

## Four districts earn *Sports Done Right* standing

ORONO, Maine – Four more communities are now recognized as official *Sports Done Right* school communities, joining eight other school districts and six parks and recreation departments that already share this distinction.

Cape Elizabeth School Department, Cape Elizabeth Community Services, Scarborough School Department, Scarborough Community Services, and the Auburn School Department received unanimous approval for *Sports Done Right* accreditation from the *Sports Done Right* Board of Directors on Monday.

“The school department and community services in both Scarborough and Cape Elizabeth serve as outstanding examples of the power of community partnerships,” said Karen Hawkes, director of the Maine Center for Sport and Coaching (MCSC), which is the headquarters for the *Sports Done Right* program. “In both communities, the partnerships have led to increased athletic and leadership opportunities for students of all ages. Furthermore, the partnerships have ensured a consistent athletic philosophy throughout the community.”

*Sports Done Right* serves as a guide for schools and youth sports organizations to identify strengths in sports programs as well as areas of potential concern. The intent of the program is to generate local discussions about the overall sports program while forming local partnerships to ensure students are offered a healthy and positive sports experience.

The Auburn School Department first became involved in the *Sports Done Right* program in 2005, in partnership with Lewiston Public Schools, as a *Sports Done Right* pilot site. Since then, Auburn has been using *Sports Done Right* to educate parents, coaches and student-athletes about appropriate behavior and sportsmanship.

“Auburn has done an excellent job informing parents of the school’s expectations and the *Sports Done Right* program,” said Hawkes. “Over the course of four years, Auburn has remained committed to the *Sports Done Right* philosophy.”

The Board of Directors also granted *Sports Done Right* endorsement to Vinalhaven School, making Vinalhaven the first school community in Maine to receive such a standing. The Board of Directors noted that Vinalhaven School has demonstrated a commitment to student leadership and engagement while using the principles of *Sports Done Right* to assist in shaping athletic policy and procedure. The *Sports Done Right* endorsement process was launched in November 2008 and serves as the first level of recognition.

*Sports Done Right* was co-founded in June 2003 by Robert A. Cobb, former Dean of the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Maine, and J. Duke Albanese, co-executive director for the Great Schools Partnership at the Mitchell Institute and former Maine Commissioner of Education. More information is available by calling the MCSC at (207) 581-2443 or online at [www.sportsdoneright.org](http://www.sportsdoneright.org).

*UMaine News Release, June 9, 2009*  
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## Scholastic programs are feeling the pinch

MIAMI (AP) - Across the country this spring, the recession has taken its toll on high school athletic programs. As states and school districts have tried to shore up their budgets, Florida has taken some of the most drastic steps. The Florida High School Athletic Association is considering sweeping, two-year schedule changes with all sports except football canceling some matches, meets or games. The changes were approved earlier this year, but officials backed off the plan, saying they would take it up again at a later date. When the fall season starts, many young athletes will feel the effects of cost-cutting measures. A high school football coach in Washington said he would have tattered uniforms patched instead of requesting new jerseys. A Virginia school district is exploring transportation plans in which teams would share buses. And throughout California, which faces a grim financial situation, districts are bracing for cuts that could devastate entire programs. Bob Kanaby, executive director of the National Federation of State High School Associations, said a handful of other states had also made across-the-board changes to help districts cope with the financial climate. For example, New York has shortened its sports schedules, and in Maine, fewer schools will be allowed to compete in the state playoffs. “Certainly in these economic times, we want to try and draw balance and perspective between educational experiences for young people and the realization that our nation is in a serious economic situation,” Kanaby said. “So there is concern, and there is action being done.” Since the economy tumbled, programs have found themselves on the chopping block and districts are asking students to chip in and help cover the costs. In California, some high schools have eliminated coaching stipends and decided they will ask students and parents to contribute donations. Officials with the Kent (Wash.) School District will cut \$110,000 in athletic funding, which is still an improvement from the original proposal of \$760,000 in reductions. Some high school coaches at Mohawk High School in Oregon worked without pay this spring. And because of statewide financing cuts, Santa Fe (N.M.) Public Schools were considering switching middle school athletic programs to a club-team format. - *By The Associated Press, The New York Times, June 14, 2009*

