



August 16, 2020

This week's message to the members is provided by WADA President Elect, Nathan DeLany, CMAA, AD at Marshfield High School.

WADA Members,

This letter/note is written in two parts to reflect before and after the WIAA Board of Control.

August 12, 2020

Next Up! Can you remember the number of times you have said or heard this phrase in the sports world? Maybe we have taken this philosophy too far with our athletes, students, communities, and state. During the pandemic of our lifetime, we are next up and sometimes next up after that. In many districts and communities, there is no immediate replacement for us. Education based athletics has been thrust into the regional and state political landscape with no definitive outcome, landing, or path for a smooth return. We, the person behind the curtain, are being thrust to the front of the room with microphones in place to provide information and answers that are often mere educated guesses. But we do it, because if there is one thing the pandemic has taught us, some information about progress, current direction, and the items you don't have answers to is what our communities are wanting to hear.

Hopefully, we understand the importance of our role and voice in our district and communities. All of us are planning for schools and seasons, with forward thinking, contingency plans (not just 1 or 2, maybe 5 or 6), and providing the most important piece, HOPE. This is not "A New Hope" at the beginning of some successful sci-fi trilogy, this is genuine hope for our students and coaches to return to their passions. This planning process has possibly brought many closer with their district level administration and particularly one's Superintendent. I am sure you have found the process full of uncomfortable discussions, along with occasions where we find ourselves out of our lane. But we are planners and problem solvers, it is what we do under all conditions. Prepare, plan, alter original plans and repeat. However, as our relationship with our district administration continues to grow, we are finding it is important to have well thought out plans for others to digest. District Administrators will have the information and tools when decisions need to be made at the district, conference, and state levels. Develop your relationship and plan to ensure you have a voice at the table to ensure you unify all decisions, because this fall will continue to test us all.

The reason for my date at the top of this note has to do with my intent to finish this letter after the WIAA Board of Control meeting on Friday. We greatly appreciate the feedback and engagement we have received in our most recent WADA survey, but also throughout the spring and summer in meetings, round tables, and surveys. The continued support and collaboration shows all of us the importance of these mediums to connect and find valuable information. The most recent WIAA Board of Control meeting broadcast had over 3000 live viewers and 14,000 total views to date, I think Friday will likely surpass those numbers, but time will tell. I/We thank the WIAA Board and Staff for this opportunity. The WIAA Board, Executive Staff and WADA Board continue to collaborate to serve our memberships in providing as close to real time information as possible.

August 15, 2020

If you are like me, you have not fully digested yesterday's WIAA Board of Control Meeting. But as I continue to digest the information, I have talked with many of you about the positive direction we are now going with our education-based athletic offerings. We have flexibility with local control that many were asking for and I believe there will be further flexibility to come to ensure we are making meaningful contacts with our student-athletes.

After yesterday's meeting, Green Bay, Appleton, La Crosse, and Oshkosh schools took advantage of the new fall window and postponed the fall seasons until March. Today the Eau Claire School District followed. There are still many decisions to make within your districts and conferences because all seasons have changed, not just fall.

As your fall decisions are made over the coming days, please remember winter and spring athletes need you to show your support and understanding for their new calendars as well. While the path forward has dates, there are still things (school, sports, activities, club influence) we will navigate together with our coaches, families, students, and communities. Show your empathy, professionalism, respect, understanding and open mind for all stakeholders to experience. This is not an easy ask, but it is a necessary one to ensure you are able to accurately articulate your direction and rationale. These are extraordinary times and your leadership is vital to your school, community, conference, and state. WADA will continue to provide many resources at www.gowada.org under COVID-19 resources and I encourage you to share your work with us to share with all. #WeAreInThisTogether

Lastly, make sure to take care of yourself emotionally, physically, and mentally. We perform at our best when we are completely focused on the opportunities in front of us.

Be Well.

Nathan DeLany, CMAA

WADA President-Elect

ITEMS of INTEREST

1. [WADA Survey Results](#) - thanks to all of you that completed the survey and helped us inform the WIAA and Board of Control. The results show the spectrum of perspectives and challenges we are all working to navigate and I think also showed the distinct themes of needing definite guidelines so we as ADs can begin planning and communicating to make the best of the situation in our school and community. We identified the metric they used for the determination of a completed season and made clear the need for flexibility and desire for the most options for all schools to be able to administer education based athletics for all. Look for an additional survey this week regarding contact days during the school year and tournament options as those items will be returning to the Board agenda for further discussion and consideration.

2. Please remember to check out gowada.org for regular updates and resources. This week's highlight resource is our Quick [Links Mentoring Program](#) resource page. See item #5 of this newsletter for why this resource is an important one for our members. If you would like to share resources or templates we would love to have your submissions, please email to Eric Plitzuweit, eplitzuweit@basd.k12.wi.us

3. WADA Board/District Reps Updates:

District 1 - Mary Schradle-Mau, Turtle Lake - With options becoming much clearer after the Board of Control meeting last week, ADs are now working with their school leaders trying to find the best course of action for moving forward with fall sports. The most common theme in the north is "we will play until we can't." Spring weather can be dicey for us well into April, so most schools will try to get as much play in this fall as possible. We now anxiously await an announcement from DHS and hope that it won't change the plans we're making.

