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**THE PRACTICES AND CHARACTERISTICS
OF ATHLETIC BOOSTER CLUBS IN 2A AND 3A
HIGH SCHOOLS IN SOUTHEASTERN IDAHO**

By

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A dissertation

**submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education
in the Department of Educational Leadership**

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Dear Mr. Risenmay:

I have reviewed your request for expedited approval of the new study listed above. This is to confirm that I have approved your application.

Notify the HSC of any adverse events. Serious, unexpected adverse events must be reported in writing within 10 business days.

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You may conduct your study as described in your application effective immediately. The study is subject to renewal on or before 7/27/2013, unless closed before that date.

Please note that any changes to the study as approved must be promptly reported and approved. Some changes may be approved by expedited review; others require full board review. Contact Patricia Hunter (208-282-2179; fax 208-282-4529; email: humsbj@isu.edu) if you have any questions or require further information.

Sinc

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P

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ABSTRACT

Sports lie at the heart of the American culture, and high schools are not exempt from this phenomenon. American high schools use sports and activities in general to motivate and hold students accountable for academic achievement. Booster clubs have become an important venue for parents and community members to support the athletic efforts, and by extension, the academic efforts of the school. Successful booster clubs are capable of raising large sums of money, of energizing the community in support of the school, and of underwriting the pride of the students and their parents in the high school. The purpose of this study was to examine the characteristics of successful athletic booster clubs from medium-sized schools in southeastern Idaho and the relationship the booster clubs and officers have with their high school administrators.

A mixed-methods study was conducted in phase one with phone interviews with principals from 2A and 3A high schools in Regions 5 and 6 of southeastern Idaho. If a school had a functioning booster club, it became a part of phase two. Phase two consisted of questionnaires being sent to the principals and booster officers of the schools. Three booster clubs deemed successful from this data were used in phase three of the study, which consisted of qualitative interviews with a school administrator and a booster club officer of each school.

The findings reveal that the most important characteristic of a successful booster club is the quality of leadership. Other important features of successful booster clubs are elected leaders, a good relationship with the high school administration, written documents to guide practice, financial controls, recruiting and retaining new members, and varied and creative activities to raise funds and to support school spirit.

Recommendations include recruitment and training of good leaders for the booster club, regular meetings and a structured organization, the use of standard accounting procedures to safeguard money and officers, establishment of good communication between school administrators and booster club officers, the use of a web site and social media to inform and include booster club members in activities, and the establishment of a network with other booster clubs and their leaders. Following these guidelines will increase the viability of the booster club and foster a positive synergism between the booster leadership and the leadership of the school.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Sports lie near the heart of culture in America. Sports nurture the young and coddle the old as Americans participate in and become spectators of the vast array of sports offered for their enjoyment. Sports are the source of pride and rallying point in prep schools across the nation. Athletic prowess has become, in many instances, the chief identifier of colleges and universities in America. Sports are a main topic around water coolers at work. Americans even dress to identify a favorite team or sports hero. Schools advance this culture through the myriad of athletics and extra-curricular activities that they are called upon to support.

Higgs (1995) noted three views of American sports:

(1) Sports are a form of adiaphora (things indifferent), a theological concept that would mean that sports have no effect on cultural values and deserve little consideration. (2) Sports belong entirely to what Howard Cosell called the Toy Department of Life, not really a serious part of our lives but nevertheless with a value worth holding on to. (3) Sports, as Robert Frost proclaimed, lie near the soul of culture, displaying and even proving all that we hold dear. (p. xii)

Whether one views sports as affecting American culture, as entertainment, or as a major component of the American soul, sports are here to stay. “Nearly as certain as death and taxes, and more agreeable, is the fact that almost every American has participated in sports at some level, talked about sports, attended sports events, and followed sports in the daily press and the electronic media” (Guttmann, 1988, ix). Sports begin for many children in the earliest days of grammar school, follow students to middle

and high school, dominate the college scene, endure through working life, and ease one to the grave. Even if one does not indulge personally in sport, its effects press on the American culture. Sport and its effects are leviathan in the American experience (Michener, 1987).

Sports in America, in very many instances, are closely affiliated with the education process. Results of a survey by the National Federation of State High School Associations in 2008-2009 reported that 52.2 percent of all high school students are involved in athletics (Howard & Gillis, 2011). Almost all of the rest attend games, victory dances, spirit assemblies, homecoming events, and pep rallies.

Where students are involved in athletics, parents are found. Parents, community members, boosters, and alumni support, influence, and often work to control the athletic programs in their schools. Booster clubs become an important vehicle in the financial and emotional support and control of sports, coaches, and programs. Burke and Picus (2001) noted that financially supporting athletics on a high school campus has empowered many parent groups as they create booster clubs. According to the North American Association of Booster Clubs (2011), there are about 25,000 booster clubs in the United States, an average of more than one per high school. "Athletic booster clubs are generally volunteer groups of parents and community members organized to support extracurricular activities" (Newell, 2005, p. 40). The booster influence becomes an important factor in the administration and coaching of high school sports.

Booster clubs have many positive attributes in their relationship with the schools. In fact, parental and community boosters are part of the American system of free public schools. "Private support to public schools has been a steadfast tradition throughout the

history of public schooling in the United States” (Zimmer, Krop, Kaganoff, Ross, & Brewer, 2000, p. 3).

Many high school sports programs and other extra-curricular activities would not exist or would be greatly reduced in scope if booster clubs were not active. “Booster clubs take people’s passion for kids, music, sports and such, and the schools where they all come together, and put that passion to work, good work” (Booster Control, 2007, p. B9). In a time of increasing financial strain on schools and districts, boosters become a lifeline for many activities. “The survey confirmed that more than 82 percent of schools are experiencing athletics budget pressures, primarily related to the lack of support from school district funds” (High school athletics, 2007, p. 4). Boosters, especially parents, step into the void and help ensure the continuation of programs.

Another advantage of the booster club is the impact of parental involvement on students. “Parental participation impacts a student’s level of success more than any curriculum reform, self-esteem-building activity, computer technology, or other innovation” (Jonson, 1999, p. 121). Athletics and activities become an important vehicle in advancing the concept of a school to parent to community team. “Well-planned and well-implemented family and community involvement activities contribute to student achievement and success in school” (Epstein, 2001, p. 3).

The booster movement does have its down side. Boosters can become excessively driven by dollars, making athletics more about business than about children and education. Dowling (2001) observed that the commercialization of athletics has become a destructive force in American education. Ball games dominate the agenda,

advertisements take over the school, and economic factors drive administrative and personnel decisions.

Parents, especially those with money, are often moving away from the democratic underpinnings on which American education is founded.

Some parents—those who have enough income—spend lavishly on their children, generating the notion that we are a child-centered society. But public spending for children is often meager and always surrounded by contention, and it embodies the peculiar conception that children are not valuable as persons in their own right, but only for the adults they will grow up to be....The saccharine myth (that)....children are (America's) most precious natural resource has in practice been falsified by our hostility to other people's children and our unwillingness to support them. (Kohn, 1998, p. 571)

In the vacuum created by a lack of public tax support grows an undue reliance on private funding sources. The result is that the position and the value of children can become compromised (Grubb & Lazerson, 1982). Education, the reality of a child's potential in the workplace, and even the sense of a child's self-worth become unrealistically tied to the ability to throw a ball through a net or to hit a ball with a stick (Dowling, 2000). The sacrifice of education was alluded to by Barlow (2001) when he said, "There are students on our football team this year who will graduate when both faculty and students know they cannot read or write" (p. 34).

Even for those talented few who have the ability to move on to college sports, education is often sacrificed to the athletic ideal. Barlow (2001) reported the graduation rates of high school students in general and of athletes who then participate in college

athletics: 75 % of high school graduates who go to college receive a bachelor's degree within five and one-half years of high school graduation; 48 % of Division I football players do; 55 % of white football players do; 42 per cent of black football players do; 31 % of Division I basketball players do; 35 % of players on the 64-team field of March Madness do; and 26 % of the black players who participate in March Madness receive their degrees.

Administrators, teachers, coaches, high school athletes, community members, and especially parents must be reminded that, whereas all students who graduate from high school move on to college, jobs, the military, and other life pursuits, only a select few participate in college athletics. Of that elite few who dream of professional glory, “approximately 1% of NCAA men's basketball players and 2% of NCAA football players are drafted by NBA or NFL teams—and just being drafted is no assurance of a successful career” (Barlow, 2001, p. 35). Kept in perspective, high school sports are not to prepare children for a career in sports but are meant to hold the interest of students in school as they prepare for a career in life. The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS, 2001) stated, “.... interscholastic sports and fine arts activities promote citizenship and sportsmanship. They instill a sense of pride in community, teach lifelong lessons of teamwork and self-discipline and facilitate the physical and emotional development of our nation's youth” (p. 1).

The crush of fans, parents, advertisers, and even educators as athletic boosters can become overwhelming. This research addresses how the booster culture, as manifest through the booster club, affects the administrative, legal, financial, and business aspects of high schools. Both positive and negative aspects will be examined in an effort to

illuminate best practices for school leaders, athletic departments, and boosters who work for the benefit of school children.

Purpose of Study

Booster clubs are a prominent feature in the athletic landscape of American schools. Small Idaho high schools in the 2A and 3A classifications are no exception. Booster clubs can be an asset or a liability for school administrators. The purpose of this study was to examine the select characteristics of booster clubs affiliated with class 2A and 3A high schools in southeast Idaho and the influence that booster clubs have on school athletics and school administration in these schools. The dynamics and expectations that booster clubs have pertaining to their relationship with the school were studied. The expectations of school administrators related to their working with booster clubs were also examined.

The study also assessed business and financial aspects of booster clubs and how they affect funding for schools generally and sports programs specifically. Legal issues related to booster clubs were studied, and school booster clubs were examined for adherence to legal regulations of non-profit entities. Gender issues that have impacted athletics since Title IX legislation were examined as they relate to booster clubs in high schools.

The study addressed booster clubs from the perspective of school administrators as they work to fulfill the important mission of education and the preparation of students for future roles in American society. The study also examined booster clubs from the perspective of community boosters as they work to advance specific programs. This relationship between school and booster club was defined in terms of what is happening

in a number of small schools in southeastern Idaho as compared to best practices inherent in successful booster clubs affiliated with successful schools as reported in the related literature.

Research Questions

The research questions that guided the study were the following:

1. What are the underlying characteristics of successful athletic booster clubs in 2A and 3A schools in southeastern Idaho?
2. How are the athletic booster clubs in southeast Idaho organized and managed?
3. What similarities and differences exist in the perceptions of school administrators and athletic booster club officers concerning the role of the booster club?
4. What influence does the athletic booster club have on the administration of the sports program and on the administration of the school?

Definition of Terms

To avoid the misunderstanding of terms that may be used differently in local situations, the following are the definitions used in this study:

2A School Classification: Those schools in Idaho that compete under the provisions of the Idaho High School Athletic Association and have a student enrollment in the high school between 160 and 319 students (Idaho High School Athletic Association, 2012).

3A School Classification: Those schools in Idaho that compete under the provisions of the Idaho High School Athletic Association and have a student enrollment

in the high school between 319 and 639 students (Idaho High School Athletic Association, 2012).

Athletic/Activities Director: The person specifically in charge of all aspects of the high school athletics program from finances to scheduling to hiring and evaluations. This job may be an independent position in a large school or school district but often is a principal, assistant principal, or a coach in a smaller school.

Booster Club: A support organization affiliated with a local school. The purpose of the organization is to support specific school activities, generally athletics, for the benefit of the students. Membership in a booster club is primarily comprised of parents, community members, school staff, alumni, and other interested parties.

Booster Club President: The elected officer who serves as the executive of the booster club and is often the liaison with the school.

Bylaws: The body of rules that sets the parameters of the organization and becomes the basis for governance of the organization.

Coach/coaching staff: The adult directors of school sporting events, including the head coach, assistant coaches, trainers, and other advisors. They may be paid or volunteer.

Co-Curricular Activities: Activities, such as band, choir, speech, theater, FFA, or debate, that are affiliated with a class where the students receive academic credit for graduation from high school.

Extra-Curricular Activities: Activities in the school that are not affiliated with curricular subjects and that do not generate credits applicable to graduation from high

school. Examples of these activities are athletics, marching band, cheerleading, National Honor Society, and drill team.

Fund Raising: Activities that are organized by the booster club with the express purpose of raising money for the school and its programs.

High School Principal: The chief executive officer of a high school.

Idaho High School Athletic Association (IHSAA): The governing body for interscholastic athletics and activities in the State of Idaho. The association is led by a team of professional administrators, but the governing board is made up of representatives from school districts drawn from the six districts in the state. Every school district that engages in athletics belongs to the association and has representation on the board.

Interscholastic athletics: Athletic contests that are conducted between two different schools under the sanction of the IHSAA.

Region Five: That area of southeastern Idaho that includes the schools from American Falls on the west to Snake River on the north, east to the Wyoming border and south to the Utah border. The district is determined by the Idaho High School Athletic Association and applies to the sports that it supervises. (See map in Appendix A.)

Region Six: That area of southeastern Idaho that includes the schools from Blackfoot on the south to Butte County on the west, north to the Montana border and east to the Wyoming border. The district is determined by the Idaho High School Athletic Association and applies to the sports that it supervises. (See the map in Appendix A.)

Southeastern Idaho: That area of southern Idaho that lies generally east of American Falls, extending to the Wyoming border on the east, the Utah border on the south, and the Montana border on the north. (See map in Appendix A.)

Teacher/Coach: A coach who is also a credentialed teacher in the school. The teacher/coach is a paid teacher in the school system who also coaches an athletic team, usually receiving an additional stipend for this work.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972: The law enacted by Congress on June 23, 1972 that stated, “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance...” (Education Amendments, 1972)

Assumptions

Certain assumptions by the researcher are germane to the study. The following assumptions are noted for this study:

- The participants in the study responded honestly and accurately.
- Those who participated had knowledge of local booster clubs.
- Booster clubs had a meaningful role in the high schools of southeastern Idaho.

Limitations

The limitations are the factors beyond the control of the researcher that may affect the study. Following are the limitations of this study:

- The study could not control the level of honesty with which administrators and booster club members responded during research interviews.

- The researcher could not control the values and attitudes of the respondents at the time of the study.
- The researcher could not control for gender bias by the participants.
- The researcher could not control the willingness of participants to reveal all they knew about the internal workings of the booster club.
- The researcher could not realistically eliminate all bias during the gathering, analysis, and reporting of qualitative data. It is noted that the researcher is a practicing superintendent and interacts with a booster club in his school district.

Delimitations

The delimitations are the aspects of the study that are under the control of the researcher. The following delimitations are noted:

- The study was delimited to school districts in southeastern Idaho, specifically Regions 5 and 6.
- The study was delimited to 2A and 3A classification public high schools in southeastern Idaho. That translates to schools with student populations from 160 to 319 for 2A schools and from 320 to 639 for 3A schools.
- The study was delimited to high schools that have a functioning booster club in the 2012-13 school year.
- The study included only athletic booster clubs and not those that support band, drama, or other non-athletic activities.

Significance of the Study

“Athletic booster clubs are generally volunteer groups of parents and community members organized to support extracurricular activities” (Newell, 2005, p. 40). In a time of constricting budgets and cost reductions, booster clubs may become a lifeline for some school activities. They can pull communities together and unite the fiscal power and personal support of parents and communities for the benefit of school functions.

Despite the great good that booster organizations may be able to do, they can be a two-edged sword. “There’s just so much money around athletics programs. When there’s all that money, you have to worry about people who care nothing about the institution but are absolutely devoted to that program’s winning” (Wolverton, 2007, p. 1). Many leaders worry about the undue influence of booster organizations and boosters on athletic programs. Others worry about financial indiscretions that would put a dark shadow on schools and their athletic programs. Still other administrators fret over the un-businesslike procedures and unlawful and/or immoral activities of booster clubs that may become a liability for the school (Corral, 2001).

This study was significant for three groups of stakeholders: high school administrators, high school booster club members and officers, and students. School administrators may use the study to improve relations with booster clubs. They may learn what booster clubs should do and how they should function and then be able to help clubs reach their objectives to serve athletics and thereby students.

High school athletic booster club members and officers may gain an understanding of the importance of appropriate organization and operation of a booster

club in order to assure success. They may better understand the relationship of the booster club to the school and the financial restrictions under which the school operates.

The study is significant to students because the underlying purpose of both schools and their booster clubs is to promote the best interests of students. As the study increases understanding about booster clubs and encourages their positive influence on athletics in particular and school in general, then the interests of students are fostered.

Conclusion

In conclusion, administrators and boosters alike may be able to read this study and better understand the culture and operations of successful booster clubs. They may be able to adjust their organizations to work more smoothly with each other. The final result may be that booster clubs and school administrators work together for the educational benefit of students, the enhancement of student opportunity to participate in activities, and closer relationships between parents and schools. All should benefit as they create the inherent synergy derived from better relationships between school and community.