## Florida parents sue over gender discrimination

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (AP) - A group of parents sued the Florida High School Athletic Association, alleging that a new scheduling rule designed to save money discriminates against female student-athletes. The lawsuit was filed in federal court in Jacksonville by six Florida parents on behalf of their minor daughters. The parents took issue with the FHSAA’s new policy, which would cut the number of varsity games in sports, according to the court documents. Football is exempt from the policy change, and the parents, who are members of a group Florida Parents for Athletic Equality, believe that violates the Title IX federal law mandating equal opportunities for female athletes, the documents state. Earlier this year, FHSAA board of directors voted to cut the number of varsity games by 20% and all other play by 40% through the 2010-11 school year. The rule change was developed as a way to cut costs for Florida high school athletic departments, which are facing tough budget constraints. “If you’re going to make cuts, you have to do it in an equitable way. The most surprising thing is that this wasn’t considered before,” said Nancy Hogshead-Makar, who is representing the group in the suit. When reached about the lawsuit earlier in the week, FHSAA spokeswoman Cristina Alvarez said in an email that the organization would have no comment. - *By The Associated Press, USA Today, June 16, 2009*

## Football coach shot

DES MOINES, Iowa (Reuters) - A high school football coach in the midwestern United States whose team became a symbol of recovery from a deadly 2008 tornado was shot and killed. A suspect was in custody after Ed Thomas was shot in the head in the Aplington-Parkersburg high school’s weight-training room and airlifted to a hospital where he died, said officials with the school and Butler County in Iowa. Some students witnessed the attack but none were hurt. The suspect was not identified and the motive was not immediately known. “It was a senseless act in our community this morning,” school superintendent Jon Thompson said. A tornado struck Parkersburg and nearby New Hartford on May 25, 2008, killing eight people and damaging the high school and flattening hundreds of homes. Thomas, the football team’s long-time coach, spearheaded the rebuilding and the two-time state champions resumed play on their new field in September, which was widely reported as a morale boost for the community’s 1,900 residents. Four graduates of the school play in the National Football League. The NFL named Thomas its high school coach of the year in 2005. - *Reporting by Kay Henderson; Writing by Andrew Stern; Editing by John O’Callaghan, Reuters, June 24, 2009*

# Congratulations

On June 8, 2009 the Maine Center for Sport and Coaching Board of Directors granted *Sports Done Right* accreditation to:

Auburn School Department  
Cape Elizabeth Community Services  
Cape Elizabeth School Department  
Scarborough Community Services  
Scarborough School Department

and *Sports Done Right* endorsement to:

Vinalhaven School (MSAD #8)

The Board of the Directors and the MCSC would like to thank each school community for their efforts and dedication to the *Sports Done Right* program. Your work is making a difference. Congratulations!

## In summer, kids need real play time

Parents should look to their past in tough economic times for inspiration when looking for activities for their children, says Carol Torgan, a health scientist with the American College of Sports Medicine. She suggests that parents ask themselves: "What are some of my favorite memories of childhood?" Chances are those activities involve tree houses, water sprinklers, mud pies, bikes, Legos, forts made with blankets she says. "Our generation's childhood memories involve playing endlessly, but this generation of kids may not be doing that. Besides being creative and inexpensive, many traditional childhood activities are great ways to strengthen kids' muscles, bones and heart, says Cheryl Richardson, the senior program manager of physical education for the National Association for Sport and Physical Education. For some children reared in the Internet age, a hula hoop and hopscotch are "brand-new activities that will provide them with a sense of novelty this summer," Richardson says. The government's physical activity guidelines recommend that children and adolescents do an hour or more of moderate-intensity to vigorous aerobic physical activity each day. Many exercise experts believe children today are too sedentary, which is contributing to the excess weight in one-third of children in the USA. - *By Nanci Hellmich, USA Today, June 24, 2009*

