

## Hazing in high schools pervasive, study finds

PORTLAND, Maine - Authors of an ambitious survey of hazing in colleges and universities have turned their attention to high schools and discovered that many freshmen arrive on campus with experience - with 47 percent reporting getting hazed in high school. As in college, high school hazing pervaded groups from sports teams to the yearbook staff and performing arts, according to professors Elizabeth Allan and Mary Madden of the University of Maine's College of Education and Human Development.

The hazing included activities from silly stunts to drinking games, with 8 percent of the students drinking to the point of getting sick or passing out, they said. Just like college students, high schoolers are susceptible to getting swept up in group activities and doing things they might not otherwise do, the authors said. "That group dynamic can lead to the escalation where you have the hazing that's been reported in the news, some horrendous incidents," Madden said. The professors' findings suggest that little has changed since the last major survey of hazing in American high school in 2000. That survey, led by Norm Pollard at Alfred University, indicated that 48 percent of high schoolers belonging to school groups were hazed.

While lack of any significant improvement is bad enough, the nature of hazing has become more dangerous and destructive, some educators say. "We're still having hazing incidents in this country in high schools. They're getting more brutal. They're getting more sexual. And they're being pushed down into middle schools," said Elliot Hopkins of the National Federation of State High School Associations.

Allan and Madden previously reported on college hazing using a survey of 11,480 students at 53 colleges and universities. The result was the biggest study of hazing in higher education to date, said Pollard, who served as an advisor. This time, the professors tapped the same pool of participants to explore what happened to them before their arrival on college campuses.

Allan and Madden found the highest rates of hazing was among members of sports teams (47 percent), ROTC (46 percent), and bands and performing arts organizations (34 percent). The average for other school organizations was 20 percent, the researchers reported. Hazing-related activities included being required to associate only with the peer group (28 percent), singing or chanting in public (21 percent), verbal abuse (19 percent), sleep deprivation (12 percent), and getting a tattoo or piercing (12 percent), they said. Twelve percent of the survey's respondents participated in a drinking game.

The psychological harm from hazing can follow into students' relationships, marriages, parenting and workplace, Pollard said. "It's not just 'boys being boys'. It teaches impressionable young adults about power, control, humiliation and how you treat other individuals," he said. Allan and Madden say they were disturbed to learn that hazing is taking a back seat as high school administrators focus on bullying.

Bullies do not want the victim to be part of their group, and their goal is to humiliate, ostracize and degrade to make themselves feel bigger and better, Madden said. Hazing is different because it involves a group dynamic and coercion. "The coercion can be subtle, but it's powerful," Allan said. "You have these really nice people who are generally reasonable kids making sound decisions for the most part. And then all of the sudden they're swept up in this group dynamic - it contributes to impairing judgment."

*By David Sharp, Bangor Daily News, April 16, 2009*

## Augusta middle school changes on table

AUGUSTA, Maine - All but two middle school sports could become intramural-only as part of the closure of Hodgkins Middle School. The Augusta Board of Education's Curriculum and Education Committee agreed Monday night to forward a proposal to switch most middle school sports from the current interscholastic - in which they compete against students from other schools - to intramural - in which they'll compete against fellow students from the same school. The Board of Education voted in March to close Hodgkins and send its seventh- and eighth-grade students to Cony High School. As part of the transition, school administrators proposed changing most middle school sports to intramural as a cost-saving measure. The first reading of the change goes to the full Board of Education Wednesday. Two readings are required for approval. Track and cross-country running would remain interscholastic as these sports generally wouldn't have enough participants within the school to form teams for intramurals. Athletic Director Paul Vachon noted participation in many middle school sports is dwindling, as students in sports such as basketball compete on travel teams outside of school. Superintendent Cornelia Brown said changing middle school sports to intramural sports could save \$20,000 in reduced stipends for coaches and travel expenses to away games. The school budget approved by the Board of Education last month already includes that \$20,000 cut. - *By Keith Edwards, Kennebec Journal, April 7, 2009*

## Former Deering coaches cleared

The Cumberland County district attorney has dropped charges against two former Deering High School assistant baseball coaches accused of furnishing a place for minors to consume alcohol. Christopher Grant and Michael D'Andrea Jr. were indicted by a grand jury in September, in connection with a team party at the home of a third former assistant coach on June 22, 2008, hours after Deering won the Class A baseball championship. Early last month, Cumberland County District Attorney Stephanie Anderson signed off on the dismissal of both charges. The charge against Grant was dismissed as a result of cooperation by the defendant, while the charge against D'Andrea was dropped due to insufficient evidence, according to documents signed by Anderson. "I can tell you that they cooperated with the investigation, but I was more concerned with the conviction in regards to the homeowners (Frank and Kimberly Watson) and the parents," Anderson said Wednesday. "(Grant's and D'Andrea's) culpability was not as strong as it was for the homeowners." D'Andrea, 22, could not be reached for comment. His lawyer, William McKinley of Troubh Heisler in Portland, said: "Mike was not the owner of the property where the party was held; he was a guest. I viewed that as no different than if I got invited to a neighbor's house and there were minors there drinking. But Michael took the matter very seriously, and knows that (underage drinking) is a huge problem." Deering administrators began an investigation following reports of photographs from the party that circulated on the Internet. The investigation led to the resignation of head coach Mike D'Andrea and the dismissals of Watson, Grant and Michael D'Andrea Jr. last summer. Frank and Kimberly Watson pleaded guilty Feb. 23 to furnishing a place for minors to consume alcohol. - *By Rachel Lenzi, Portland Press Herald, April 9, 2009*