This study is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 is the introduction of the topic, the purpose of the study, and related research questions. Chapter 2 is the review of related literature. Chapter 3 contains a description of methodology used in the study. Chapter 4 presents the findings. Chapter 5 contains a discussion of the findings, conclusions derived from the findings, and suggestions for application of the findings and for future research of the topic.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Intoduction

A significant part of the educational experience in American schools is tied to extra-curricular activities, particularly sports. The reasons are that activities help hold a student's interest in school, that activities promote a feeling of unity in the school, and that students who are involved in activities do better in their academic work than they would if the activities were absent (Giulianotti, 2005).

Being a part of a sports team, whether the star or the second string; a member of the band or orchestra; a hard worker on the student council, the newspaper or the school play; or an active member of the many clubs . . . is the stuff of high school memories. These are what make a student feel like he or she "belongs" . . . It's where self-esteem can be developed . . . It is where volunteerism can flourish and lead to strong commitments for their lives ahead . . . (Hickman, 2007, p. 5)

Burke and Picus (2001) noted that where students find involvement, there are their parents. Parental interest in and support for their children's activities lay the foundation for school booster clubs.

The importance of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities in American schools will be examined in the review of relevant literature. To understand booster clubs in their historical context, a review of sport history along with a study of the growth and importance of sports in America and in American schools will be undertaken. The actual formation of booster clubs and the booster club phenomenon will be reviewed. The relationship of booster clubs to federal and state law and the school's legal basis will be

examined. Booster clubs will be viewed in terms of business and how they fit into the business context of the community and the school. Booster clubs will be examined to determine how they impact and are impacted by school finance. Finally, booster clubs and their relationship with schools as both a positive and as a negative impact on students in particular and on schools in general will be considered.

The Importance of Co-curricular and Extra-curricular Activities

Booster clubs, by definition, support and fund activities associated with the school. In order to establish the importance of booster clubs, it is first necessary to study the importance of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities as they relate to student success and to furthering the mission of the school. Braddock, Hua, and Dawkins (2007) affirmed:

Schools seek to fulfill that responsibility (to develop literacy and nurture citizenship) through both formal and informal curricula beginning in the earliest grades and continuing through the entire educational process. Especially important to the fulfillment of civic education are extracurricular activities (including sports) which typify the informal curriculum in schools while serving as key socialization contexts. (p. 201)

Hoff and Mitchell (2006) wrote, “. . . the benefits of sports and other activities have been well documented by practitioners and scholars alike” (p. 230).

The following research shows that extracurricular activities, in most cases, enhance outcomes in the areas of better school attendance, higher graduation rates, improved test scores, higher grades, more intrinsic motivation of students, fewer

discipline problems, habits leading to a healthier life style, and higher likelihood of advancing to post-secondary studies.

Better school attendance. Educators have long known what research has been able to verify: students who are involved in school activities are much more likely to attend school on a regular basis. Yancey (2007) noted that students involved in sports were less likely to skip school. He also observed an increase in test scores among student athletes that was attributable in part to a decrease in school absences for participants involved in after-school activities. McCarthy (2000) reported, “Of the 19,543 students covered by (my) study, those who participated in student activities had significantly higher GPAs and significantly lower absenteeism” (p. 1).

Improved test scores. In the context of 21st century accountability, schools must pay careful attention to scores on tests mandated by the state. Zwart (2007) studied students in California and noted that there was a statistically significant correlation between after-school activities and an increase in standardized test scores. He concluded, “The result of the study suggests that administrations, faculty, parents, students, communities, and all stakeholders should not only tolerate extracurricular participation, but encourage it” (p. 3).

Lipscomb (2007) approached the question of athletic effect on student achievement from the aspect of societal economic return on human capital investment. He found, after controlling for individual academic ability, there was a two percent increase in math and science test scores for students participating in school athletics. He concluded that this result indicated students were more ready to assume their roles as

productive members of society and that this was a profitable return on the public investment in school athletics.

Yancey (2007) noted, “Sports can help schools meet AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress), by cutting down the number of student absences” (p. 2). He added:

Another way sports can help meet AYP is by forcing student-athletes to remain eligible to play sports. The increase in eligibility will help the school achieve AYP. Administrators looking for ways to help their high school attain AYP will readily find the answer in their sports program. (p. 2)

Sports and other after-school activities may become one of the tools administrators and schools can use to improve student achievement on state-wide accountability tests.

Higher grades. Athletic programs, along with other after-school activities, have been shown to increase student achievement, as indicated by increased grade point averages. Reeves (2008) documented the efforts of Woodstock High School in Woodstock, Illinois, to improve student achievement through participation in school activities. The school put in place a program to dramatically increase student participation in after-school activities, and over a five-year period, the school experienced a 400 % increase in participation levels. During the same time period, the school noted a dramatic decrease in failure rates in math, science, social studies, English, and physical education. The most significant success was a 40% decrease in math failure rates in a single year.

Darling (2005) studied an ethnically diverse sample of adolescents involved in activities from six high schools in California and saw an increase in nearly all adolescent outcomes, including better grades. Fejgin (1994) studied tenth grade students’

achievement based on national longitudinal data. He found, among other positive effects, a positive effect of sport participation on grades.

Marsh (1992) suggested caution about the optimism surrounding athletic participation and grade enhancement. He accepted the often observed correlation between grades and participation in athletics but noted that athletes may take easier courses to remain eligible, leading to grade inflation.

Higher intrinsic motivation of students. Athletics and other school activities can increase the self-esteem and intrinsic motivation of students. Marsh (1988) noted, “Participation in extracurricular activities may . . . enhance perceived social status which in turn influences educational aspirations and concomitant behaviors” (p. 4). Fejgin (1994) wrote of the positive effect sports participation had on grades, self-concept, locus of control, and educational aspirations. Those students involved in athletics were motivated to get better grades, to take more control over their lives, and to pursue postsecondary educational opportunities. Gadbois and Bowker (2007), after studying the effects of athletics on young men, noted that athletics were associated with greater body satisfaction for boys and a more masculine self-description, which led to higher self-esteem. Lleras (2008) reported that students who combined social skills and good work habits with participation in extracurricular activities showed higher educational attainment and earnings with a resultant higher level of self-esteem and life satisfaction. These results were consistent, even after controlling for different cognitive levels among the subjects of the study.

Lower dropout rates resulting in higher graduation rates. After-school activities have been shown to help keep students in school and to propel them toward

graduation. Yin (2004) used data from the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 to follow the subject eighth graders for two years and then for four years after the initial study. He concluded that there was a significantly lower dropout rate for both boys and girls who participated in interscholastic sports. He stated, “These findings support the presumed positive role of sport participation for adolescents in American schools” (p. 147). Curtin, Ingels, Wu, and Heuer (2002) added that, based on their studies of the national longitudinal data from 1988 and a follow up in 2000, students who are involved in extracurricular activities are significantly more likely to earn a high school diploma.

Fewer discipline problems. Practitioners acknowledge the observable fact that students involved in meaningful activities are less likely to cause discipline problems. Researchers have verified this notion. Darling (2005) noted in her study of ethnically diverse students that participation in sports positively influenced many adolescent outcomes, including a decrease in discipline problems. Fredericks (2008) observed lower than expected numbers of risky behaviors for students involved in significant after-school activities. He cautioned, however, that the outcomes showed differences depending on variables such as gender, race, and socioeconomic status.

Yancey (2007) wrote that students who are not involved after school are “. . . 27% more likely to have been arrested than those who spend one to four hours per week in extracurricular activities” (p. 2). Reeves (2008) reported improvements in behavior, not only in high schools but in middle and elementary schools, where a viable activity program was promoted by school officials and participated in by students.

Habits leading to a healthier lifestyle. The work and effort inherent in participation in athletics in high school have been shown to have lasting effects on the

lives of young students. An important aspect of sport is that it leads to a lifetime of participation and enjoyment. Kirkbride (1999) observed:

The odds are that many of our players will be playing for the last time a highly structured program in high school and, those that continue on, will end their career in college. Yet, those who do not continue to the pros will play in summer leagues and church leagues and on intra-mural programs as they compete for the sport of it. (p. 1)

Katzel, Sorkin, and Fleg (2001) wrote that athletes who kept up their training and fitness habits acquired as young students were healthier and less at risk than sedentary men of a comparable age. DeMeersman (1993) recorded the results of his study of heart variability between physically active and sedentary men:

Overall results between the two groups showed that the physically active group had significantly higher fitness levels ($p < 0.001$), which were associated with significantly higher levels of heart rate variability, when compared with their sedentary counterparts ($p < 0.001$). These findings provide suggestive evidence for habitual aerobic exercise as a beneficial modulator of heart rate variability in an aging population. (p. 726)

Tanaka et al. (1997) confirmed that the results are similar for active women compared with those who follow a sedentary lifestyle.

Higher likelihood of advancing to post-secondary studies. Some researchers have reported a higher likelihood of students involved in after-school activities moving on to post-secondary schooling. Marsh (1988) wrote, “. . . there was convincing evidence that participation in extracurricular activities is positively associated with educational

aspirations even after controlling for variables such as academic performance and socioeconomic status” (p. 7). Lipscomb (2007) authenticated a five% increase in bachelor’s degree attainment for college students who were significantly involved in sports in secondary school.

Graff (2008) explained a reverse correlation where students are more likely to participate in high school activities because of the positive nature of this involvement when it appears on the college application. This explanation leaves some question as to which is cause and which is effect pertaining to after-school activities and the likelihood of going to college.

Negatives associated with extra-curricular activities. Not all aspects of sports participation are necessarily positive. Some researchers found negative aspects regarding school activities. Darling (2005) noted increased levels of alcohol use and increased levels of depression often accompanied participation in athletics among adolescents in California.

Hoffman (2004) reported an increased use of drugs among high school males who were involved in athletics. He noted that drug use in this particular demographic was most powerful in the more affluent schools and in schools with a low population of minority students. He attributed this phenomenon to an increase in the use of performance-enhancing drugs and to both the culture of high school athletic participation and the greater availability of resources in wealthier schools.

Summary. There is strong evidence that participation in after-school activities has a positive effect, for the most part, on secondary school students. Cahalon, Ingels, & Burns (2006) concluded, “In addition to the growth and learning that takes place in the

classroom, after school activities play an important role in adolescent development” (p. 78). Positive effects are exhibited in the form of higher grades, higher test scores, lower drop-out rates, better attendance at school, better self-esteem, and a higher likelihood of advancing to post-secondary studies. Some negatives that have been found to accompany extracurricular activities, especially sports, are higher levels of alcohol and drug use and higher levels of depression.

The History of Sport in America and American Schools

Sports are embedded in mankind’s earliest beginnings and are a consistent part of the human story. In the modern age, sports and schools seem almost synonymous with some even believing that schools exist to provide a platform for sports (McComb, 2004).

Sports are an integral part of U. S. and Canadian societies, and they will continue to be an important component in the lives of most men, many women, and hundreds of communities. Teams and the games they play provide entertainment, opportunities for countless numbers of discussions and debates (especially around water coolers and over lunch and coffee), and an escape from the demands of daily life. (Rosentraub, 1997, p. 448)

Sports in antiquity. “In every known culture children run races, throw stones, wrestle, and play games . . . ” (Guttmann, 1988, p. 8). Sport, dating back to ancient times, was an inherent part of the human condition, especially among youth. For example, Native Americans were especially adept at contriving games, some of which remain in American culture today. Lacrosse is a Native American game that was known as stickball (Guttmann, 1988).

Anciently, games were closely tied to the daily life experiences of tribal peoples. Often ancient sports were an integral part of religious festivals. Twietmeyer (2003) wrote that this bond was indicated by “. . . relationships between sport or physical activity, and various cultural phenomena; harvest, marriage, death, and preparation for war to name just a few” (p. 202).

Ancient cultures used sport to infuse cultural norms into the rising generation. Children were socialized through sport to a particular value system, which they, in turn, passed on to the next generation. The same pattern is repeated today as children pass values they learned in sports to the next generation as teachers, coaches, and administrators (Twietmeyer, 2003).

Sports were also used as a means of conversion, both culturally and religiously. Both Rome and Greece were very adept at the use of games to bind outsiders to the prevailing culture. Eighteenth century America mirrored this tactic with “Muscular Christianity” and the YMCA movement as pastors fervently worked to convert frontier heathens to the ideals of Christian life (Higgs, 1995). Another example is the efforts of the American Legion to instill American ideals in immigrants with the institution of baseball, that most American of sports (Gorn & Goldstein, 2004).

From the earliest times, sports and games have been part and substance of the human condition. Mankind has been able to look through the lens of sports in order to better understand itself and the environment. The English historian Joseph Strutt (1838) understood decades ago about the ability of men and women to use sports as a tool to understand what they value most when unconstrained by circumstance:

In order to form a just estimation of the character of any particular people, it is absolutely necessary to investigate the Sports and Pastimes most generally prevalent among them. War, politics, and other contingent circumstances may effectually place men, at different times, in different points of view, but, when we follow them into their retirements, where no disguise is necessary, we are most likely to see them in their true state, and may best judge of their natural dispositions. (pp. xvii-xviii)

This stripping away of the cultural veneer to the essence of the inner person may be part of what makes sports and games indispensable in modern times, just as they were in antiquity.

Sports in colonial America. Colonial immigrants brought their cultures, their languages, their customs, and their games to America. Their games and restrictions on their games give a glimpse into those cultures. The conservative fathers of Massachusetts and Connecticut “. . . banned dice, cards, quoits, bowls, ninepins, or any other unlawful game . . . whereby much precious time is spent unfruitfully” (Guttmann, 1988, p. 24). Early Puritans particularly were staunch in their efforts to control colonists’ lives and leisure. “The Puritans saw their mission to erase all sport and play from men’s lives” (Guttmann, 1988, p. 24). The English essayist Thomas Babington Macaulay (2008) quipped, “The Puritans hated bear-baiting, not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators” (p. 3). A little more moderate New England attitude was the work/play test employed by the axiom: “Play that refreshed a man for work was worthy; play that wasted time and left him enervated was not” (Gorn & Goldstein, 2004, p. 32).

This strict New England attitude was in conflict with the natural joyful temperament of the settler from the English countryside. Many colonists resisted the dour nature of the Puritans, but the Puritan culture caused the development of sports to be much more restricted in the North than in the South (Gorn & Goldstein, 2004). Guttmann (1988) noted that as a result, the southern colonies saw an earlier and more devoted rise of such sports as horse racing, cock fighting, and stomp-and-gouge fighting (that eventually evolved into wrestling and boxing) than did the northern colonies.

Sport and recreation were certainly an important part of colonial life. As such, the foundations were laid for the growth of a sport culture in America.

Sports and the Civil War. The ravages of the Civil War underlined some of the differences in recreation and leisure as well as other cultural and social differences between the North and the South. However, as wars often do, unexpected results remained in the aftermath of battle. The interaction of troops from both sides and the presence of thousands of Yankee soldiers in the territory of the South tended to fuse together a new American culture that included a more unified sporting and recreational scene (Nelson, 2005).

Guttmann (1988) wrote that before the war “. . . outdoor sports were more various, more popular, and more socially acceptable in the South than in the North” (p.37). Gorn and Goldstein (2004) noted that the Civil War introduced thousands of men to new ideas of sports and sporting practices. They also stated that “. . . men organized themselves into company teams and regimental leagues (baseball) Those whom the war did not kill, or maim, or debilitate went home with a new appreciation for sports” (p. 99). With a post-war economic boom for the winners and this newfound appreciation for

sports, the rise of modern sports was in the North, not the South, as churches gave way to industry and Puritans became Yankees (Guttmann, 1988).

Post-war America was poised for the rise of modern sports. The first American sports weekly, *The Spirit of the Times*, was published in New York in the mid 1800's. (Guttmann, 1988). Baseball was widely acknowledged as the national game. Colleges stepped into the sports void resulting from the disbanding of the armies, becoming the champions of the incipient world of modern sport (Gorn & Goldstein, 2004).

While West Point became the soul and symbol of knighthood in the United States, the eastern colleges were also affected by the spirit of reform in physical education sweeping the Western world in the nineteenth century. The response to the Napoleonic Wars in both Europe and the United States, as well as responses to the revolutions of 1848, rekindled reactionary thought that promoted militarism under the guise of educational progress. By the end of the Civil War the colleges, even traditionally liberal Harvard, had themselves become bastions of conservatism, championing the interlocking virtues of religion, sport, and military heroism. (Higgs, 1995, p. 100)

The American Civil War helped blend the cultures of North and South and prepare the nation to advance to the twentieth century. Sport would now become truly a national experience with a decidedly American flavor to replace the sectionalism of the nineteenth century.

The foundation of modern sports. As America recovered from the Civil War, a measured evolution began to take place as the country industrialized and urbanized. Recreation and sport also changed. Jebson (1979) wrote, "Sport became a positive force

which might allay discontent. Cities across the nation began to provide athletic fields, equipment, training, leadership, and encouragement for a broad spectrum of the population” (p. 6).

