is needed to examine the effect of continued education/professional development on the athletic director’s job performance.

Finally, the results of this study indicate 15.07% of secondary school athletic administrators in the United States serve exclusively in that role with no other additional responsibilities. Conversely, 84.93% of secondary school athletic directors have multiple duties outside the realm of athletic administration. Additional studies are recommended to investigate the overall success of secondary school athletic programs that are directed by a full-time athletic administrator, as compared to those directed by an athletic administrator with multiple responsibilities.
REFERENCES


Appendix A: Institutional Review Board Approval

DATE: February 6, 2013
TO: Christopher Gaddis
FROM: Western Kentucky University (WKU) IRB

PROJECT TITLE: [412294-2] Secondary School Athletic Administrators: State Overights and Requirements for Athletic Directors
REFERENCE #: IRB 13-200
SUBMISSION TYPE: Continuing Review/Progress Report

ACTION: APPROVED
APPROVAL DATE: February 6, 2013
EXPIRATION DATE: May 6, 2013
REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review

Thank you for your submission of Continuing Review/Progress Report materials for this project. The Western Kentucky University (WKU) IRB has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a project design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

This submission has received Expedited Review based on the applicable federal regulation.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the project and insurance of participant understanding followed by an implied consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the project via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require each participant receive a copy of the consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this office prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All UNANTICIPATED PROBLEMS involving risks to subjects or others and SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported promptly to this office. Please use the appropriate reporting forms for this procedure. All FDA and sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed.

All NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this project must be reported promptly to this office.

This project has been determined to be a Minimal Risk project. Based on the risks, this project requires continuing review by this committee on an annual basis. Please use the appropriate forms for this procedure. Your documentation for continuing review must be received with sufficient time for review and continued approval before the expiration date of May 6, 2013.
Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of three years after the completion of the project.

If you have any questions, please contact Paul Mooney at (270) 745-2129 or irb@wku.edu. Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within Western Kentucky University (WKU) IRB’s records.
Appendix B: Informed Consent

INFORMED CONSENT

Project Title: Secondary School Athletic Administration Certification: State Oversights and Requirements for Athletic Directors

Investigator: Christopher Gaddis, Western Kentucky University Doctoral Student
270-929-1493
christopher.gaddis422@topper.wku.edu

You are being asked to participate in a project conducted through Western Kentucky University. The University requires that you give your signed agreement to participate in this project.

The investigator will explain to you in detail the purpose of the project, the procedures to be used, and the potential benefits and possible risks of participation. You may ask him/her any questions you have to help you understand the project. A basic explanation of the project is written below. Please read this explanation and discuss with the researcher any questions you may have.

If you then decide to participate in this research, please select “Yes I have read the Informed Consent and choose to participate” on the first item of the survey.

1. Nature and Purpose of the Project:

The purpose of the study is to highlight the qualifications, both educational and experiential, for secondary school athletic administrators. By identifying these qualifications, the researcher hopes to provide information to each State Department of Education and/or Athletic Association so they can self-assess their own high school athletic director qualifications. The intent of this study is to present a detailed picture of the different states’ requirements, but not to question any one particular model.

2. Explanation of Procedures:

Subjects participating in this research will be asked to answer series of questions on a brief survey, which is designed to gather demographic data, educational practices, and job requirements of athletic administrators in their state. Furthermore, participants will be asked to rate a number of topics that have been identified as of growing importance to interscholastic athletics.

3. Discomfort and Risks:

There are no known discomforts or risks to subjects participating in this survey.

WKU IRB# 13-200
Approval - 2/6/2013
End Date - 5/13/2013
Expedited
Original - 2/6/2013
4. **Benefits:**

By conducting this study, evidence will be provided that can be used to measure requirements to enhance the professional integrity of athletic administrators across the United States. It is the researcher’s intention to provide information as an initial step for further research.

5. **Confidentiality:**

Information received from this survey will be restricted for research purposes only, however since school names and States are requested as part of the demographic data, there will be identifiable information exposed. The intent of this study is to present a detailed picture of the different states’ requirements and pressing issues in athletic administration, but not to question any one particular model. The data obtained from this research will be analyzed and used exclusively for a doctoral dissertation and follow up presentations. All data obtained from this research will be secured in the office of Dr. Randy Deere, Western Kentucky University (Smith Stadium-East 1039), for three years prior to being destroyed.

6. **Refusal/Withdrawal:**

Refusal to participate in this study will have no effect on any future services you may be entitled to from the University. Anyone who agrees to participate in this study is free to withdraw from the study at any time with no penalty.