District 2 - Brian Margelofsky, CAA, Northland Pines - Following the announcement by the WIAA on Friday, conferences and AD's will be cleaning up shortened winter and spring schedules. Some conferences may

even choose to utilize the alternative fall schedule, and will start their planning accordingly. AD's are reminded to visit the WIAA COVID-19 Games Wanted. With some sports beginning today, many are encouraged to have our student-athletes back in action in our buildings.

District 3 - Jim Langkamp, Baraboo - Schools are starting to have discussions about whether they will play fall sports as planned, or move to the spring. [Here is an article](#) from the La Crosse Tribune that gives a brief update.

District 4 - Kathy Bates, CMAA, Appleton Xavier - After the WIAA Board of Control meeting on Friday, August 14, district schools are making the decision whether to play fall sports in the fall or in the spring. Some conferences had previously decided to play conference only opponents, but now are finding that some of the conference schools are opting for the spring dates for fall sports. MUch uncertainty currently for our district and the entire state. We plan to hold a district zoom meeting in either late August or early September so we can get a clear picture of decisions our district has made. Watch your email for that zoom meeting invite. In the meantime, stay safe, wash your hands, and wear a mask!

District 5 - Brittany Spencer Grant, CMAA, New Glarus - I'm looking to develop a [professional development list of reading materials](#) (books, articles, etc). These could be aimed at students, coaches, administrations, parents, etc. If you have a suggested read, please consider adding it to the Google Sheet linked above. A few books already on the list are: Grit, How to Be an Antiracist, Lead...For God'Sake, Stamped, The Captain Class, UThrive and White Fragility. I'm hoping to make this a great resource!

District 6- Eric Plitzuweit, CAA, Burlington - Districts and conferences across the state now have some guidance from the WIAA Board of Control on Friday. Meetings in the next week will be focused on deciding whether to keep to the fall schedule or develop schedules to create opportunities for student athletes in the newly created spring season. As athletic directors and school districts ultimately make these local decisions, please make sure to reach out to each other with any questions or concerns that you might have. Just as Dr. Tim McGuine pointed out the importance of or return to play for student athletes and their mental health, please make sure that we are all also taking care of yourself and each other!

District 7- Michelle Guyant-Holloway, Wauwatosa East - A zoom meeting will be set up for the end of the month to discuss the status of everyone after the August BoC meeting this past Friday. Stay alert for an email coming sometime soon with that information. Good luck to everyone as we move forward!

4. [August 11, 2020](#) WADA Board Meeting Minutes

The next WADA Board meeting is scheduled for Sunday August 23, 2020.

Feel free to contact your District Rep with any items you would like brought to the Board to discuss.

5. [2020 New Athletic Directors](#) - **WE NEED YOUR HELP!!** As of August 14 we have 83 AD's new to their schools - WOW!! This represents over a 20% change for schools in the AD position in Wisconsin high schools headed into the 2020-21 school year. One of WADA's main purposes is to "**Provide ongoing mentoring, networking and support for WADA members.**" WADA is currently looking for mentors for many of our "new" AD's. These mentor assignments are arranged by our [WADA District Gender Reps](#). If you are interested in being a mentor please reach out to your district gender rep and let them know you are willing to serve as a mentor and help our "new" AD's survive and hopefully enjoy their AD experience.

6. **From our WIAA Liaison, Tom Shafranski:**

Are you looking for a cause for your high school teams to be a part of? Something positive to help turn the tide of this pandemic? How about getting your high school teams to join in the WIAA's social media campaign #TeamUpToBeatCOVID!

Your school teams can simply post this hashtag on their own social media accounts to get started. Then, post photos of student-athletes and/or coaches wearing masks, social distancing during practice, taking precautions in anyway or put a mask on the logo of your school and post it.

Additionally, if any coach, school administrator or school is looking for graphics, they are available on the WIAA website under SCHOOLS & PROMOTIONAL RESOURCES. Please feel free to contact Megan Loken, WIAA Graphic Designer & Social Media Specialist, for further information.

Together we can #TeamUpToBeatCOVID!

Stay well and wear a mask,

Tom Shafranski, CAA
Assistant Director

7. Message from Dave Anderson, WIAA Executive Director:

It's been another busy week. Exhausting for you all, as well as my staff. And as you might expect, the office and staff have been flooded with questions and reactions since the Board wrapped up work today.

So this week's note will be brief – just a couple quick things.

First, I want to acknowledge the extensive help of those Doctors and other health care professionals who volunteer to help and to selflessly serve this membership. They are a phenomenal resource to this membership. We are grateful to them for their help and review of the return to fall guidance that they and our sport executives collaborated on to give to you. Not many states have the caliber of Sport Med's team that the WIAA is able to call upon – and call "friends". I want to acknowledge their work to you. My apologies that we were not able to get it to you before now.

Second, I hope it has been apparent to those of you who may have viewed these past two Board meetings that the Board and staff have been looking for as many ways to create and provide opportunities for our members and the students you serve, in order to preserve the hope of seeing some interscholastic events able to be provided. Today's agenda included relief measures "A through O" and as I pointed out to the Board, these are our initial thoughts on various things that we hope might help and make sense. There is no roadmap for this. All I can say is that the intentions of the Board and staff are sincere.

I do want to make you aware that in closed session the Board asked that letter "O" in that list, "Coaching Contact Days" would be brought back to the September Board agenda for some additional discussion and consideration. We will put it back on the agenda and see where that discussion leads.

Best of All Success in the coming days.

Let us know how we can help.

Keep Well,

Dave Anderson

The next WIAA Board of Control meeting is scheduled for Sept 18 @ 1 pm.