The Progressive Movement of the late nineteenth century changed American society and, subsequently, American sport from structured military and religious fundamentalism to a new era where there was found a positive role for sports in the public sector (Jebsen, 1979). “. . . religion, rather than sport became the peripheral activity on Sunday . . .” (Twietmeyer, 2003, p. 204).

Whether modern America emerged from a search for order, from the complaints of the average citizens during the depression of the mid-1890’s, or from the machinations of businessmen who tried to control competitive forces, the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries sought both new and different ideas, systems, and values in establishing an improved living environment. (Jebsen, 1979, p. 5)

American society had a great influence on the evolution of sport and recreation, but sport was now poised to have a mammoth impact on American society in the twentieth century. Three major sports (football, baseball, and basketball) would emerge to affect Americans from prep school to college to the domination of the nation’s entertainment via professional sports.

Guttmann (1988) surmised that “for approximately a century, from the 1850’s to the 1950’s, baseball was considered to be our national pastime” (p. 51). Baseball was a distinctive expression of American culture, and, as Palmer (1889) quoted Mark Twain, it

was “. . . the very symbol, the outward and visible expression of the drive and the push and rush and struggle of the raging, tearing, booming nineteenth century” (p. 447).

Contrary to the popular myth, Abner Doubleday did not invent baseball in Cooperstown, New York. In the eighteenth century, English children played such games as rounders, town ball, one old cat, stoolball, and eventually baseball, all of which involved hitting a ball with a stick (Gorn & Goldstein, 2004). Gorn and Goldstein (2004) also wrote, “. . . around the middle of the nineteenth century . . . the baseball configuration we recognize today, with its diamond-shaped infield and nine players on each side emerged as the dominant form” (p. 78). In 1845 Alexander Cartwright, the father of modern baseball, organized the Knickerbocker Base Ball Club in New York, the first team to survive for more than a year or so (Nelson, 2005). By the 1850's dozens of baseball clubs had been formed as fraternal organizations. Typical baseball teams were sponsored by firemen's locals, police precincts, and mechanics unions (Gorn & Goldstein, 2004). This order of sport allowed men from similar economic and social strata to meet and fraternize, as well as to participate in athletics.

So while the game as it was played by 1860 would be recognizable to a modern-day fan—two teams of nine players each, nine innings, hitter, pitcher, runs scored and outs made in familiar ways—baseball was not yet played by trained professionals, as it would be by the 1870's. (Gorn & Goldstein, 2004, p. 79)

As teams competed and play was elevated to a higher and higher level, teams began to pay players to enhance the skill level of the team. Gorn and Goldstein noted that “by the 1870's, baseball had become professionalized, as fans, players, and sportswriters sought the highest possible quality of play” (p. 81).

Alexander Cartwright's inspired invention eased the difficult transition from an agrarian to an urban-industrial society. Playing and watching the game allowed nineteenth-century Americans to experience the comfortably familiar and the thrillingly novel, the bucolic sounds of summer and "the drive and push and rush and struggle of the raging, tearing, booming nineteenth century." (Guttman, 1988. p. 55)

Baseball remains today a connection to America's past, a sentimental return to lost youth, a reminder of better times and a better way of life. Baseball is a distinctive expression of American culture (Guttman, 1988).

Football never rivaled baseball for the number of participants or fans in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, much more than baseball, football became entrenched in American colleges and later in high schools, growing into the unrivaled force that it is today on and off campus (Bernstein, 2001).

Football had its origins in the English game of rugby. Prior to 1880, the game resembled English rugby much more than today's football. Play was more or less continuous unless the ball went out of bounds, while almost any physical means of stopping the ball carrier was permitted and encouraged. There was no line of scrimmage, no series of downs, and no forward passing. Touchdowns were scored only by running. Early football differed far more from the modern game than did early baseball. (Gorn & Goldstein, 2004. p. 154)

In the 1870's northern students domesticated rugby and turned it into American football. In 1877, the line of scrimmage was inserted, and the game was forever changed from rugby to American football (Nelson, 2005). The first football game played between

colleges was Princeton vs. Rutgers in 1869. In 1875, four Ivy League schools formed the Intercollegiate Football Association to standardize rules. The rules added features that would be recognized today, including blocking, alternate possessions, and a fixed number of downs. Football became the collegiate passion of the late nineteenth century and the central feature of college social life (Bernstein, 2001).

Football, however, almost did not make it out of the nineteenth century. “While American educators were generally sanguine about football’s contribution to manly character, they were upset when the young men who actually played the game began to cripple and even kill each other on the field” (Guttmann, 1988, p. 104). Higgs (1995) detailed that in the 1905 football season, 18 boys were killed and 159 were seriously maimed. It took no less than the President of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt, to save the game. He called the presidents of Harvard, Yale, and Princeton to the White House for a conference on football violence. It was largely because of the President’s energetic appeals that football escaped abolition by the presidents of America’s colleges (Guttmann, 1988). “The 1906 season saw the introduction of a new open game of football as a result of the national reform of the rules implemented by the colleges following the 1905 season that were designed to make the game less brutal” (Pruter, 2003, p. 61). Rules were changed, and protective equipment was devised so that players could participate without the threat of losing their lives. The sport continued to grow until it threatened to become the dominant feature of American colleges. Professors in the early twentieth century, as now, worried that football had become more important than academics in American universities (Colm, 2000).

Football spread from the colleges to the country's high schools. There is evidence that high school football began in Texas as early as 1900 (Jebsen, 1979). Today, throughout the length and breadth of the land, football and its associated traditions are found in nearly every high school and middle school in America. Students, parents, alumni, and community members alike gather in autumnal tranquility at the local school to worship at the gridiron shrine (Nelson, 2005).

In the words of its inventor, James Naismith, basketball was created as “a synthetic product of the office. The conditions were met, and the rules formulated . . . before any attempt was made to test its value” (Gorn & Goldstein, 2004, p. 70). Naismith was charged by the YMCA director to invent a game so that young men would have the same interest in the winter that they had in football in the fall and baseball in the spring. In 1891 he designed a game of throwing balls through peach baskets. Afraid that the game would be too violent, the peach baskets were moved from floor level to ten feet and were nailed to the gym balconies (Guttmann, 1988).

We are reminded of the role of chance in invention; many of basketball's most salient features just happened. For instance, Naismith wanted boxes to serve as goals, but the janitor he asked had only peach baskets handy. They were placed 10 feet off the ground because that was where the balcony of the Springfield gym on which they were nailed, began. And backboards were introduced, in 1893, to keep spectators from helping their favorite teams by swatting away opponents' shots.

(Klein, 1991, p. 18)

Staffo (1998) claimed that basketball, as originally invented, would be thoroughly recognized by fans today.

The game, sponsored by the YMCA, spread quickly across the United States. As basketball grew in popularity, it became the prime recruiting tool for the YMCA, and “. . . the game he (Naismith) invented probably made possible the extraordinary expansion of organized, supervised play in the early twentieth century” (Gorn & Goldstein, 2004, p. 174). Guttman (1988) wrote that in the 1920’s and 30’s, Naismith’s invention became the favorite sport of metropolitan high schools and colleges. The sport has shown such popularity that few would think of building a school without a basketball gym. Basketball hoops are found in nearly every recreation area and playground. Homes have basketball standards on or near the garage. The game has spread from America to become an international phenomenon (Naismith & Baker, 1996).

Basketball, football, and baseball are major sports found in American schools. As schools evolved from community-based, parent-involved entities in the seventeenth century to the bureaucratic, factory-based model in the twentieth century, these and other sports and activities have been used to help soften the harsh edges of the military-industrial school culture (Selbe, 1997).

Schools have become inextricably intertwined with sports in the American culture. However, the marriage of sports and schools is not without its challenges and problems. Schools themselves have often been viewed with suspicion by those outside the school walls. Schools see themselves as “. . . a community of people slightly removed from the world, who make and share knowledge” (Dowling, 2000, p. 1). As schools and universities set themselves apart in an effort to be “centers of disinterested learning,” they were for a time perceived as enemies of the fledgling democracy (Dowling, 2001, p. 3).

In 1806 a correspondent in North Carolina reported that the “enlightened legislature” of the state had just stripped funds from the university because it has “discovered that education was inconsistent with democracy; that it created an aristocracy of the learned, who would trample upon the rights and liberties of the ignorant, and that an equality of intellect was necessary to preserve the equality of rights.” (Dowling, 2000, p. 5)

Dowling had stated earlier, “. . . anything that promises to set a person or a group apart as superior to the average will be felt as deeply disturbing or threatening. This is why even public education, in its earlier phase, constituted a problem for American democracy” (Dowling, 2000, p. 5).

As the majority of young people became schooled, the new elite were not the scholars but the athletes. “When the athletes recognize that they are virtual demigods on campus, real students come to regard themselves as marginally important to the university, less real in the life of the school” (Dowling, 2007, p. 83). This phenomenon is found not only in the university but is evident in many high schools as well.

As regular students see the excesses of athletes and the immunity athletes often have to the rules of the school, the attitudes of the regular students about school are affected. Academics become marginalized and, “. . . the big-time sports ethos of athletes and boosters breeds drunkenness, violence, and defiant crudity, impressionable young people, joining in because they fear being left out, lose out on an educational experience that could lift their lives to something better” (Dowling, 2007, p. 11).

The problems caused by athletic programs gave rise to organizations to control interscholastic athletics. The organization on the national level for high schools is The

National Federation of State High School Athletic Associations, founded in 1920 to assist in the administering of high school athletics (Myers, 1988). The organization on the local level is the Idaho High School Activities Association, founded in 1925. The founding of the state association was in response to such conflicts and problems with sports in schools as recruiting of athletes, over-age athletes, and fighting between communities (Idaho High School Activities Association, 2012).

As America moves into the twenty-first century, there seems to be no abatement of the fervor that surrounds sports in all forms from grade school to high school to college to the professional level. Challenges remain to keep athletes, boosters, and sports in general in their proper perspective.

Sport and American culture. Sports have become a major factor in the culture and life of twenty-first century Americans. Whether a person actively participates in sports, views games on television or in the stadium, or tries blithely to ignore athletics and sports, sports and the climate of sports impact each life in and out of school (Sparks and Robinson, 2002). Guttman (1988) observed, “We . . . have become accustomed to the concept of adult-sponsored child’s play” (p. 82). Guttman again said, “The conviction that every child ought to be involved in some kind of adult-organized athletic program from the age of six through college graduation is as much a product of the scientific revolution as is the fact that astronomers now have more prestige than astrologers” (p. 185).

Ping (1999) stated that “sport is only a game” (p. 157). Michener (1987), however, observed that sport is religion for many Americans:

. . . it is not just a parallel that is emerging between sport and religion, but rather a complete identity. Sport is religion for many Americans, and this is no product of simple facile reasoning or wishful thinking. Further, for many, sport religion has become a more appropriate expression of personal religiosity than Christianity, Judaism, or any of the traditional religions. (Twietmeyer, 2003, p. 202)

Schools have been an important part of the deification of sport in America. Higgs (1995) pointed out that “. . . educational institutions have been a primary setting for the development of what seems to me the religion of sports . . .” (p. 1). Edwards (1973) gave some illuminating comparisons between sports and what are commonly considered to be the accoutrements of religion: (a) sports have their saints, those departed souls who in their lives exemplified the dogma of the sport, such as Babe Ruth and Vince Lombardi; (b) sports have ruling patriarchs who exercise controlling influence over the nation’s sports; (c) sports have their gods, those superstar athletes who are venerated no matter what course their lives take, such as Kobe Bryant, Michael Vick, and Alex Rodriguez; (d) sports have scribes, the sports writers and sports telecasters who record the ongoing history of sports and spread its dogma; (e) sports have their shrines, such as halls of fame and trophy cases that grace every school in America; (f) sports have their houses of worship where millions gather across the land to give their devotions and adulation, more often than not on Sunday; (g) sports have their symbols of faith, such as game balls, team clothing, and paraphernalia that depict the immortal personages and great moments in sports history; and (h) sports have their seekers of the kingdom—the true believers,

devotees, and converts to the faith. Sport is more than “only a game” in America, disputing what Ping (1999) said.

Sports have long been identified with and sometimes are symbolic of America’s schools. The relationship was not always as close as it is today. At the end of the nineteenth century, a prolonged battle over the control of high school sports developed between student-controlled fraternities on one side and teachers and administrators on the other side. Pruter (2003) noted four vital areas of reform at the turn of the century: inclusion of a broader segment of society; schools becoming more democratic; schools taking control of the extra-curriculum, especially athletics; and administrators waging war against secret societies, i.e., fraternities and sororities. Pruter quoted the President of the Chicago School Board:

We are determined to kill off the frats and sororities in the high schools and this may delay the work of the board of education two or three years, but we are determined that secret societies must be driven out of the public schools, even if scholars are driven with them. (p. 47)

The students accepted this declaration of war and stated that the school board had no right to determine what society students could or could not belong to. The struggle between school authorities and student societies was “. . . a battle that rested on who in the school controls sports and other areas of the extra-curriculum, but which ultimately rested on how a public high school should be defined” (Pruter, 2003, p. 48).

School administrators prevailed in their efforts to wrest control of sports from the students, and sports became entrenched in the school systems. Next, however, the battle for control of sports programs moved from students opposed to the administration to

boosters, parents, and coaches against the administration (Barlow, 2001). The National Federation of State High School Associations said in its philosophy statement:

Interscholastic athletes shall be an integral part of the total secondary school educational program that has as its purpose to provide educational experiences not otherwise provided in the curriculum and which will develop learning outcomes in the areas of knowledge, skills, and emotional patterns and will contribute to the development of better citizens. Emphasis should be upon teaching through athletics in addition to teaching the skills of athletics. (Olson & Koplin, 1987, p. 10)

This philosophy binds together sports and schools in a common effort to benefit students, but it also opens the door for the undue influence of sports in the public school culture.

Sports are now not only one factor in American society; in many respects, our most popular games reflect American society. Gorn and Goldstein (2004) wrote that baseball, football, and other team sports incorporate the specialization of function, advance planning, and rational, goal-oriented behavior generally associated with industrialized production. They also noted, “Quantification is central to modern sports Statistics allow comparison of performances separated by time and space, and thereby establish common standards of excellence” (Gorn & Goldstein, 2004, p. 111). Sports also reflect the violence, the dishonesty, the cheating, and other dark aspects of American culture (Giulianotti, 2005).

Sports also became a method for acculturation of immigrants and their perceived threat to the American way. Americans worried about physical and moral deterioration caused by urbanization and the great influx of immigrants (Higgs, 1995). “During the

1920's, the American Legion began to sponsor a baseball program, part of its campaign to make sure that all citizens stayed '100 percent American'" (Gorn & Goldstein, 2004, p. 182).

Thus sport, rather than being a blight on American culture as feared by the early colonial fathers, has become interwoven in the composition of twenty-first century life. Some even see sport as a partial answer to some of society's most perplexing problems. "Instead of being an obstacle to salvation or a hindrance to law and order, sports . . . (may become) a solution to the ill effects of inner city life" (Jebsen, 1979, p. 12).

The future of sports. "Prediction, like hang-gliding, is risky fun, but it seems fairly safe to predict that American sports will continue along the paths already taken over the last three centuries" (Guttman, 1988, p. 185). Sports likely will become even more available through electronic enhancements, and whatever problems television has brought to sport will likely be multiplied in the growing electronic wasteland of the twenty first century (Higgs, 1995). Guttman (1988) wrote, ". . . sports promise (or threaten) to become, in a formal-structural sense, ever more specialized, rationalized, bureaucratized, and quantified" (p. 185).

Commercialization promises to continue to mold and rule athletics. ". . . [I]t is not the integrity of . . . sports that will be held up to question, but the integrity of education itself" (Barlow, 2001, p. 36). Dowling (2001) noted, ". . . commercialized college sports have shrunk the institutional identity of many universities to little more than the images running back and forth on the TV screen during 'March Madness' or college bowl games" (p. 6).

When every institutional resource is dedicated—and known to be dedicated—to the support and celebration of specialized physical skills, intellectual talent and the pursuit of learning come to be disregarded and displaced, even at many schools, despised. (Then) . . . the student who has come to college hoping to learn about Greek philosophy or Renaissance poetry or molecular biology walks the campus as a ghost. (Dowling, 2007, p. 8)

New stadiums are built, and libraries are neglected. The football coaching staff is enlarged, and the honors program is eliminated (Dowling, 2007, p. 9). Sports thus grow to be an ever more powerful force in American education.

If the past is an indicator, college athletics will continue to set the precedent for high school programs. Recruiting violations, pay-offs, and outright cheating will become more prevalent in high schools as the pressure to produce winners and blue chip college recruits continues to increase (Rosentrub, 1997). The media will likely cover more and more high school games, making prep school a commercialized plum to be nurtured and plucked (Sparks & Robinson, 2002).