## New plan halts shift to intramurals

AUGUSTA, Maine - Middle school students are losing their own school when Hodgkins closes, but probably not their competitive sports. The Board of Education rejected a proposal to make all but two middle school sports intramural-only. Instead, administrators including Athletic Director Paul Vachon are working on a new plan to cut the number of teams in each sport to one. That one team would compete against other schools. If more students try out for a sport than can be accommodated on a single team, Vachon said, the school would organize intramural squads to play against each other. Vachon said students on the intramural teams could be evaluated by coaches regularly, giving them a chance to make the competitive team. "We want to make sure every kid gets a chance to compete," Vachon said. "This gives us an opportunity to cut back on some coaching stipends and still have a competitive program." The school budget approved by the Board of Education last month already includes a \$20,000 cut, savings that Superintendent Cornelia Brown said could result from changing middle school sports to intramurals. Vachon and board member Nathanael Rende said the new plan maintaining competitive sports, but at a reduced number of teams, can also save that \$20,000. Currently, some sports have two teams: one each for the seventh- and eighth-grades. Vachon said most other local middle schools don't have two teams, so it can be a challenge to find schools to play against Augusta's middle school teams. Board members Tuesday unanimously approved the first reading - two readings are required for adoption - of the new plan, to keep competitive middle school sports but reduce all competitive sports to one team each. The change would start next school year. - *By Keith Edwards, Kennebec Journal, April 10, 2009*

## Sickels earns state honor

When Craig Sickels was in fourth grade, he went to Mt. Blue High School boys basketball games and sat right behind the Cougar bench to watch the players and coach Bob Lahey. "I wanted to be where the action was," Sickels said. Now the athletic director at Freeport High School, Sickels was recently named the Bob Lahey Maine Athletic Administrator of the Year by the Maine Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (MIAAA) at their annual spring conference. Lahey was the executive director of the MIAAA when Sickels became athletic director at Buckfield High School in 1984, and Sickels said Lahey was one of his mentors. "My parents both knew (Lahey)," Sickels said. "He was probably the founding father of the MIAAA." Sickels also was awarded the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators' State Award of Merit, awarded annually to one athletic director from each state. Sickels estimated he's been nominated for the Bob Lahey Award "eight or nine times." "You always hope you win, but it's a nice surprise when you do," Sickels said. "It's a nice honor, but it's not why you do the job." Sickels graduated from Springfield College in 1982 and earned a Master's degree from Biscayne College in Miami before becoming the athletic director and boys basketball coach at Buckfield. Sickels coached the Bucks to the Class D state title in 1992. Sickels has been the athletic director at Freeport for the last 15 years. He recently stepped down as boys basketball coach at the school, but will remain athletic director. Sickels coached Freeport to the Western Class B championship game in 2008. Sickels sees athletics as an important part of the school experience. Along with classroom teaching, school should prepare students for life, Sickels said. "I think athletics fits that perfectly." - *By Travis Lazarczyk, Morning Sentinel, April 15, 2009*

## 100-Yard penalty on players' parents

As the 13-year-old girls chased the soccer ball around the verdant field Sunday, one set of parents watched from the sidelines in comfy collapsible chairs, sipping coffee. The others were banished to a nearby hill, straining to see the action with binoculars. The parents rooting for Bethesda's Legacy travel team at the Maryland SoccerPlex in Boyds were being punished for behavior at the end of last season, when a referee was berated for a call. Saying their actions were "nothing less than egregious," the Washington Area Girls Soccer League took the unusual step of banning them from the sidelines for two games, and a referee made sure they stayed back. The soccer league, home to many of the area's best soccer players with 600 teams and more than 15,000 participants, has a strict disciplinary system, in which players and coaches receive yellow or red cards for rough or unsportsmanlike conduct. Some have to explain themselves at disciplinary hearings. There are also sportsmanship liaisons on each team, who are supposed to keep fellow parents in check. Kathie Diapoulis, league president, said the parents had gone too far. "We have taken a strong stance," Diapoulis said. "It's important. This isn't the World Cup...And for the parents to be shrieking on the sidelines and belittling people goes against everything we're trying to do...It's not acceptable behavior." The league's disciplinary committee ruled that the Bethesda parents had violated the league's code of conduct - which asks parents to refrain from questioning referees' calls - through "egregious" behavior that "has no place in youth sports." They ruled that the parents could not be on the sidelines for the first two games of this season. "It's embarrassing," one of the parents said. "This is seventh-grade soccer." - *By Annie Gowen, The Washington Post, April 21, 2009*