**Your continued cooperation with the research implies your consent.**

THE DATED APPROVAL ON THIS CONSENT FORM INDICATES THAT
THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY
THE WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
Paul Mooney, Human Protections Administrator
TELEPHONE: (270) 745-2129

WKU IRB# 13-200
Approval - 2/6/2013
End Date - 5/13/2013
Expedited
Original - 2/6/2013
### Secondary School Athletic Administration

**Athletic Administration Survey**

Kentucky High School Athletic Directors:

You are being asked to participate in the following (Pilot Survey) because you serve as an Athletic Director in the state of Kentucky. The researcher is interested in gathering demographic data in the area of secondary school athletic administration. As a professional in this field, your input is very valuable to this study, as well as validating this survey instrument and its reliability. Please respond to this survey to the best of your knowledge from a state level perspective. This is a pilot survey which is designed for state level administrators and the researcher understands you serve as an Athletic Director on the school level, which may prohibit accurate responses to all of the questions.

Thank you for taking time to complete this survey.

**1. “INFORMED CONSENT”**

- Yes, I understand that it is not possible to identify all potential risks in an experimental procedure, and believe that reasonable safeguards have been taken to minimize both the known and potential but unknown risk. Furthermore, I have read the “Informed Consent” and choose to participate in this survey.
- No, I choose not to participate in this survey.

**2. What high school in Kentucky do you serve as the Athletic Director?**


**3. What state organization is the governing body for secondary school athletics in your state?**

- State Government
- State Department of Education
- State Athletic/Activity Association
- State Athletic Association within the State Department of Education
- Other (please specify)

**4. How many high schools are members of your state athletic/activity association?**


**5. How many MALE sports are sanctioned by your state's high school athletic/activity association?**


Secondary School Athletic Administration

6. How many FEMALE sports are sanctioned by your state's high school athletic/activity association?
   
7. How many individual student athletes participate in at least one sport sanctioned by your state’s high school athletic/activity association? (please only count each student once)
   
8. What are the minimal educational requirements for a high school Athletic Administrator in your state?
   - None
   - High School Diploma
   - 60+ college credit hours
   - Bachelor's Degree
   - Master's Degree
   - Other (please specify)

9. Does your state require Athletic Administrators to have any of the following certifications? (check all that apply)
   - Teaching Certification
   - School Administrator/Educational Leadership Certification
   - NIAAA Certification
   - Does not require any certification
   - Other (please specify)

10. Does your state recognize a Master's Degree in Sports Administration for a rank change/salary increase?
    - Yes
    - No

11. Does your state recognize NIAAA certification for a salary increase?
    - Yes
    - No
Secondary School Athletic Administration

12. Does your state require any continued education/professional development for Athletic Administrators?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Other (please specify)

13. Athletic Administrators have multiple responsibilities and job descriptions. Below are some of the most common job combinations held by Athletic Administrators. Look over this list and provide your best estimate of the approximate number of individuals, in your state, within each category. The total number should reflect as close as possible the overall number of individuals assigned as Athletic Administrators in your state.

   - Athletic Administrator only
   - Athletic Director/District Responsibilities
   - School Administrator/Athletic Director
   - Athletic Director/Coach
   - Teacher/Athletic Director
   - Teacher/Coach/Athletic Director
**14. Notwithstanding the issues above, a number of other topics have been identified nationally, as of growing importance to interscholastic athletics. For each topic below indicate the how importance the topic is for your state. (1=Low Importance, 6=High Importance). If the topic is not applicable to your state, circle N/A.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ensuring awareness in athletes of the dangers associated with Hazing/Bullying.</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>High</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Obtaining new resources to offset athletic budget shortfall.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing the awareness in athletic programs as to the influence of social media on interscholastic athletics.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensuring that all athletic programs are in compliance with Title IX regulatory guidelines.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensuring that students with disabilities consistently have opportunities to participate in athletics equal to those of other students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensuring that all athletic staff receives appropriate and ongoing safety training.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having emergency management plans in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place that ensures public safety at athletic events.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing the role of state association's oversight of middle school athletics.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elimination athletic participation fees (i.e., &quot;pay to play&quot;).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putting in place guidelines that help ensure only qualified and well-screened personnel are hired as athletic staff.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D: NIAAA Letter of Endorsement

The NIAAA office has been working with a doctoral student at Western Kentucky University who is conducting a research project on interscholastic athletic administration. We will be sending an email to you from our office next week requesting your participation in a survey. You have been selected to participate because of the position you serve with the NIAAA. As a professional in the field, your input will be valuable to this study and your feedback will assist in developing a detailed picture of the requirements in each state for athletic administration, as well as current issues facing our profession.

The NIAAA will receive a copy of the survey results and we will share those results with you as the administrators of your state associations.