Summary. Sports and recreation are core ingredients in human life and culture, but they have brought great challenges:

The alliance of religion and sports in America presented new problems with which we still struggle. They are well illustrated in the careers of some of America's greatest coaches, field generals of the crusade, who transformed the mission inaugurated by the founding fathers such as Stagg and Naismith from building character to building winning dynasties. The problems inherent in their transformation appear in almost every dimension of our public and private lives,

from gender issues to politics, from education to morality, from ecology to economics. (Higgs, 1995, p. 262)

Despite the inherent challenges and problems, the human condition would be less rich without sports. Michener (1987) spoke of “. . . the delight one can find in the sublime nonsense of games” (p. 547). “I want our country to protect, and augment, and make available such experiences to others. For it is this enlarging of the human adventure that sports are all about” (Michener, 1987, p. 555).

The History of Booster Clubs

The background and history of booster clubs is sketchy at best. “Although the research literature has grown in recent years, most of what we know about private support of public education comes from anecdotal reports generated by the news media” (Zimmer, Krop, Kaganoff, Ross, & Brewer, 2000, p. 7).

It is known that the booster movement began because of the need for private support of public education. Booster clubs can help a school with manpower, finance, and public relations (Hidinger, 1976). Dowling (2007) stated that although booster clubs can be beneficial, we have sometimes allowed “. . . a retrograde booster subculture to assert control over institutions of . . . learning from coast to coast” (p. 2).

Booster clubs originated as informal, supportive organizations but then evolved into powerful lobby entities that had a detrimental effect on the school, on students, on school governance, and on the athletic programs in general (Selbe, 1997). Early private boosters were in the form of college alumni associations, which were founded to help promote and control college athletics (Gorn & Goldstein, 2004). As with sports, the concepts of private boosters soon migrated from the colleges to the high schools. Since

there were few public high schools in the East (there were no public schools in New York until 1897), private support for public schools originated and grew first in the West (Pruter, 2003).

Money for education was tight in the beginning of the 20th century. For example, in Texas “. . . the only money appropriated by the school board for sports was \$150 for schools to rent sport fields plus ten dollars per school for equipment. Support for athletic teams in the high schools had to come from booster club or parent associations” (Jebsen, 1979, p. 15). By the 1920’s, a full range of interscholastic sports was available to students in the state of Texas through the support of booster clubs. However, during the Great Depression, booster clubs were not able to meet the financial needs of sports for the schools so school boards voted in the 1930s to take over the funding of sports in the districts (Jebsen, 1979). This situation was typical throughout the nation until extracurricular funding became a local board function.

In the 1970’s, increasing pressure was put on state officials to make school funding equitable by moving funding formulas away from the dependency on property tax (Corral, 2001). California led the nation in creating financial difficulties for activity programs by passing Proposition 13 in 1978. Proposition 13 “. . . fixed the property tax rate at one percent throughout the state and gave the state legislature authority to allocate property tax revenue among local jurisdictions, including school districts” (Brunner & Sonstelie, 2002, p. 42). This action limited the funds available in many school districts and hastened the move of control and funding of schools from the local jurisdiction to the state.

In 1977, the Booster Clubs of America organization was founded to encourage booster clubs in their efforts to help fund extracurricular and co-curricular activities in response to the loss of tax support (Selbe, 1997). Selbe (1997) also reported that in 1994, a survey was conducted of high school athletic directors nationwide. This study found that fundraising was necessary to supplement athletic budgets in 60 percent of the schools and that participation fees were charged in 30 percent of the schools. The National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA) reported that booster clubs were the source for the greatest increase in athletic funds during the past five years while school boards were responsible for the greatest decrease (NIAAA, 2008).

It is estimated that there are between 20,000 and 25,000 high school booster clubs in America. Since there are approximately 18,000 high schools, it is obvious that some schools have more than one booster club. The BCA (Booster Clubs of America) has found that the size of the school does not dictate the success of the booster club. What matters is the enthusiasm and commitment of the parents and that can vary from community to community. (Selbe, 1997, p. 41)

Economic conditions after 2000 seemed to dictate another round of financial crisis for activities and sports (Trainor, 2008). Corral (2001) commented that districts were in a predicament. There is no law saying school districts have to provide sports, but parents and patrons often demand athletic opportunities for their children. Newell (2005) said, “We . . . deal with a lot of schools, and the only way many of them can support certain sports is by booster club activity” (p. 41). Student fees are a common way for districts to enhance activity funding, but some schools distance themselves from student

fees by letting the booster clubs raise the money and assume the responsibility of asking parents to pay (Selbe, 1997).

Booster clubs came into existence through the natural support from parents and sports enthusiasts bolstered by a need for private funding. Economic conditions facing programs in the twenty first century and the intense pressure for successful athletic programs will ensure a booster club culture in the foreseeable future.

Booster Clubs and the Law

Booster clubs, like other nonprofit institutions in America, are subject to certain laws and regulations. Trainor (2008) noted that it is reasonable for school districts to protect their own reputations by monitoring and helping affiliated booster clubs live within the pertinent laws and regulations. There is no body of law on the federal level that specifically relates to booster clubs and their activities. They are subject to federal law, as are all organizations, in such areas as discrimination and taxes (Corral, 2001).

Federal tax law. It is in the area of taxation that booster clubs are most likely to find themselves in difficulties. The IRS requires most tax exempt organizations, including booster clubs, to file Form 990-N if their gross annual receipts are less than \$50,000. If annual receipts exceed \$50,000, they must file Form 990 (IRS, 2012). This filing requirement includes “. . . PTAs and all other nonprofit organizations supporting K-12 schools.” (Brunner and Imazeki, 2004, p. 42). Booster clubs are not accustomed to filing these annual statements. “. . . [T]he Senate Finance Committee has shown increased interest in requiring nonprofit organizations to better account for their revenues and expenses—an area where experts say many booster clubs and athletics departments fall short” (Wolverton, 2007, p. 6).

The issue begins with the tax status of booster clubs as they relate to athletic programs. “If the club has a tax identification number and meets federal guidelines, contributors may be able to make tax-deductible contributions” (Trainor, 2008, p. 42). If the booster clubs are not in compliance with tax laws, there is a question about the tax deduction allowance for benefactors. A tax deduction is allowable under current law for charitable giving, but many question the charitable nature of athletics programs. Are boosters giving to benefit all school children, or are they giving to benefit primarily their own children? This is the question that troubles many. “We need to make sure that taxpayer subsidies for . . . athletic-program donations benefit the public at large” (Wolverton, 2007, p. 6). Wolverton (2007) also reported that because of this concern, senior lawmakers plan to question the Internal Revenue Service about the tax status of booster clubs as they relate to public school athletics programs.

Getting tax exempt status in Idaho is relatively easy. If an organization files for 501(c)3 status and receives it from the Internal Revenue Service, the organization automatically receives tax exemption from Idaho income tax (Hurwit & Associates, 2012).

The school administration and booster club officials must make sure that the tax code is followed concerning the club’s funds and distribution of funds. A tax evasion scandal would not further the interests of either the school or the contributors. It is important that all non-profit laws are followed as the booster club seeks to benefit athletics and other school activities (Ott, 2001).

Booster clubs and Title IX. Disparity between men’s and women’s opportunities, especially in regard to athletics, gave rise to Title IX legislation. The

theory behind Title IX “. . . simply means that all programs have the same opportunities, the same experiences, and the same quality as compared to other programs” (Berry, 2001, p. 31). The statute states, “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance” (Education Amendments of 1972, 1972). Finley (2006) wrote, “Title IX prohibits discrimination at academic institutions that receive federal funding” (p. 1).

In 1984, the Supreme Court in *Grove City v. Bell* ruled that Title IX applies only to the department or program receiving federal aid and not to the college as a whole, effectively diminishing the impact of Title IX (*Grove City v. Bell*, 1984). To correct this breach of the original intention of the law, Congress passed the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 (over the veto of President Regan), which directly applied Title IX to the whole of any academic institution that receives any federal funding, including scholarships (Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, 1988).

The passage of Title IX legislation in 1972 had an enormous, perhaps the largest, impact upon athletics in this (the twentieth) century. This law provided equal opportunity for young ladies. An athletic director had to make sure that the program met the three-pronged criteria of compliance, and also had to find funding for the new initiatives to make it work. In addition, the implementation of Title IX also meant education of the many constituents of an athletic program—coaches, athletes, parents, administrators, and booster clubs. (Hoch, 2006, p. 70)

Many booster clubs have been slow to understand and to implement this law as they spend funds, seemingly without regard, on certain men’s sports while women’s sports

struggle for financial survival (Suggs, 2005). This inequality incurs liability for the school with which the club is affiliated.

Title IX has a three-prong test to ensure compliance by the subject institution: (a) the school can demonstrate that the number of participation opportunities is substantially proportional to the percent of males and females in the school; (b) the school can demonstrate a history of expansion of offerings for the under-represented gender; or (c) the school can show that it has fully accommodated the interests and abilities of the underrepresented gender. This test applies not only to all school activities but also to boosters and the contributors to booster organizations (Epstein, 2003).

The Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act was amended in 1994 (Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act, 1994), requiring all colleges receiving federal funds to submit an annual report detailing their compliance with the Title IX provisions. To date, middle and high schools are not required to report under federal law, but they are required by some states to report their individual status to the state (Suggs, 2005).

Title IX has largely been seen as a college problem. However, Finley (2006) noted, “The colleges get all the attention, but Title IX isn’t about the nation’s elite college athletes. It’s about providing a grass-roots gateway to sports that benefit millions” (p. 2). Pennington (2004) wrote, “High school is where the Title IX action is” (p. 1). Currently, Title IX complaints to the United States Department of Education are far more likely to involve the lower level athletics found in secondary schools than college athletics. Since 2001, the Department of Education has handled five times as many equity complaints involving middle and high schools as complaints involving colleges and universities (Finley, 2006).

One of the challenges faced by high school administrators is working with parent-run booster clubs to ensure that male and female participants are being treated equitably (O'Reilly & Borman, 1984). The task is daunting. "Title IX applies to equipment, supplies, scheduling, practice time, travel, tutoring, coaching, locker rooms and facilities, medical and training services, housing and dining facilities, publicity, support services, and recruitment of athletes" (Finley, 2006, p. 2). Thelin (2000) noted that the criteria for equity of equipment and supplies is to assess the quality, quantity, suitability, maintenance, and availability of equipment for the athletic programs for both men's and women's athletic programs.

The responsibility for compliance with Title IX falls upon the shoulders of the district, not the booster club. Meade (2005) emphasized that the district ". . . has the sole responsibility for complying with Title IX and cannot shift the responsibility to the booster club" (p. 1). Finley (2006) added, "When inequity results from gifts given along gender lines, it is the responsibility of the district to correct the inequity by allocation of their own resources" (p. 3).

In the past five years, as more Title IX cases have been argued before the courts, judges have taken a closer look at how booster clubs affect the implementation of Title IX. What the courts have ruled is that booster club moneys do count in the Title IX equation. If the booster club for the boys' basketball team raises enough money for the players to have expensive warm-up jackets, the girls' team is entitled to such jackets, also. And, yes, it is the school district's responsibility to come up with the money for the girls' team. (Berry, 2001, p. 31)

This requirement sometimes brings about the situation where a district cannot legally accept a booster club donation without overextending its own financial resources. Schools should not accept donations unless the district is willing to provide or raise money to equalize girls' and boy's sports (Thelin, 2000). When powerful booster clubs gather strong community support, the need to equalize boys' and girls' sports by either turning down money or matching it with district funds can become a most difficult task.

In some cases, the school board has side-stepped the issue by directing building principals to oversee athletic expenditures to ensure gender equity. This responsibility has been put upon administrators regardless of the source of funding, whether school funds, district funds, or booster funds (Berry, 2001). The administration is thus put in the position, on the one hand, of offending powerful booster groups or, on the other hand, of exposing the district and the school to serious legal consequences.

Finley (2006) advised schools to avoid this situation by prohibiting gifts other than to the athletic department generally. The funds then go into a general athletic fund so the school administrators may control expenditures for all benefits provided to students. This solution, however, is often distasteful to booster groups because they want to administer their own funds; sometimes this solution greatly inhibits the booster club's ability to raise funds (Jordan, 2007). Savoye (2000) quoted a booster club president, who may be archetypical of booster officers and members: "We're the ones who have been out here working to make money, and . . . they're now telling us how we can spend it . . . " (p. 1).

The reality is that when booster clubs are active, the school administration must engage in a constant education process about Title IX. Berry (2001) wrote, ". . . explain

to your boosters what the vision is for your school—both for the long and short term. Let them know that and they'll buy in. The more education they have, the more they see that Title IX is not a hindrance" (p. 33).

Title IX is the law, and it will not, and should not, go away (Suggs, 2002). United States District Judge Anne Conway, in a case in a high school in Florida where the boys' baseball team had amenities not available to the girls' softball team, ruled, "Title IX is the law; it must be followed. Plaintiff correctly notes that the School Board has had decades to make the changes mandated by Title IX, yet it has not done so" (Berry, 2001, p. 33). The superior boys' facilities had almost entirely been provided by the baseball booster club (Battle of Sexes Rages over Equal Playing Fields, 1998). Since high schools do not have scholarship money and therefore do not need to worry about gender equity in funding athletes' education, their major concern is to ensure equal sport offerings are provided by district funds, school funds, and booster funds (Vest & Masterson, 2007). School administrators cannot use the defenses that they are not aware of the law, that they do not have enough money, or that they have not had sufficient time to correct deficiencies (Berry, 2001).

Title IX is not only the law; it is the right thing to do. It is important that the efforts of the booster club are not allowed to violate the letter nor the spirit of gender equity. The school administrator needs to be aware of the pitfalls and exposure to the school district in its relationship with the booster club and Title IX requirements.

Summary. Booster clubs are not fettered by many laws and regulations; however, they are required to pay relevant taxes such as sales tax, to file appropriate tax forms, and

to abide by Title IX. Booster club noncompliance may cause legal and public relations problems for the school district.

Booster Clubs as Businesses

Because of the fund-raising mission of booster clubs and the very public nature of their activities, sound business procedures must be embraced by booster clubs. These procedures should begin as the club is formed and define the way the club is administered and how the funds are accounted for. Careful guidelines must be in place to guide fundraising, thereby assuring fidelity of the funds and protection for the club officers and members.

The initial organization of a booster club. A successfully organized booster club will give the school the winning edge needed to compete successfully in both men's and women's sports (*Benedict College Procedural Manual*, 2002). Cassidy (1994) wrote that booster groups should benefit the school, students, teachers, administrators, individual programs, parents, and the community at large. Meyers (1988) noted, "The lack of success on the playing fields and gymnasiums is not a valid excuse for small or nonproductive booster clubs" (p. 91). Separating the success of the team on the field and the success of the booster club becomes an important undertaking, and if it is to be accomplished, careful thought should go into the founding and running of the booster club.

One of the most critical steps in laying the foundation for effectively utilizing booster clubs is the clarification of its purpose along with the drafting of by-laws that would incorporate this purpose and ensure its compatibility with existing Board of Education philosophies. (Selbe, 1997, p. 38)

Selbe (1997) also observed, “If guidelines are not identified and understood by all stakeholders the result may be an overlap of school and booster club responsibilities, which may cause unnecessary conflict between the administration and parents” (p. 2).

A mission statement helps define the purpose of the club, align club purpose with the school administration, and lay a foundation for development of club by-laws (*Benedict College Procedural Manual*, 2002). The mission statement for the Eden Prairie High School Booster Club (2011) is included as Appendix B as an example of a mission statement that accomplishes the above three objectives.

The club by-laws should define the purposes of the club and incorporate fidelity with the mission of the district and school (Selbe, 1997). The following two by-laws from the East Lansing Booster Club show how by-laws can identify the purposes of boosters and also identify those areas that are not allowed to the booster club:

Article 2—Statement of Purpose. The purpose of the booster club shall be: (1) to promote athletics in the atmosphere that is consistent with the educational philosophy of the school community; (2) to assist the school with the financial support of the athletic program through various programs and activities that either generate revenue for, or reduce expenses of, the athletic program; (3) to provide an opportunity for citizens to support student involvement in athletics and have a better understanding of activities which affect students in the school experience; (4) to provide additional opportunities for communication between coaches and parents, parents and parents, parents and students, and to give parents and students a common interest to share.

Article 9—Relationship of the Booster Club to the East Lansing School Administration. The Booster Club acknowledges that it is the school's responsibility for the following; (1) supervision of activities; (2) hiring, dismissal, and evaluation of personnel; (3) selection, use, cleaning, and storage of equipment; (4) adherence to the district, league, and state rules and regulations; (5) preparation of field and facilities; (6) hiring and supervision of officials; (7) transportation; (8) scheduling of athletic contests; (9) disbursement of funds transferred to the Athletic Department. (Cassidy, 1994, p. 74)

A complete set of sample bylaws from the Booster Clubs of America (Booster Clubs of America, 2011) is found in Appendix C. Care taken during the establishment of the by-laws will be an important key in avoiding conflict later in the relationship between the school and the booster club. Existing booster clubs and their affiliated schools are well advised to be sure a working set of by-laws is in place and is understood by all involved in the booster/school relationship (Corral, 2001).