## Catastrophic sports injury report released

The National Center for Catastrophic Sports Injury Research based at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has released its 26th annual all sports report. In addition to collecting data on catastrophic injuries in all high school and college sports, the report also contains cheerleading injury data. The latest figures are from the 2007-08 academic year. The report defines catastrophic injuries as any severe injury incurred during participation in a school or college sponsored sport, and includes three categories: fatal; non-fatal (resulting in permanent severe functional disability); and serious (no permanent functional disability but severe injury). The report's conclusions for the 26-year period from the fall of 1992 through the spring of 2008 report that there are 1,116 direct catastrophic injuries in high school (905) and college sports (211). High school sports were associated with 152 fatalities, 379 non-fatal and 374 serious injuries. College sports accounted for 22 fatalities, 63 non-fatal and 126 serious injuries. Cheerleading accounted for 65.2 percent of high school and 70.5 percent of college catastrophic injuries among all female sports. The report's author and center director, Frederick O. Mueller, Ph.D., professor of exercise and sports science in UNC's College of Arts and Sciences, noted that the number of cheerleading injuries fell slightly in 2007-08. "Progress has been slow, but there has been an increased emphasis on cheerleading safety," Mueller said. "Continued data collection on all types of cheerleading injuries will hopefully show that these safety measures are working to reduce injuries." - *University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Medical News Today, June 26, 2009*

## That awful empty feeling

It was senior night, South Boston High School's final home football game of the 2008 season, and coach Sean Guthrie wanted to make it memorable for the players who were ending their high school careers. Everything seemed in order as South Boston ran up a comfortable lead against Charlestown, clearing the way for a once-in-a-lifetime halftime ceremony for the team's 10 seniors. The only problem: Almost no one bothered to show up. As Guthrie's colleague called the roll of South Boston's seniors, he shared the grandstand with 11 spectators. It was "Friday Night Lights," Boston-style: 11 supporters for more than 60 players, coaches, and cheerleaders. The scene is common at high school sports events across the city, where athletes rarely hear the roar of a crowd, see their parents, schoolmates, or teachers turn out to support them, or simply know that someone is taking note of special moments in their lives. Coaches say it is heartrending to watch the efforts of some students make to commute to schools and games through dangerous neighborhoods, maintain their academic eligibility, and dedicate themselves to their teams, only to play their games in virtual anonymity. Longtime coaches said attendance has faded as poverty has risen in the school population. Working parents who have no time to attend teacher meetings have even less time to attend sports events. It is a situation exacerbated, at some schools, by teachers and administrators who show scant commitment to their schools' athletes. Numerous coaches said their schools rarely, if ever, stage pregame rallies. Some coaches said they are rebuffed when they ask for team news to be broadcast on the school's public address system. Many coaches attribute the problem in part to the splintering of large education complexes into smaller schools. A lack of neighborhood ties also hurts. More than 30 years after the city began busing vast numbers of students out of their neighborhoods in an effort to achieve racial integration, so few students attend schools in their own geographic areas that local interest in sports teams has plummeted. Attendance is typically better for basketball, the city's most popular high school sport. The crowds also are generally larger when teams from East Boston, Brighton, and a couple of exam schools are involved because their headmasters actively promote sports. But athletes at other Boston schools struggle for recognition. - *By Bob Hohler, The Boston Globe, June 26, 2009*

## City seeks heroes to rescue school athletics

With local school athletic systems in crisis, professional sports teams in some American cities have rushed to the rescue. In Denver, charitable arms of the Avalanche, Broncos, Nuggets, and Rockies have contributed more than \$1 million over the last five years to improve sports in the public schools. In Cleveland, the Browns donated \$300,000 to the city's school athletic department, and the Indians kicked in \$250,000. In San Francisco, the Giants and 49ers agreed to a ticket tax - 25 cents for every Giant ticket, 75 cents for every 49ers ticket over \$27 - to help fund the city's athletic programs. The fees have generated about \$1 million a year for sports in the schools. Will there be similar heroes in Boston? After a Globe review found the city's high school athletics program plagued by serious inadequacies in funding, facilities, equipment, coaching, and oversight, city leaders were scrambling for answers this week to problems that have festered for years and have cost countless students opportunities to make the most of their athletic abilities. Boston's professional teams expressed preliminary interest this week in helping the city's struggling school athletic program. The teams already contribute to urban programs aimed at improving health care, education, and recreational opportunities for needy children. A high-ranking city official said the Red Sox are weighing a significant contribution after the Globe series. Celtics president Rich Gotham said, "If the city of Boston were to approach the Boston sports teams with a program that demonstrated how assistance provided by the teams could benefit school athletic programs in a way that positively impacts the lives of students, it's something we would carefully consider, along with the many other causes we support through the Shamrock Foundation." The Bruins, too, are poised to field a request for help. - *By Bob Hohler, The Boston Globe, June 27, 2009*

*Due to summer break, the next Sports Done Right newsletter will be available August 2009. **Enjoy the summer!***

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