Bruce Whitehead, CMAA
9100 Keystone Crossing, Suite 650
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317-587-1450
Appendix E: NIAAA Letter of Endorsement

State Liaisons,

In few days you will receive an invitation to participate in a research study being conducted by Mr. Chris Gaddis, district athletic director at Owensboro (Kentucky) Public Schools. The topic of the survey instrument is the general requirements to serve as an athletic director in each state. Chris is involved in dissertation work at Western Kentucky University. We highly encourage your participation in completing the survey information, as we believe it will benefit not only Mr. Gaddis research, but prove beneficial to the NIAAA and its members as well.

Only State Liaisons and Executive Directors are being included in this research effort. Thank you for your involvement.

Take care.

Mike

Mike Blackburn, CMAA
Associate Executive Director
National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association
9100 Keystone Crossing, Suite 650
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317-587-1450
Fax 317-587-1451
mblackburn@niaaa.org
www.niaaa.org
# Appendix F: Survey

## Secondary School Athletic Administration

### Athletic Administration Survey

Executive Directors and State Liaisons:

You are being asked to participate in the following survey because you serve as the NIAAA Executive Director or Liaison in your state. The researcher is interested in gathering demographic data in the area of secondary school athletic administration. As a professional in this field, your input is very valuable to this study and your feedback will assist in providing a detailed picture of the different state’s requirements for athletic administrators.

Thank you for taking time to complete this survey.

### 1. "INFORMED CONSENT"

- [ ] Yes, I understand that it is not possible to identify all potential risks in an experimental procedure, and believe that reasonable safeguards have been taken to minimize both the known and potential but unknown risks. Furthermore, I have read the "Informed Consent" and choose to participate in this survey.
- [ ] No, I choose not to participate in this survey.

### 2. What state do you serve as the "Executive Director"/"State Liaison" for the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA)?

### 3. What state organization is the governing body for secondary school athletics in your state?

- [ ] State Government
- [ ] State Department of Education
- [ ] State Athletic/Activity Association
- [ ] State Athletic Association within the State Department of Education
- [ ] Other (please specify)

### 4. How many high schools are members of your state athletic/activity association?

### 5. How many MALE sports are sanctioned by your state's high school athletic/activity association?

### 6. How many FEMALE sports are sanctioned by your state's high school athletic/activity association?
Secondary School Athletic Administration

7. How many individual student athletes participate in at least one sport sanctioned by your state's high school athletic/activity association? (please only count each student once)


8. What are the minimal educational requirements for a high school Athletic Administrator in your state?

- None
- High School Diploma
- 60+ college credit hours
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- Other (please specify)


9. Does your state require Athletic Administrators to have any of the following certifications? (check all that apply)

- Teaching Certification
- School Administrator/Educational Leadership Certification
- NIAAA Certification
- Does not require any certification
- Other (please specify)


10. Does your state recognize a Master's Degree in Sports Administration for a rank change/salary increase?

- Yes
- No


11. Does your state recognize NIAAA certification for a salary increase?

- Yes
- No
**12.** Does your state require any continued education/professional development for Athletic Administrators?

- Yes
- No
- Other (please specify) ____________________________

**13.** Athletic Administrators have multiple responsibilities and job descriptions. Below are some of the most common job combinations held by Athletic Administrators. Look over this list and provide your best estimate of the approximate number of individuals, in your state, within each category. The total number should reflect as close as possible the overall number of individuals assigned as Athletic Administrators in your state.

- Athletic Administrator
- Athletic Director/District Responsibilities
- School Administrator/Athletic Director
- Athletic Director/Coach
- Teacher/Athletic Director
- Teacher/Coach/Athletic Director
- Teacher/Director
- Coach/Athletic Director
- Teacher/Director
**Secondary School Athletic Administration**

*14. Notwithstanding the issues above, a number of other topics have been identified nationally, as of growing importance to interscholastic athletics. For each topic below indicate how importance the topic is for your state. (1=Not At All Important, 2=Somewhat Important, 3=Neutral, 4=Important, 5=Very Important) N/A=Topic is not applicable to your state.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Not At All Important</th>
<th>Somewhat Important</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ensuring awareness in athletes of the dangers associated with Hazing/Bullying.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtaining new resources to offset athletic budget shortfalls.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing the awareness in athletic programs as to the influence of social media on interscholastic athletes.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensuring that all athletic programs are in compliance with Title IX regulatory guidelines.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensuring that students with disabilities consistently have opportunities to participate in athletics equal to those of other students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensuring that all athletic staff receives appropriate and ongoing safety training.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having emergency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary School Athletic Administration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management plans in place that ensures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>public safety at athletic events.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing the role of state association's</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oversight in middle school athletics.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elimination athletic participation fees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i.e., “pay to play”).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putting in place guidelines that help</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ensure only qualified and well-screened</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>personnel are hired as athletic staff.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>