The administration of a booster club. Selbe (1997) wrote, “An active high school booster club can result in a spirited and cooperative relationship between the school and the community” (p. 39). Also, students' educational experiences will improve if parents are actively involved. One way that this partnership between parents and the school can be fostered is when parents become involved in booster activities. This partnership works best when there is a clear understanding and agreement between the booster club and the school and the club is run in accordance with sound business procedures (Cassidy, 1994).

The school administration must take the lead in fostering the school/booster club relationship. Administrators need to have a better understanding of the role of the booster club, and they must make an effort to establish a personal relationship with the booster club leadership (Myers, 1988). “. . . [A]thletic directors, school administrators, and booster club members must understand exactly what booster clubs are, what groups and interests they represent, and what the clubs can do to help or hinder a high school athletic program” (Myers, 1988, p. 2). School administrators then must use this understanding to guide boosters and their respective clubs toward common educational goals (Manzo, 1997). Berry (2001) explained that this is the opportunity for administrators to keep booster club members informed about the school’s mission and to direct them to the fulfillment of that mission.

Because the school is responsible for all activities under the umbrella of the school name, school administrators must have oversight of any booster activities (Berry, 2001). Hoch (2006) observed, “As an athletic administrator, you need to provide time lines and organizational guidelines for the booster club. Otherwise, you will be the one picking up the pieces from poorly constructed plans” (p. 12).

In most circumstances, the school athletic director will serve as the link between the booster club and the school. It is not his or her duty to dictate or preside over the club but to advise, counsel, guide, and answer questions (Hoch, 2006). Appendix D lists procedures that can be used by the athletic director for establishing and maintaining booster clubs (Kentucky High School Athletic Association, 2011). The procedures define the relationship between the school and the booster club. They outline the school’s Title IX requirements and indicate how the booster club funds fit into the requirements. The

procedures set dates when the school will be notified of the booster club officer(s) who will communicate with the school. Also, guidelines are provided that direct fund-raising activities and how the school is informed of these activities.

From the booster club side, areas of concern are the short terms of involvement and the rapid turnover in officers, ignoring of their own constitutions and by-laws, and the small number of members in most booster clubs (Myers, 1988). Parents tend to remain active only as long as they have children in the school. This transition leads to a revolving door of parent turnover from year to year and instability in the booster club. This problem can be solved by promotion of officers from within the club and attention to the probability of discontinued activity of specific parents (Newell, 2005). “When a president steps down and new officers come in, it is explained to them what worked and what the duties of the club are” (Berry, 2001, p. 33)

Boosters should review their own constitution and by-laws yearly. If the club strays outside of these parameters, it falls upon the school administrators to demand adherence (Hoch, 2006). Corral (2001) noted, “Some districts have guidelines for parent organizations in board policy” (p. 7). Regardless of whether guidelines exist or not, it is clearly the responsibility of the school administration to oversee booster activities and the distribution of their funds (Berry, 2001).

A small number of members in a booster club may indicate the problem of parents free-riding on the contributions made by other families (Brunner & Imazeki, 2001). Free-riding refers to parents who receive the benefits of money and activities that benefit their children, but who choose not to become involved with their own time or money. Education of parents, solicitation of new members, cooperation of school officials, and

retention of current members are strategies in maintaining a sufficient number of members for a healthy booster club (Corral, 2001). Simon (2001) noted, “When educators guided parents and solicited their participation, parents responded with increased involvement to support student success” (p. 8).

Good management of a booster club is like good management of other organizations. Communication, respect, meaningful objectives, a sense of fair play, and accountability underlie a good club (Huntsman, 2005). A booster club that is run in accordance with sound business procedures is much more likely to be a club making major contributions with a minimum of problems.

Accounting procedures for a booster club. Booster clubs exist to raise funds and support various school activities (Hoch, 1998). Sometimes they are successful, such as the Corona del Mar High School Booster Club in California that raised \$650,000 in one year to help maintain school programs (Erdman, 1996). The challenge becomes the accurate accounting and proper use of these funds in compliance with public accounting procedures, Title IX requirements, federal regulations, and state laws, while at the same time achieving adequacy, equity, and a sense of fairness to students within the individual school (Odden & Picus, 2008).

The underlying principle in booster club accounting must be that booster club funds are really public funds (Myers, 1988). Many donors think they are actually giving to the school when they contribute to booster club functions. Booster clubs, however, often become very sensitive about the distribution of, and even the accounting for, these funds. They strongly resist being told how to spend “their money” and often generate problems regarding gender equity, fairness from sport to sport, and accountability for

funds (Finley, 2006). “Parent booster organizations provide funding for special programs that state funding cannot support. Unlike state funding there are very few, if any, limitations on how booster organizations are governed and how they spend their funds” (Corral, 2001, p. 7). Brunner and Imazeke (2004) asserted, “. . . schools and school districts often do not report private contributions in their official statements of revenue and expenses and even when they do, private contributions are not singled out as a separate source of revenue” (p. 42). The limited oversight of booster activities and an ability to raise vast amounts of money lead to the necessity for booster clubs to incorporate good accounting practices. Reliable accounting procedures provide confidence and trust in the club. Accounting procedures must coincide with accepted accounting principles if difficulties are to be avoided (Trainor, 2008).

[The] *Benedict College Procedural Manual* (2002) suggested the establishment of a purchase order system for booster club distribution of money. The purchase order system can incorporate school administrator input but should not involve school personnel signatures on booster club checking accounts. “Several of the booster organizations had the teacher or coach sign on the checking accounts. This is inconsistent with the district’s position of non-involvement. Having an employee’s signature on the checks (and/or purchase orders) can make the district liable” (Corral, 2001, p. 140).

“PTA organizations require an annual audit that is presented to their State organization. Boosters are not organized in any type of network and are only accountable to themselves” (Addonizio, 2000, p. 73). This lack of accountability leaves booster clubs susceptible to irregularities, defalcation, and fraud if proper accounting procedures are not followed. Corral (2001) found that booster fund audits were not consistent in any of

the schools she studied. An annual audit would go far in establishing accountability for funds and in tracing the equitable use of funds in the activities programs. An annual audit should be required in school board policy and in booster club by-laws (Odden & Picus, 2008).

Berry (2001) professed the ideal for booster clubs when she said that her booster club tried to meet the needs of anybody who came before it and that everything they did was reflected in the books. (The) *Benedict College Procedural Manual* (2002) stated the same attitude: “The Board of Directors (of the booster club) shall record in the minutes, every policy decision and fiscal transaction for posterity and accountability” (p. 26).

Booster clubs can and should provide accountability for their own protection and for the protection of their affiliated schools. It is the right of the donating public to be informed regarding the disposition of their donations. All stakeholders must remember that booster funds are public funds and must be accounted for and audited as such.

Booster clubs and fundraising. The very existence of most booster clubs is closely tied to their fundraising function. “Athletic booster clubs are generally volunteer groups of parents and community members organized to support extracurricular activities” (Newell, 2005, p. 41). As parents show concern for a higher quality of education and activities for their children, fundraising is one of the few activities they have available to help assuage that concern (Brunner & Imazeki, 2004). From the school side, the need for fundraising is not going away anytime soon. The present climate of budget cuts, increasing costs, and financial pressures is causing districts to look for alternate funding for activities (Newell, 2005). Booster clubs can become one of the major sources of this alternate funding.

“At the school level, contributions are raised primarily by PTAs (Parent Teacher Associations), PTOs (Parent Teacher Organizations), and booster clubs. At the district level, contributions are raised primarily by local educational foundations” (Brunner and Imazeki, 2004).

. . . [A] booster club is a terrific revenue stream . . . It’s an outreach of the school programs. A lot of the schools have gone the route of allowing the fundraising part to go to a booster club vs. the sports team, the athletic director, or the individual coach. The booster club has become the fundraising arm at the school now. It might be for the sports programs or it might be for the whole school. It just depends on how it is coordinated within the school. (Newell, 2005, p. 41)

Booster clubs have shown a remarkable ability to raise large sums of money. In 1994, California PTA’s, education foundations, and booster clubs raised more than \$200 million for schools (Brunner & Sonstelie, 2002) The Wawasee Booster Club in Syracuse, Indiana, raised \$15,000 to \$17,000 in just one day at the annual golf tournament (Newell, 2002). Finley (2006) reported that the Westlake Chaps Booster Club in Texas raised \$300,000 in one month and spent the same amount. The Douglas County Quarterback Club in Castle Rock, Colorado, raises \$65,000 annually for football (Finley, 2006).

“Fund-raising is such a staple at public schools that it has spawned an entire industry that does nothing but supply products for fund-raisers” (Zimmer, Krop, Kaganoff, Ross, & Brewer, 2000, p. 10). The fundraising industry and its influence on schools introduce a growing concern about the commercialization of schools and the effect it has on the health and well-being of children (Dowling, 2000). Another recent addition to the fundraising juggernaut is the introduction of outright gambling to the

public school system. Bingo, poker nights, raffles, and lotteries are increasing in scope and popularity (Zimmer, Krop, Kaganoff, Ross, & Brewer, 2000). The moral implications, as they apply to the mission of the school, need to be weighed against the need for funds and the methods used to obtain them.

There is a danger faced by school districts as they turn the fundraising for athletics over to booster groups. “Institutions that sponsor major sports programs become subservient to the interests of boosters whose primary allegiance is to the teams . . .” (Naughton, 1998, p. 1) “Athletics . . . threaten(s) to overwhelm the (schools) in whose name they were established” (Barlow, 2001, p. 34). Fasano (2003) wrote, “. . . the commercialization of . . . sports has become a cancer on the soul of academia in America. That cancer must be excised in its entirety” (p. 4).

Sports as big business (riding on the backs of boosters and alumni) . . . is in direct conflict with nearly every value that should matter for . . . education. In the year 2001, the big business of big-time sports all but swamps those values, making a mockery of those professing to uphold them. (Barlow, 2001, p. 36)

The concern lies in the need for funding, the desire to include community and parents in the process, and the need to maintain control of activities associated with the school.

Although booster clubs arrange for and sponsor these fundraisers, the ultimate responsibility reverts to the schools with which they are affiliated. Immoral behavior, unethical fundraising, inappropriate dispersion of funds, and overzealous boosters all may taint the school and leave it with legal liability and a lack of adherence to its educational purpose (Finley, 2006).

School districts need to be careful in their relationship with boosters and commercial interests if they want to maintain control of the programs and if they want to fulfill their overall mission to educate students.

. . . [B]y granting a strong institutional voice to Booster Club members, or by filling the (school) with sports paraphernalia . . . the school is sending a message to every bright and intellectually serious high school student—if you’re brilliant at math or philosophy or Greek, we don’t value what you have to offer. (Dowling, 2001, p. 6)

Another pitfall in relying too heavily on the boosters to fund activities is patron burn-out. Patrons may put extensive efforts into fundraisers and then become unwilling to volunteer for and support a tax levy or a bond issue (Reeves, 2006).

Despite the inherent dangers faced by schools from overactive boosters, booster clubs and patron input will become more important than ever during a funding crisis. School boards know that if they cut athletic spending, threatening the sports programs, they will get voters’ attention (Swift, 1991). Newell (2005) wrote, “That’s how booster clubs, in many cases, are created, because they are going to supplement what used to be provided within their school taxes” (p. 41).

Unfortunately, the need for fund-raising is not going away. It’s even increased in certain states due to the geographic nature of budget cuts. I’ve seen in several states that programs are being cut from the budget in all areas. They need to really step up their fund-raising efforts to keep those extra sports. (Newel, 2005, p. 42)

Corral (2001) added, “. . . schools are becoming more dependent on booster organizations and communities to raise money for projects that they cannot otherwise afford” (p. 5).

Summary. The key then is to control, not eliminate, boosters and parents. Hoyle and Leff (1997) observed that players who enjoy a high level of parental support tend to find greater enjoyment in sports and place the activities higher in importance in their lives. Parents and boosters have a very important role to play, but their efforts must be controlled and channeled in productive avenues if the school is to maintain the integrity of its mission and control of its programs. Booster clubs can be a potent ally in the need for funding for extracurricular activities. Care must be taken to avoid unethical and immoral methods, to disperse funds in accordance with federal laws and good accounting practices, and to not overuse patrons in the effort.

Booster Clubs and School Finance

“The basic problem in school finance consists of providing sufficient resources to schools to enable them, in turn, to provide an equitable and adequate education for each child” (Odden & Picus, 2008, p. 29). The booster club can become an important factor in helping solve this problem, but unless officers and members understand the concepts of equity and adequacy, the organization may actually hinder the achievement of these objectives by the way they infuse funds into the school. The onus devolves upon the school administration to educate the boosters to become partners in achieving adequacy and equity. Booster clubs and education foundations may sometimes be resistant to these concepts (Addonizio, 2000). Despite the inherent dangers accompanying booster involvement, the fund-raising role of booster clubs is particularly critical in today’s economic climate (Newell, 2005).

Tax reform and financial challenges to activity programs. The tax reform movement in the late twentieth and the early twenty-first centuries has had a profound

impact on the ability of schools to finance programs and activities. California is a well documented example of the struggles concerning school finance across the nation. “Prior to 1972, finance in California schools was simple and dependable. The major source of school funding of K-12 education was local property tax . . .” (Corral, 2001, p. 2). In 1971, the California Supreme Court turned school finance in California upside down with its ruling in *Serrano v. Priest*. In the ruling, the court decided that wealth-related spending differences in the state should be eliminated (Glenn & Picus, 2007, p. 382). Coon (2009) noted, “*Serrano I* struck down California’s public-school, general-fund, financing structure as a violation of equal protection because under this system per-pupil expenditures varied greatly and depended on a school district’s tax base” (p. 1). To implement that ruling, the state legislature began to move school finance from the historical model of local property tax funding for schools to state-wide models of monetary redistribution (Thompson & Wood, 2001). In the wake of *Serrano v. Priest* (1971), 68% of California voters passed Proposition 13 in 1978. Proposition 13 limited the property tax that could be levied on taxpayers to one-percent of the cash value of the property (McCann, 1978). Goldfinger (1998) observed that the passage of Proposition 13, the *Serrano v. Priest* decision, and the school reform movement put California schools in a state of financial crisis. Glenn and Picus (2007) reasoned, “The passage of Proposition 13 demonstrated that Californians preferred low-quality public schools to a drastic redistribution of resources” (p. 393).

The impetus for greater levels of private support comes largely from the convergence of changes in the states’ school finance systems and changes in school governance models. Since the 1970s, more than 34 states have faced legal

challenges to their school funding systems. These challenges have been based on language contained in state constitutions regarding equitable educational opportunities for all students. In response to these challenges, to achieve greater equity in the use of dollars for education, school funding in many states has moved away from its traditional dependence on local property taxes toward greater dependence on state support. (Zimmer, Krop, Kaganoff, Ross, & Brewer, 2000, p. 7-8)

Idaho followed the lead of California and began the move from local to state funding of schools in the 1970's (Ferguson, 2013). There is a direct relationship between the availability of funding for school districts and the need for private fund raising, such as that provided by booster clubs. Idaho is no exception. Funding for schools in Idaho was originally based on local property tax and was the purview of the local school district. School districts flourished or languished depending upon the assessed valuation of property in the district and the willingness of local patrons to tax themselves for the benefit of their schools (Patrick, 2009).

The ensuing equity and adequacy issues resulted in a lawsuit in the 1970's, claiming that the Idaho school finance system violated equal protection principles as presented in state and federal law (Thompson v. Engelking, 1975). The Idaho State Supreme Court rejected the claim but reversed itself in 1993, declaring that the case should proceed to trial under the adequacy provision of the state constitution's education clause (ISEEO v. Evans, 1993). But before the case could go to trial, the legislature followed the lead of California and began the move from local to state funding of schools (Roberts, 2003). The funding formula was changed with the passage of SB 1560 in 1994,

which endeavored to eliminate teacher salary and class size disparities across the state. To do this, local property taxes were equalized by the state, a statewide salary and employee allocation system was put in place, and multipliers were used to help small, poor schools (Friend, 2005). Nicholson (1998) reported that this “. . . resulted in reduced local property tax levying authority of the local districts and replaced those funds with state funding” (p. 1).

The trial court declared *ISEEO v. Evans* moot because of the actions of the legislature, but the Idaho Supreme Court reversed the decision, declaring that the question was unresolved as to whether a “thorough” education was being provided for the children of Idaho. In 1997, the Idaho Supreme Court ruled that the state has a significant responsibility when it stated, “. . . the legislature has the duty to provide a means for school districts to fund facilities that offer a safe environment conducive to learning” (*ISEEO v. State*, 1998).