## Kennebunk will fill AD post by welcoming home Nilsen

Thor Nilsen, the longtime athletic director in the Southern Maine Activities Association (SMAA), is returning as the athletic director at Kennebunk High School. Nilsen, 61, will replace Marty Ryan, who is retiring at the end of the school year. This will be Nilsen's fourth job at an SMAA school. He worked previously as an AD at Windham, Noble and South Portland, along with Yarmouth of the Western Maine Conference. For the past three years, Nilsen has been athletic director and head of the wellness department at Bedford (N.H.) High School. Nilsen's desire to work closer to home - he and his wife live in Scarborough - coincided with the opening at Kennebunk. "Kennebunk has a strong tradition in sports," said Nilsen. "Marty Ryan has established a solid program and my goal will be to continue where he leaves off." Nilsen said he thought four years ago he had retired as an athletic director. After two years at Yarmouth High, he needed back surgery. Prior to working at Yarmouth, Nilsen had spent 13 years at South Portland High. During his recovery from surgery, Nilsen discovered he missed the daily interaction with students and faculty and the excitement of high school sports. "I enjoy working more than ever," he said. "I missed athletics when I was recuperating and the positive type of environment that you don't find in other professions. I thoroughly enjoy what I do. I know the hours are long, but that's the nature of the job, which I accept without question." "I've known Thor for over 20 years," said Ryan. "He's an outstanding athletic director and I'm sure he'll have a lot of success with the athletic program here at Kennebunk." - *By Tom Chard, MaineToday.com, April 22, 2009*

## 'Little league elbow' caused by overuse

WASHINGTON - U.S. orthopedic surgeons warn children can suffer injury from throwing too many baseball pitches. Members of the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons (AAOS) say one such injury has become so common among children, many health professionals refer to it as "little league elbow." "Little league has become a very popular sport among children today," Dr. Donald J. Zoltan - an orthopedic surgeon in Wisconsin specializing in sports medicine and a spokesman for the AAOS - said in a statement. "Coaches and parents need to remember that a child's bones, muscles, ligaments and tendons are still growing, making them more susceptible to injury, especially from overuse." To avoid injury from excessive pitching, doctors recommend that coaches: 1) Follow guidelines on the number of innings that can be pitched, usually a maximum of four to 10 innings a week as specified by the league. 2) Keep track of the number of pitches thrown by an individual player. While there is no concrete guideline, a reasonable number is 80 to 100 pitches as the maximum in a game and 30 to 40 pitches in a practice. 3) Remove any child with persistent pain from the game or practice until the pain subsides. - *United Press International, April 25, 2009*

## Events

### **Bowdoin College Coaching Clinic**

**May 17, 2009**

**10:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.**

*A free clinic for Maine high school and youth coaches*

Bowdoin College is proud to announce the first annual Polar Bear Coaches Clinic. Keynote speakers, Steve Nickerson and Tony Faulkner, established their organization, *Provelop Your Game* in April of 2008 after four years of research and some impressive results regarding the identification and management of leadership and decision making abilities in athletes. To bring even greater value to the day, twenty members of the Bowdoin College athletic staff will lead breakout sessions on a wide variety of topics, both sports specific and general. A full list of topics are listed on the Bowdoin website at <http://athletics.bowdoin.edu/>. *The clinic is open to anyone who coaches high school or middle school age children in Maine. Attendees may register at the door or online by visiting <http://athletics.bowdoin.edu/sports/general/2009coachclinic>. Those who register online will be entered into a raffle for two tickets to the Red Sox game vs. Baltimore on July 26, 2009.*

### **Acadian Running Camp**

**July 26-29, 2009**

*First Annual Running Camp for High School Students*

The running community of MDI (Eden Athletics and Crow Athletics) along with Saucony welcome high school students who will be in grades 9 -12 next fall to join the Acadian Running Camp for 4 days of running on the carriage trails of Acadia National Park. We will traverse amongst the most scenic trails in the country and reside at Smuggler's Den Campground. All levels of runners are encouraged to attend and will be divided into training groups according to fitness level. Regardless of experience and fitness, each camper will be pushed by our experienced coaching staff to develop as a runner. *For more information and/or to request a registration form contact OJ Logue, camp director, at [ojlogue@gmail.com](mailto:ojlogue@gmail.com).*

For more information about the *Sports Done Right* initiative visit  
[www.sportsdoneright.org](http://www.sportsdoneright.org) or call 1-866-767-8540

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