As state leaders struggled with the funding of schools in Idaho, Governor James Risch proposed the elimination of the school funding portion of the property tax and the substitution of revenue from a sales tax increase. This action was taken in August of 2006, moving school funding from the relatively stable property tax to the recession sensitive sales tax (Cuniff, 2006). The recession/depression of 2008 caused a dramatic decrease in state revenues, forcing the legislature to cut school funding by an unprecedented 7.7 percent. The staggering budget cut to local schools meant cuts in, among other things, activity programs (Russel, 2009). The response has been to look to such local sources of funds as over-ride levies, increased student fees, and booster contributions.

The funding of schools in Idaho has taken a tortuous path as the legislature has struggled to provide equity and adequacy in funding to local school districts. The State has taken on the burden of distributing funds to local districts. As state funding has moved from property tax to sales tax and income tax, the resulting sensitivity to recession has placed an increased burden on local sources to maintain programs. In this exigency, booster clubs, among other local sources, have played an important part in funding athletic programs.

The volunteer financing of high school activities. “A long-projected revenue chill is beginning to bite in a number of states, putting pressure on education policymakers to defend existing programs—and, in some cases, forcing them to prepare for the worst (when) budget cuts become a reality” (Zehr, 2007, p. 1). Selbe (1997) maintained, “Economic pressures have not spared high school athletic programs and school administrators are motivated to develop alternate means of funding” (p. ii). Corral (2001) stated that state budget cuts are forcing schools to find creative funding for programs that no longer receive state funds. Programs that tend to suffer from a funding shortfall are art, music, health, sports, and other electives.

When budgets tighten, programs begin to charge participation fees and turn to outside sources of funding.

School board funds remained the top source of athletics budget dollars, accounting for more than 46 percent of the budget. Revenue generated from student activities, sports tickets, and gate receipts make up about 32 percent of the average athletics budget, followed by booster club activities (almost 10 percent) and supplemental fundraising (about 7 percent). While many schools have

increasingly resorted to athletics participation fees, “pay-to-play” dollars make up only about 6 percent of the average athletics budget . . . In order to make up for that decreased funding, increases in other forms of funding were common.

Topping the list was an increase in booster club funding . . . (High School Athletics, 2007, p. 4)

Brunner and Imazeki (2004) stated, “. . . an increasing number of public schools and districts are appealing to their communities for private contributions to help counter dwindling local tax revenue and budget cuts at the state level” (p. 41). Booster clubs have become one of the major vehicles for garnering and channeling these private contributions into the school coffers (Trainor, 2008).

Communities have often been quick to provide voluntary contributions to save programs that otherwise would have been eliminated (Brunner and Imazeki, 2001). These actions, however, tend to run contrary to the avowed aim of fiscal reformers to provide adequacy and equity in funding for schools on a state-wide basis and likely violate the spirit of *Serrano v. Priest* (Seligman, 1988). In other words, rich districts can easily raise large sums of money for threatened programs while poor districts struggle, even with the best efforts of patrons, to raise money for programs that may be cut because of lack of state funding.

Although the reform equalizes government revenues across districts, families with high demand for school quality will supplement state revenue with their own contributions, yielding the same resources for their children’s education as under local finance. In the end, families undo school finance reform through voluntary contributions. (Brunner & Sonstelie, 2002, p. 3)

Addonizio (2000) noted, “. . . state authorities are generally unaware of the scope of revenue-raising activities of foundations and booster clubs, because such revenues are rarely included in standard school district financial reports” (p. 73). So the end result may well be that “local education foundations, booster clubs, and other entrepreneurial activities may exacerbate the very fiscal disparities public policy seeks to reduce” (Addonizio, 2000, p. 72).

Voluntary fundraising is seen also to support the effort to privatize public schools. “If nonprofit foundations rise to the occasion to fund education, then the educational enterprises in our communities become less dependent on public funds. By taking up the slack, educators and community members are reinforcing the political agenda to privatize schools” (Garret, 2007).

Picus (2004) wrote that the school finance effort towards adequacy is not an easy process. Voluntary fundraising complicates the effort, as does the prospect of severe budget cutbacks and rising costs for school programs. However, given the economic climate ravaging America today, the need for booster support and volunteer financing will not go away soon (Garret, 2007). Selbe (1997) claimed, “Teachers, students, or parents who were interested in certain programs found the only way to retain them was through the financial support of the booster club” (p. 25).

Schools are under a moral and legal mandate to provide adequate and equitable educational opportunities to students. Booster clubs provide an important source of funding to schools, but care must be taken to ensure that boosters’ efforts do not undo adequacy and equity in school finance. The onus falls on school administrators to provide a fair opportunity for all children. Therefore, administrators have a duty to educate and

control the activities of booster groups so that these opportunities are not unfairly skewed.

Summary

Sports are an important aspect of the lives of most Americans.

From politics to social relations, numerous aspects of our lives revolve around sports. Holiday celebrations include sporting events; political statements are made through sporting events; even dating is tied to the high school sports scene . . . even our language is replete with metaphors drawn from sports. (Rosentraub, 1997, p. 448)

Sports entwine people's lives, especially in adolescence during school. As students are drawn into the realm of school activities, parents and whole communities are pulled with them. Booster clubs are a natural result of the involvement of parents and community members with school sports. If there is to be a symbiotic relationship between the school and the booster club, "There must be effective communications between booster clubs, principals, and teacher/coaches" (Selbe, 1997).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to examine the characteristics of athletic booster clubs affiliated with medium sized high schools in southeastern Idaho and the relationship the clubs have with school athletics and school administration.

Research Questions

The following questions guided this study:

1. What are the underlying characteristics of successful athletic booster clubs in 2A and 3A schools in southeast Idaho?
2. How are the athletic booster clubs in southeastern Idaho organized and managed?
3. What similarities and differences exist in the perceptions of school administrators and athletic booster club officers concerning the role of the booster club?
4. What influence does the athletic booster club have on the administration of the athletics program and on the administration of the school?

This chapter on methodology describes the participants and sampling, instrumentation, procedures, and design and analysis as they apply to the purpose of this study. This study was a mixed methods study conducted in three phases: initial telephone contact with principals in 2A and 3A schools in Idaho Regions 5 and 6, written surveys completed by principals and booster club presidents where there was a functioning booster club, and in-depth interviews of principals and booster club president of three participating schools.

Participants and Sampling

The participants in the study were principals, athletic directors, and booster club leaders, all of whom were knowledgeable about and instrumental in the guidance and functioning of the local booster clubs in 2A and 3A high schools in southeastern Idaho. In Idaho, 2A high schools have student populations from 160 to 319, and 3A schools have student populations from 320 to 639. These schools were chosen because they represent the medium-sized schools in southeastern Idaho, thus eliminating the very small, rural schools and the large city schools.

Participants in the first phase of the study were the principals of all 2A and 3A schools in Regions 5 and 6, the regions in southeastern Idaho. Table 1 shows all high schools in Regions 5 and 6 with the subject 2A and 3A high schools in bold type.

Table 1
High Schools in Southeast Idaho (n = 38)

Region	Classification of high school	Name of high school
Region 5	5A	Highland
	4A	Century
		Pocatello
		Preston
	3A	American Falls
		Marsh Valley
		Snake River
	2A	Aberdeen
		Bear Lake
		Malad
		Soda Springs
		West Side
		Grace
	1A	North Gem
		Rockland
		Sho-Ban
Region 6	5A	Bonneville
		Hillcrest
		Idaho Falls
		Madison
		Skyline
	4A	Blackfoot
		Rigby
	3A	Shelley
		South Fremont
		Sugar-Salem
		Teton
	2A	Firth
		North Fremont
		Ririe
		Salmon
		West Jefferson
		Butte County
	1A	Challis
		Clark County
		Leadore
		Mackay

A criterion sample, meaning a sample of schools meeting pre-determined criteria (Patton, 2002), was formulated during the first phone call to the school principals. The principals helped the researcher identify the criterion sample for the second phase of the study. The determining factor was that the schools had a functioning booster club. A functioning booster club was defined as (a) a booster club that was organized, (b) a booster club that had meetings at least once a year, (c) a booster club that supported school activities, and (d) a booster club that was active in raising money for the athletics programs of the affiliated school. These criteria eliminated non-functioning and inactive booster organizations from the study.

Participants in the second phase of the study were principals and booster club presidents in those schools identified as having active booster clubs. These persons were sent an electronic survey via the Internet. For those participants who did not respond to the invitation to participate in the Internet survey, paper copies of the survey were mailed with return envelopes. Follow-up phone calls ensured that all schools that had functioning booster clubs were represented in the study.

During the third phase, three of the strongest and best booster clubs in the region were selected for the qualitative portion of the study. The participants in the qualitative phase of the study included the school principals and booster club officers from the three schools selected for the third phase of the study. This list is not exclusive because if a vice-principal, an athletic director, a head coach, or another individual emerged as one who had significant dealings with and knowledge of the booster club, he or she participated in the third phase of the study. Similarly, booster club members who participated in the third phase were chosen by the researcher after questioning the booster

club officers and school principal to find those individuals who were active, supporting members of the booster club, who were engaged in nearly all booster activities, and who would have the best insights to booster club activities.

Instrumentation

The initial telephone interview for the first phase of the study was developed following the pattern for telephone interviews used in the research for football booster clubs in Georgia by Tighe (1988). Questions from that study were adapted to align with the research questions of this phase of the study (The initial interview protocol appears in Appendix E). The external validity of the instrument was tested by piloting the questions with the principal and a booster club officer of a school that was not in the study group. Each question was examined to determine if it measured what was claimed to be measured in order to answer the questions of the study (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 2002). The initial phone interviews with school principals determined which schools were to be included in the second phase of the study. If a school did not have a functioning booster club, it was excluded from the study.

During the second phase of the study, questionnaires (see Appendix F) were sent via the Internet to principals and booster club officers of those schools with booster clubs that met the criteria for functioning booster clubs. The questionnaires were developed according to guidelines outlined in the *Practical Guide: Write Survey and Interview Questions* (OER Commons, 2011). The questionnaires used by Ronda Tighe (1988), Denise Selbe (1997), and Eric Myers (1988) for their research on booster clubs were used as guides for developing the research instrument related to booster clubs.

The primary instrument in the third phase of the study, the qualitative phase, was a list of structured interview questions (see Appendix G) for the principal and a similar list (see Appendix H) for the booster club officer. These questions were adapted from the booster club research of Corral (2001) and Selbe (1997). This approach allowed data to be gathered in a “somewhat systematic (manner) for each respondent” while still retaining a “fairly conversational and situational” interview (Patton, 2002, p. 349)

Reliability. The reliability or dependability of the Internet survey was achieved by using tested questions from the studies of Corral (2001), Tighe (1988), Selbe (1997), and Myers (1988). The questions were then pilot tested with a principal and a booster officer not affiliated with the study to assure that they were a consistent measure of targeted booster club characteristics. The reliability of the qualitative study was enhanced by using multiple sites and multiple participants at each site. This approach allowed “data saturation” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 69) and the emergence of general key categories as required in the general inductive approach for analysis (Thomas, 2006).

Validity. The content validity of the questions was determined with a pilot test during which a principal and a booster club president who were not in the study sample were given the survey. Answers to the survey questions were evaluated to determine if these questions provided responses that addressed the research questions (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 2002).

The questions used in the qualitative study were also pilot tested before the study interviews by conducting practice interviews with school administrators and booster members who were not involved in the study. Also, member checks were made after the interviews to ensure that what the researcher recorded was actually what was meant by

the participant (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 202, p. 453). The use of the focused interviews with a structured interview guide protocol enhanced validity and reliability by trading some of the freedom of participants' responses that would be inherent in a more open format for the structure and direction contained in the structured interview guide (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

Procedures

Application was made to the Idaho State University Human Subjects Committee for permission to proceed with the study. The study was approved with exempt status because the study was not invasive and was restricted to adults. After receiving approval by the committee, the study continued.

The first step was to conduct pilot studies with high school principals and booster club officers who were not a part of the study. This pilot study tested the questions and instruments for reliability and validity. It also allowed the researcher to practice his research and interview techniques.

After the pilot phase, the researcher contacted via telephone all of the high school principals in 2A and 3A schools in Regions 5 and 6 in southeastern Idaho. The telephone calls aided in the selection process of booster clubs to be studied. Each principal was questioned as to whether or not the school had a functioning booster club. If the school had a functioning booster club, the principal was asked if he or she was willing to cooperate in filling out a questionnaire about the booster club. The principal was also asked to provide names of and contact information for booster club officers.

If the school had a functioning booster club and if the school administrator and the booster club officer were willing to cooperate, questionnaires were loaded onto an

online survey service, and the participants were invited by e-mail to respond. A link to the survey was provided in the e-mail so that all the participant had to do was click to the survey and answers the questions. Then one click on the “finished” button sent the survey to the survey vendor where the researcher could access the data. When principals and booster officers did not respond to the online survey, a paper survey and a pre-addressed, stamped envelope were sent to the subject. Phone calls then followed up the mailings until all schools were represented in the survey.

The results of the questionnaire were tabulated, and then three booster clubs were chosen for the qualitative study. The criteria for the selection of the booster clubs were (a) booster clubs that perceived themselves as successful, (b) booster clubs that had elected leaders in place, (c) the most active booster clubs in terms of money raised for school programs and, (d) booster clubs that held regular meetings. The researcher, based on the research of Selbe (1997), Tighe(1988), and Myers (1988), decided that these were the criteria for booster club success that warranted further investigation in the study. At the researcher’s discretion, each criterion was awarded points on a Likert scale of “1” to “4”.

After having selected the three schools, the researcher interviewed administrators and the booster club officers of the selected schools in one-on-one situations, using a structured interview guide protocol. Interview sessions lasted 30 to 45 minutes per session, thus limiting repetition in the data that would have made the data mass unmanageable. Data were recorded with a voice recorder and with field notes. Participants were asked to share relevant documents, such as articles of incorporation, by-laws, meeting minutes, and advertisements. The setting for the interviews varied but was

always at the locale of the booster club under study. To ensure confidentiality and to enhance the honesty of responses, participants and schools were not identified. Each school was assigned a number and letters, and the participants' names were never used. This promise of anonymity was included in the informed consent that each participant signed.

The data that were recorded on the digital recording device were entered into a word processing program by the researcher. Validity or the trustworthiness of the data was checked by using the member check technique of presenting the transcribed interviews to the participants and having them evaluate the accuracy of their own statements. During this member checking, the participants were encouraged to elaborate on their previous answers and "to comment on categories or the interpretations made" (Thomas, 2006, p. 243).

Before and after the interviews, observations were made of the activities of each booster club in its context. Booster club activities were observed during athletic events, during booster club meetings, and during other activities, such as a booster-sponsored back-to-school night. Photos were taken (see Appendix I), and artifacts were collected to support observations.

Throughout these observations, the researcher ascertained how active the booster club was at the activities and how many people were involved. It was noted whether community members were involved or if the participants were primarily parents. The researcher also noted if the work of the booster club had many people providing leadership or if it was dictatorial in style. The researcher observed the level of involvement provided by the booster club in terms of school clothing, excitement about

team success, and general attitude about the school. A lack of booster involvement in activities was also noted if such a lack was observed.

The study was conducted with the understanding that no matter what lengths were taken to assure reliability and validity, the work was done through the lens of the researcher. It was also observed that participants were invariably proud of their schools and that people did not want their school to look bad to an administrator of a competing district. All attempts were made to enhance objectivity, but the nature of the research was, in reality, subjective (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

Design and Analysis

This study employed a mixed methods design. The emphasis was on the qualitative data with quantitative data being used to identify, define, and screen the subject booster clubs. The quantitative data were analyzed with descriptive statistics to show demographics, characteristics, and identifiers for the booster clubs in all schools that met the criteria for inclusion in the study. These data were gathered with electronic surveys and mailed questionnaires.

Because the objective was to understand the characteristics of the culture of the booster clubs within their context in the community and the school, a simple ethnological study was developed and presented. Patton (2002) noted, "Ethnographic inquiry takes as its central and guiding assumption that any human group of people interacting together for a period of time will evolve a culture" (p. 81). The booster club culture was the target, and the approach was emic: seeking to understand the characteristic of the culture as the members of the culture perceive these characteristics (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003). Because the qualitative study was limited to three booster clubs, the researcher was able to

observe the booster clubs in action and to conduct in-depth interviews. Customs, rituals, and symbols were noted as they related to booster clubs and the parent schools.

The data for the qualitative study were analyzed using the general inductive approach for analyzing qualitative data (Thomas, 2006). The approach was inductive because “the researcher begins with an area of study and allows the theory to emerge from the data” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 12). Booster clubs were the subject, and an understanding of the characteristics was allowed to emerge from “frequent, dominant, or significant themes inherent in (the) raw data” (Thomas, 2006, p. 238).

The analysis of the qualitative data proceeded as follows:

1. Prepare the raw data files (data cleaning). This step included putting all files in a common format and highlighting the interactions of the interviewer. Artifacts, observations, and photos were filed. The files were printed, and a backup file was made.
2. Initial reading and rereading of the text. The raw data were read until the researcher was familiar enough with the text that common themes and events were noted and understood.
3. Identify specific text segments related to the study objectives. The evaluator identified those segments of the text as they related to the study, and these were marked.
4. Label the segments of text to create categories. Categories were created to classify the segments of data. Some were general while others were very specific as they related to the topic. This step created as many as 30 to 40 categories.

5. Reduce overlap and redundancy among the categories. The categories were carefully studied, and duplicate phrases and themes were eliminated, reducing the categories to 15 to 20.
6. Continue revision and refinement of the category system. The researcher continued to review and refine the themes and segments within the categories. Contradictory points were noted, and appropriate quotations that conveyed the meaning of themes or categories were collected. Categories were combined or linked under other categories when the meanings were similar.
7. Create a model incorporating the most important categories. The model showed the emergence of understandings of the culture as these understandings related to the gathered categories from the research.
8. Code the data, allowing for multiple interpretations of individual segments. Theories were developed to explain the underpinnings of the booster club culture. Who was doing what? What were the assumptions of the culture? What were the interrelationships of the members of the culture? Why did they do what they did? What influence did their actions have on the school? What influence did these actions have on the community?
9. Continue revision and refinement of the category system as it related to the study objectives (Thomas, 2006, pp. 241-242).

Using emergent design to guide the study, categories and themes emerged to give meaning and understanding to booster club culture and to booster club relations with the affiliated schools (Patton, 2002).

Summary

This study used a mixed methods research design. The study began with a quantitative evaluation of the characteristics of the subject booster clubs. Survey results were used to develop graphs, charts, and tables to organize and present the data.

The qualitative portion of the research used an ethnographic approach to understand and mine the depths of the booster club culture. The researcher concerned himself with the characteristics of three booster clubs, recording the responses of school administrators and booster club officers, observing booster club and athletic activities, and noting symbols and traditions of the organization. The study was emic in the sense that booster club culture was studied as the participants themselves see it, but it had an etic aspect in the observations and interpretations of the researcher. Participants were interviewed, using a structured interview outline protocol. The data were analyzed using the general inductive approach, and responses were coded and evaluated within the parameters of the study objectives. Emergent themes were used to answer the research questions posed for this study.

Chapter 4 will present the results of the research study, using tables, diagrams, and data to enhance the explanations.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

This chapter will present the results of the study. The purpose of this study was to examine the characteristics of athletic booster clubs affiliated with medium-sized high schools in southeastern Idaho and the relationship the clubs have with school athletics and school administration.

The following questions guided the study:

1. What are the underlying characteristics of successful athletic booster clubs in 2A and 3A schools in southeastern Idaho?
2. How are the athletic booster clubs in southeastern Idaho organized and managed?
3. What similarities and differences exist in the perceptions of school administrators and athletic booster club officers concerning the role of the booster club?
4. What influence does the athletic booster club have on the administration of the sports program and on the administration of the school?

All high schools in regions 5 and 6 of southeastern Idaho were identified, and the 2A and 3A schools were categorized as indicated in Table 1 on page 71.

Phase 1: Initial Phone Calls to High School Principals.

All 2A and 3A high school principals were contacted by telephone to ascertain if the high school had a functioning athletic booster club. Table 2 indicates the number of high schools that had functioning booster clubs at the time of the study. The schools were randomly assigned numbers and are designated HS1 through HS19

Table 2**2A and 3A Schools That Have Functioning Booster Clubs (n = 19)**

		<u>Have a Booster Club</u>	<u>Do Not Have a Booster Club</u>
HS1		Yes	
HS2		Yes	
HS3		Yes	
HS4		Yes	
HS5		Yes	
HS6		Yes	
HS7		Yes	
HS8		Yes	
HS9		Yes	
HS10			No
HS11		Yes	
HS12			No
HS13		Yes	
HS14		Yes	
HS15		Yes	
HS16		Yes	
HS17			No
HS18		Yes	
HS19		Yes	
Totals	19	16	3

As shown in Table 2, three of the subject schools did not have functioning booster clubs. These schools (HS10, HS12, and HS17) were dropped from any further consideration during the study, and surveys were not sent to these schools. Sixteen schools remained and were eligible for the study.

E-mail addresses were used to invite a high school administrator (the principal or the athletic director) and a booster club officer from each school to participate in the

online survey for a potential of 32 participants. Then phone calls were made to those who did not respond to the Internet survey. Eventually, surveys were received from school administrators for every school with a functioning booster club and from booster club officers for all but two schools with a functioning booster club. Table 3 indicates the responses for booster officers and school administrators to the survey.

Table 3

Responses to the Booster Club Surveys (n = 32)

<u>Respondent</u>	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>% of Responses</u>
Total School Administrators	16	100%
School Principals	14	87.5%
School Athletic Directors	2	12.5%
Total Booster Club Officers	16	87.5%
Booster Club Presidents	12	75 %
Other Booster Club Officers	2	12.5%

As shown in Table 3, survey data were collected from 16 schools and 30 participants, including principals, athletic directors, and booster club officers.

Phase 2: Surveys of School Administrators and Booster Club Officers.

Table 4 indicates school administrators' and booster club officers' perceptions of the level of activity for their local booster club.

Table 4

Perception of Booster Club Activity (n = 16 for administrators, n = 14 for Booster Club officers)

<u>School</u>	<u>School Administrator</u>	<u>Booster Club Officer</u>
HS1	Very Active	Very Active
HS2	Somewhat Active	Somewhat Active
HS3	Somewhat Active	Very Active
HS4	Somewhat Active	(No Survey Received)
HS5	Very Active	Very Active
HS6	Somewhat Active	Somewhat Active
HS7	Very Active	Very Active
HS8	Very Active	Very Active
HS9	Somewhat Active	Somewhat Active
HS11	Very Active	Very Active
HS13	Not Very Active	(No Survey Received)
HS14	Very Active	Very Active
HS15	Somewhat Active	Somewhat Active
HS16	Not Very Active	Not Very Active
HS18	Somewhat Active	Somewhat Active
HS19	Very Active	Very Active
Very Active	7	8
Somewhat Active	7	5
Not Very Active	2	1
Totals 30	16	14

As shown on Table 4, school principals and booster officers generally agreed on the activity level of their booster clubs. In two cases, there were no booster officers to contact, so only the responses of the administrators were used. In only one case, HS3, did the booster president and the school administrator differ about the activity level of the booster club. Two booster clubs were described as not very active at all. Of the remaining

14 booster clubs, about half were described as somewhat active, and half were reported to be very active.

Table 5 indicates the responses to two inquiries about characteristics of booster clubs, i.e., having elected leaders in place and frequency of booster club meetings.

Table 5

2A and 3A Schools That Have Elected Booster Club Leaders and the Frequency of Booster Club Meetings (n = 16)

	<u>Have Elected Leaders</u>	<u>Frequency of Meetings</u>
HS1	Yes	2-3 per Year
HS2	No	Yearly
HS3	Yes	2-3 per Year
HS4	No	None
HS5	No	None
HS6	Yes	Monthly
HS7	Yes	Monthly
HS8	No	2-3 per Year
HS9	No	2-3 per Year
HS11	Yes	None
HS13	Yes	2-3 per Year
HS14	Yes	2-3 per Year
HS15	Yes	Monthly
HS16	No	2-3 per Year
HS18	No	None
HS19	Yes	Monthly

As shown in Table 5, the responses of the school administrators and the booster club leaders did not vary regarding the booster club having elected leaders. Either the club had elected leaders, or it did not. Seven (44%) of the booster clubs reported not to have elected leaders in place. Further investigation showed that long-term, unelected leaders and/or volunteers were running the club in some instances. In two cases, a school administrator was trying to run the club.

Regarding the frequency of booster club meetings, the booster club officers and the school administrators agreed that the booster clubs either met or they did not meet.

Four (25%) of the booster clubs reported that they did not meet.

The next measure of booster club success and activity was the amount of money each booster club raised in the school year 2012-13. Table 6 indicates the responses given by school administrators and booster club officers as to the amount of money raised by the booster club in the last school year. Many school administrators had limited knowledge of the actual amount of money that was raised.

Table 6

**School Administrators and Booster Club Officers Perceptions Concerning the
Amount of Money Raised by Booster Clubs in the school Year 2012-2013. (n = 32)**

	<u>School Administrator</u>	<u>Booster Club Officer</u>
HS1	\$5-10,000	\$5-10,000
HS2	Didn't Know	Less than \$5,000
HS3	Less than \$5,000	Less than \$5,000
HS4	Less than \$5,000	(No Survey Received)
HS5	\$5-10,000	\$5-10,000
HS6	\$5-10,000	Less than \$5,000
HS7	\$10-25,000	\$10-25,000
HS8	\$5-10,000	More than \$25,000
HS9	Less than \$5,000	Less than \$5,000
HS11	Less than \$5,000	\$5-10,000
HS13	Less than \$5,000	(No Survey Received)
HS14	\$5-10,000	\$5-10,000
HS15	Less than \$5,000	Less than \$5,000
HS16	\$5-10,000	\$5-10,000
HS18	Less than \$5,000	Less than \$5,000
HS19	\$10-25,000	\$10-25,000
Less than \$5,000	7	6
\$5,000 to \$10,000	6	5
\$10,000 to 25,000	2	2
More than \$25,000	0	1
Don't know/No survey	1	2
Totals	16	16

As shown on Table 6, school administrators and booster club officers from four school districts disagreed on the amount of money raised by the booster club in the previous year. Otherwise, both groups agreed on the amount of money that the booster club was able to raise.

Table 7 indicates the measures of success of a booster club. Points are assigned to

each booster club, signifying the success of the organization.

Table 7

Indicators of a Successful Booster Club

<u>Indicator</u>	<u>Points Assigned to Measure Success</u>
Perception of booster club activity	
Very active	4
Somewhat active	3
Not very active	2
Leadership	
Elected leaders in place	4
No elected leaders	1
Frequency of booster club meetings	
Monthly	4
2-3 times a year	3
Yearly	2
No formal meetings	1
Dollars raised by the booster club	
More than \$25,000	4
\$10,000 to \$25,000	3
\$5,000 to \$10,000	2
Less than \$5,000	1

Table 8 indicates the points accrued by each school's booster club on the measure of success. Then a composite score for each booster club was computed and is shown in the last column.

Table 8**Combined Indicators of a Successful Booster Club (n = 16)**

School	Perception	Leadership	Meetings	Dollars	Total
HS1	4	4	3	2	13
HS2	3	1	2	1	7
HS3	3	4	3	1	11
HS4	3	1	1	1	6
HS5	4	1	1	2	8
HS6	3	4	4	1	12
HS7	4	4	4	3	15
HS8	4	1	1	4	10
HS9	3	1	3	1	8
HS11	4	4	1	2	11
HS13	2	1	3	1	7
HS14	3	4	3	2	12
HS15	4	4	4	1	13
HS16	2	1	3	2	8
HS18	3	1	1	1	6
HS19	4	4	4	3	15

As shown on Table 8, HS1, HS7, HS15, and HS19 had the most successful booster clubs, according to the four measures of a successful booster club derived from the survey. Three were chosen for the qualitative portion of the study. The booster club from HS7 had to be eliminated from the qualitative portion of the study because time and

distance made scheduling on-site interviews with the boosters and the school leadership, gathering artifacts, and observing the booster club in action extremely difficult.

Therefore, booster clubs in HS1, HS15, and HS19 were chosen to participate in the qualitative portion of this study. Hereafter, these schools will retain their designation of HS1, HS15, and HS19 with their affiliated booster clubs being designated BC1, BC15, and BC19.

Other results from the survey, although not used to choose the booster clubs for the qualitative portion of the study, provide insight and depth to the understanding of the booster clubs in general. These indicators also provided data about direction and trends, which helped guide the qualitative interviews.

Table 9 indicates the reported percent of students in the school who participate in Idaho High School Activities Association (IHSAA) sanctioned sports. These numbers were taken from the school administrators' responses because they were more familiar with the number of students involved in athletic activities.

Table 9**Percent of Students Participating in IHSAA Sports (n = 16)**

<u>School</u>	<u>Percent of Students</u>
HS1	45%
HS2	55%
HS3	60%
HS4	40%
HS5	60%
HS6	55%
HS7	50%
HS8	35%
HS9	55%
HS11	60%
HS13	25%
HS14	60%
HS15	45%
HS16	45%
HS18	60%
HS19	25%

It is difficult to account for the difference in participation rates among the schools.

Participation rates ranged from 60% in HS18 to 25% in HS19 and HS13. Some of the difference was because larger schools had a smaller percentage of students involved while still having the same numbers of students involved.

Table 10 indicates the areas in which booster clubs contributed to sports in the schools. These responses are taken from the booster club officers' responses except in the two cases where the only response was from school administrators. Responders were allowed to answer in more than one category.

Table 10**Contributions by the Booster Club (n = 16)**

<u>Contribution</u>	<u>Number of Schools</u>
Buying Equipment	13
Paying for Transportation	5
Buying Uniforms	6
Paying Rent for Practice Facilities	1
Providing Pay-to-Play Fees for Students	1
Providing Lodging at State Tournaments	3
Paying Entry Fees for Competitions	1

As shown on Table 10, nearly all of the booster clubs helped to buy athletic equipment. Many helped to pay for transportation and uniforms for teams.

Table 11 indicates the decision-making process for the expenditure of money raised by the booster club, including who decided how the money was spent, how much money was spent, and on what funds were spent.

Table 11**Who Decided How to Spend Booster Club Funds (n = 16)**

<u>Decision Making Body</u>	<u>Number of Schools</u>
Booster Club Officers	12
School Administrators	0
Both	4

As shown in Table 11, in no case was the money raised by the booster club turned over to the school administrators to spend at their sole discretion. Most spending decisions were made by the booster club and its officers. Four booster clubs cooperated with the school administrators in deciding where the money could be best spent to the advantage of the school and the students, but the final decision belonged to the booster club. In two cases, the booster club was run by an administrator, but both administrators reported that school boosters were still included in the decision to spend money.

Table 12 indicates a composite of the major sources of funding for the booster clubs. This information came from the booster club officers. Each booster club was allowed to identify more than one source of funding if it was a significant source for the booster club.

Table 12**Sources of Booster Club Funding (n = 16)**

<u>Source of Funds</u>	<u>Number of Schools</u>
Concessions	7
Fundraisers	13
Donations	6
Dues	2
Clothing Sales	3

As shown on Table 12, fundraisers were represented to be a major source of booster club funding. Fundraisers included dinners, dances, and half-time activities at school ball games. Seven of the booster clubs operated the concessions at basketball and/or football games. The proceeds became an important source of revenue for them. Two of the booster clubs charged member dues. Three booster clubs promoted and sold school clothing at games and other events.

At the end of the survey, the participants were asked to respond to the open-ended question. “What is the biggest problem for your booster club?” The results are presented in Table 13.

Table 13**The Biggest Problem Facing the Booster Club (n = 30)**

<u>The Problem</u>	<u>Number of Respondents</u>
Lack of Membership	5
Lack of Parent Involvement	16
Crisis in Leadership	2
Difficulty Raising Money	2
Poorly Organized	1
Lack of Communication with School Administration	4

As shown on Table 13, lack of parent involvement was by far the biggest problem perceived in the booster clubs. A lack of membership in the booster club and lack of communication with the school administrators were also identified as significant problems.

Phase 3: Qualitative Study of the Three Booster Clubs.

Collecting and understanding the data pertaining to booster club activity were important in assessing the successes and weaknesses of individual booster clubs. The study examined three of the most successful booster clubs (HS1, HS15 and HS19), using ethnological methodology for the research and the general inductive approach to analyze the data.

Booster officers and school officials were interviewed, using a structured interview guide (see Appendices I and J) to facilitate open discussion but to also put limits on the inquiry. Data collection was done on-site, using a recording device, a camera, and the researcher's notebook.

After the data collection, the data were transcribed, organized, and further prepared for analysis. The general inductive approach was then used to develop emergent themes and categories: (a) the data were read and reread until familiar themes began to appear; (b) these themes were marked and put into categories; (c) redundancy and overlap among the categories were eliminated; (d) the emergent model described the characteristics of the subject booster clubs; (e) this model, along with survey data, was used to answer the research questions of the study.

Research Question One: What are the underlying characteristics of successful athletic booster clubs in 2A and 3A schools in southeastern Idaho?

Three high schools (HS1, HS15, and HS19) and their attendant booster clubs were studied. These booster clubs were chosen because of the designation of "successful" as indicated by the data taken from the survey and presented in Table 8. The definition of a successful booster club was tied to a leadership structure in the booster club, fund raising success, a perception of success about the booster club, and regular meetings of the booster club.

Leadership. The first theme that emerged related to successful athletic booster clubs was the need for a committed and consistent leadership team. School administrators lauded the efforts of their booster leaders. The principal from HS1 passionately described the efforts of the four women who have headed the booster club for several years. He

stated, “They are the key and the reason for our success.” He elaborated, “[The] booster club is run by four ladies who run everything from athletics to even saying how the finances are spent and which programs are getting a percentage of the money, and what the needs of the different sports are.” The HS15 school administrator remarked, “The essence of a successful booster club is directly tied to the quality of leadership that you have in place.” As this leader talked of the success of the booster club, he credited his club’s leadership when he said, “There hasn’t been a (significant) turnover in the booster club leadership because there are two or three very capable people who control it and have run it for several years.” The principal of HS19 also credited the success of his booster club to the club leadership. He stated, “It really has a lot to do with who the presidency is.”

The principal of HS1 stated the essence of his booster club leadership when he said, “The ladies are what makes (sic) it work, and they really have the best interests of the student athletes in mind.” The principal of HS19 summed it up when he said, “The key for a successful booster club is to have the right people in place.”

Booster club officers and members also indicated the importance of commitment and continuity in leadership. BC19 carefully groomed new leaders by nominating strong leaders to serve in the leadership team and then moving them up the ranks until they served as vice president and then president. The president stated, “Our booster club has a board of eight to ten volunteers. The booster officers always come from members of the board, (and) then they serve six to eight years, the last two as president of the booster club. This gives us strong, committed leaders and is huge in our success.” The BC1 president exemplified the attitude of successful booster club leaders when she said, “I

love working for the booster club because I feel that it helps the kids. I love that feeling. It is worth whatever hassles come my way and whatever time I spend.” The leader of BC15 remarked, “I am happy with our booster club, and I would not change anything about the way we do business.” The researcher observed this optimistic attitude and spirit of success in the leadership of all three booster clubs that were studied. It spread from them to the clubs to the activities and even to the students.

Observations and interviews indicated that the leaders were trained and were competent to do their jobs. However, no formal training programs were provided by the schools or by the booster clubs themselves. Typical of all the clubs was the report of the president of BC19. “Booster officers are not formally trained. There is a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. The old president retires, and the other officers rotate up the ladder after two years. They are trained on the job by the old officers.”

The training in every instance was informal training. Each booster club trained key leaders by having them serve for a time under other seasoned leaders. There was no instance in any of the successful booster clubs where a president was chosen from the ranks of parents or patrons who had not already been serving in the booster club. The observation was also made that there is often more longevity and stability in the booster club leadership than there is in the school administration.

The negative side of booster club leadership and participation was voiced by the principal of HS1. He said of the leadership, “They really have a thankless job.” This sentiment was echoed by an officer of BC19 who stated, “In eight years, only once has a group or leader expressed appreciation for the money that we raised and donated.”

Community Support. The next theme that emerged was the importance of community and public support for the booster club. The successful booster club became a rallying point for community support for the athletic teams and subsequently for the school. In many small communities, following the local team is what people do on Friday night. In every successful booster club that was studied, the booster club was a visible presence in and around sporting events. The president of BC15 noted,

In the fall we do a tailgate party for the community before the first game. We feed the community for free. We have tractor pulls and other activities. We introduce the players and have a huge community picnic. Most of the people who have kids in school show up.

The booster club then became an essential part of the festivities surrounding school athletic events. In HS1, the booster club operated the concessions for every home football game, grilling hamburgers and hot dogs, serving hot chocolate on cold nights and ice cones and soft drinks on warm evenings. Nearly every parent of a participating athlete and many other community members worked in the booster club concession stand at some time during the night. The researcher noted that sometimes more team work and school spirit were evident in the booster activities at these games than were evident in the student activities. The principal of this school noted, “The booster club is essential in rallying the people of our community in the support of the school and our teams.”

The principal of HS1 reported, “The booster club works a lot outside of (providing) the finances. They help the cheerleaders in pep assemblies, they promote school spirit, they provide free T-shirts for the kids, and they give prizes for students who have shown extraordinary school spirit.” Extending their efforts outside of athletics and

the students, this booster club rallied the community in a charity event. The principal reported, “The booster club helped raise funds for a community member who had cancer, like at the games and with the students.” These efforts worked to galvanize the support of the community and the school for this successful booster club.

In every instance of a successful booster club, the booster club was a known entity in the community and in the school. The principal of HS1 stated, “Our booster club helps promote attendance at school activities.” In contrast, the researcher tested this observation in an 2A school where the booster club was poorly functioning. People did not know who the leaders of this booster club were, and some did not even know there was a booster club in their town.

Even though these three booster clubs are successful, they recognize the need to increase their presence in the community and in the schools. The president of BC19 noted, “I would like more cooperation from the teachers and staff. The school needs to help us in our efforts to support their activities. We need to do a better job of getting them involved.” The leader of BC15 added, “I would like to see more people from the community involved in the booster club and in our activities.” A leader of BC1 stated, “We need better support of the parents. Too many are content to let their children live off of the efforts of others.” Another leader from BC15 responded, “I would like to see more people involved and a closer relationship with the school administration.”

By-laws. Every successful booster club had some form of written by-laws. Every booster leader was aware of the guidelines of by-laws, but the school administrators often were not. The BC15 booster club president stated that their “. . . by-laws are far from formal, but they are written and provide a guide for our booster club to follow.” The

principal of the same school stated, “They do not have by-laws.” Some of the confusion stems from the understanding of who provides the by-laws. In the mind of the principal of HS1, “The booster club is monitored and guided by the high school principal to keep an eye on things, but there is no formal policy or guidelines.” That same booster club had a set of by-laws, created and kept by the booster club, but independent of the school. Upon being pressed by the researcher about guidelines, the booster leader responded, “We have no written guidelines from the high school or from the school board. We usually meet with the administration at the beginning of the year and plan for the year.” Written guidelines, while existing within the booster clubs, are not provided by or monitored by these schools or their school boards.

BC19 had a different experience with by-laws. The BC19 president recalled, “Years ago the principal did not want a booster club. When _____ became the principal, he sponsored a booster club, and the president at that time helped create by-laws and guiding principles for the booster club to run with. It never came from the district or from the school, but it was created by the booster club itself. It was then reviewed by the principal, and he kept a copy.” The researcher questioned, “Does the present principal have a copy of these by-laws?” The response was, “I have no idea.”

A booster club officer of BC19 described the process of working with the booster club some years ago to develop written guidelines to facilitate the work of the booster club. He stated, “This has given us a foundation to build a productive relationship and has served to provide continuity as booster leadership has changed over the years.” The officers in BC19 referred to the collegial process of developing written guidelines as a significant event in the history of their club. The officers and administrators for the other

two schools' booster clubs did not collaborate in the development or revision of by-laws, but the booster clubs did have some form of written guidelines to instruct their process.

Financial Control. Financial control emerged as an important characteristic of successful booster clubs. Typically, the financial control resided in the booster club itself. BC15 reported, "The booster club accounts for our own money with no oversight or input from the school." BC19 president stated, "The booster club maintains a separate account from any money in the school accounts."

High school administrators typically had little or no knowledge of booster club funds. The HS15 principal declared, "I have no idea of the gross revenue of the booster club." The HS19 principal added, "I would like to know how much money they have in the account."

In contrast, BC1 deposited all funds in a high school account and had to request a check signed by the principal to access those funds. The principal stated, "I am comfortable with the financial system that we use, and I have never had any reason to second guess it." When the booster officials were asked about the system, the response was, "The system works for us. We have long-standing trust in our principal, and our money has always been readily available at our request. Maybe it will have to change when a new principal comes to town." The principal clarified, "Often the individual sports do a fund raiser that is independent of the booster club, and those funds are never comingled with the booster club funds."

An added advantage for the booster club using school accounts to house the booster club money was the availability of an audit by the school auditor. "The booster club funds are audited when the school funds are audited by the school auditor,"

acknowledged the HS1 principal. No other booster financial system that was researched was audited by an outside auditor.

Not one booster club was registered with the IRS as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization to facilitate tax advantages for donors. Also, no booster club filed a report with the IRS or a financial report with the State of Idaho. One of the three subject booster clubs did not pay sales tax. Their booster president acknowledged, “We do not report to the state or anyone else. We have not paid sales taxes in the past.” Another booster club did pay sales tax, and the booster president of the third school reported, “When I became president, I found out that we had not been paying sales tax. I did start paying it. We do not account to the IRS or to the state in any other way.”

One booster club reported, “Our checkbook only requires one signature. The checks are signed by the president. The secretary keeps track of the account so there are at least two people who know when and where the money is going.” She indicated, “I would recommend a two-signature system, and I think we will move that way.”

Booster officers tended to be content with the financial control as it was. High school administrators were not so sure. BC19 president confided, “I am comfortable with the financial system that we use, and I have never had any reason to second guess it.” The principal of the same school stated, “You can never have too much accounting and safeguards for the finances. I am not sure the booster club has any.” The president of the BC15 offered, “We are not audited. We do not have a formal review of the finances. I’m not sure it is anyone else’s business how much money we have in our account.” The principal of HS15 said, “The high school has no say in the accounting, distribution, and spending of booster club money.” He also voiced the concern that “I think that people

think the money raised by the booster club comes into the school and is spent by the school.” These were successful booster clubs, but clearly there was often a divide between school administrators and booster officers in what constituted adequate financial controls and operations. It was observed, however, that in each successful booster club, the finances were under control and that large amounts of money were being raised and used only on behalf of the athletic programs.

Activities and Events. Another theme that emerged from the interviews and from the observations was that successful booster clubs were involved in many varied and interesting events. All three booster clubs were involved at some level in operating concessions for football games, basketball games for boys and girls, and occasionally wrestling matches. Every successful booster club was involved in half-time activities during basketball games: conducting hoop shoots, sponsoring raffles, providing games for the children, and selling clothing and other spirit items.

The members of BC1 operated concessions and were successful in involving not only booster club members but a large number of parents and patrons of the community. BC1 also conducted a “spirit dinner” during the winter each year, featuring the athletes from the school and their families.

The members of BC15 were a very visible presence at football games with a sponsored hamburger fry, clothing sales, and half-time events, such as raffles and entertainment. The booster club president stated, “Our hamburgers are well known, and people come for a hamburger as much as for a game.” BC15 also featured a “meet the player’s night” and provided a free meal for anyone in town who wanted to attend. The booster club manned a large cannon in the end zone to celebrate a home score at the

football games. The president reported, “We also do advertising on the wall of the gym, sponsor tail-gate parties, and have a special feed for fans at the homecoming game ... we do a sports calendar. We call advertisers and sell the ads. We then distribute the calendars and split the money we make with the school.” The officers of BC15 also sponsored a free picnic for the fans and community before the first football game in the fall. The principal at HS15 noted, “One of the hallmarks of a successful booster club would have to be lots of members and lots of activities.”

Some of the members of BC19 used a candy cannon to shoot candy into the crowd during football games. BC19 had special booster spirit clothing that identified them and their booster club. The president of BC19 also reported, “We have sponsored dances in the school for the kids and also as a money making activity. We sponsor tail-gate parties and a homecoming float. We do a basketball shoot and other activities such as raffles at the halftime of the basketball games.”

In summary, the strongest theme that emerged from the qualitative research seeking the characteristics of a successful booster club was the existence of a strong and committed leadership in the booster club itself, as affirmed by both school and booster club leaders. Strong leaders provided guidance for booster club functions and continuity for booster club activities over time. Successful booster clubs also had community and public support. They were a known entity in the community and provided support for the schools they served. Successful booster clubs had written by-laws, whether formal or informal, and used those guidelines to steer activities and procedures. Successful clubs had some kind of training in place for booster club officers. The training was usually

informal, but it was consistent and effective. Finally, successful booster clubs sponsored varied and intriguing activities for both students and the local community.

Research Question Two: How are the athletic booster clubs in southeast Idaho organized and managed?

Information from the written surveys was the foundation for answering this question, and the qualitative work provided depth. Not all booster clubs had elected leaders. Of the 16 respondents that had booster clubs, seven reported that they did not have elected leaders. Several of these clubs relied on volunteers, and two of the booster clubs (BC5 and BC18) reported themselves as very active despite not having elected leadership. However, active booster clubs were never leaderless. When questioned about leadership, those clubs that did not have elected leaders in place were either being led by volunteers or, in two instances, by school administrators. It was observed that booster clubs without elected leaders often were run by entrenched boosters who had controlled the club for years. It was also observed that elected leaders promoted interest and innovation within the booster club that was largely missing when leadership of the booster club was static. One booster club had maintained the same unelected leadership for several years, and the booster club was seen to stagnate in its activities and fund raising.

Leadership typically consisted of a president, a vice-president, and a secretary/treasurer. BC19 had a governing board of eight members, but this was the exception in organizational structure. Only half of the booster clubs had some form of written documents to guide their activities.

Money was raised and used for school athletics by every booster club in the study. In HS1, the booster club money was deposited in the high school accounts and was administered by the high school principal. The high school secretary did the bookwork, and money was accessed by the booster club president, who filled out a requisition form and submitted it to the high school principal. The high school principal then approved the request and issued and signed the check, a process that gave the high school principal complete control over booster club funds. When asked if he ever refused a money request, he replied, “No, it is their money, and they are very responsible in how they use it.” The booster club officers were comfortable with the system as the booster president stated, “We totally trust our principal.” The high school principal and these booster club officers had worked together for many years and had developed a level of trust that made this system work for them. With this system, BC1 had the advantage of using the school accounting system and safeguards. This booster club also had the advantage of having their books kept by the school bookkeeper, an accounting system requiring two signatures, public disclosure of all accounts and transactions, an annual audit, and district oversight of all finances.

Much more typical were the systems used in HS15 and HS19. In these clubs, the money was kept in a separate booster club checking account. Only the booster club officers knew how much money was in the account. HS19 needed only one booster club officer signature (the president) to access the money while HS15 required two signatures. The booster president of BC19 noted, “I trust myself with the money. I don’t think this is a very secure system if someone else were president.” There was no public disclosure of funds in either booster club, and in both cases the high school administrator had no idea

of the fund balance for the booster club. Principals of HS15 and HS19 expressed their frustration in not knowing how much money the booster club had. The principal of HS19 said, “I would like to know how much money they have in their account.” The principal of HS15 stated, “I have no idea of the gross revenue of the booster club.” The booster club officials of both of these high schools carefully guarded the fund balance information and stated that they would never, despite frequent inquiries, disclose the amount to the school administration. The president of BC15 stated, “The booster club accounts for our own money with no oversight or input from the school.” The president of BC19 adamantly stated, “I’m not sure it is anyone else’s business how much money we have in our account.” When asked if the members of the booster club knew the amount of the booster club fund balance, the presidents BC15 and BC19 both replied that the president knew, and at HS15 the other officers knew. However, the members at-large did not know how much money was in the booster club accounts. The accounts of these booster clubs were never audited.

Booster club officers were asked if they collected and paid sales taxes. One booster club did not, but the other two did. None of the booster clubs filed any paperwork with the State of Idaho or with the IRS. None of the booster clubs had the tax-exempt status to benefit their donors.

The booster club officers were asked about how and when money was approved for expenditures. BC19 required a formal presentation to their booster club board. The president responded, “We only distribute money as it is requested by various teams. The request often comes through the athletic director. Then the board meets and reviews the request.” The board then discussed the request and authorized the funding if it deemed

the request appropriate. The BC15 president noted, “When a sport wants money, they fill out a grant request. The presidency of the booster club then reviews the grant and decides if we will fund all or part or none of the grant.” They reported that the decision required a consensus of the three officers. BC1 decided to fund or not to fund in a conference with the booster club president, the principal, and sometimes other booster club officers.

Most booster clubs spent money for equipment for their athletic teams. Booster club presidents and school principals all indicated they made an effort to make the spending fair and balanced between boys’ and girls’ teams and among the various sports. Booster clubs also tended to be active in providing at least some of the funding for new uniforms for the teams. Each school rotated the replacement of uniforms, and most of the booster officers were concerned that the school’s teams were appropriately uniformed.

The biggest challenge identified by all three principals and by all three booster club leadership teams was the need for more members in the booster club. The survey indicated that 10 of the 16 booster clubs identified as their number one concern some variation of membership, such as “more parent involvement” or “need more members” or “lack of community involvement.”

In summary, successful booster clubs have effective leadership in place, usually elected leaders. Generally these leaders are trained and prepared by years of service in the booster club before taking on the primary leadership role. Successful booster clubs also have some form of written documents to guide practice. Financial control is usually a function of the booster club itself, but an interesting model of unity and cooperation with attendant advantages was provided by HS1 and BC1. Booster clubs in southeastern Idaho are lax in filing paperwork with the IRS and with the State of Idaho, and in some cases

they did not pay sales tax. Most spending is approved by the booster club that raises the money with money being primarily spent on uniforms and equipment for the teams.

Every booster club and every school administrator identified the need for increased membership for continued success of the booster club.

Research Question Three: What similarities and differences exist in the perceptions of school administrators and athletic booster club officers concerning the role of the booster club?

Surveys and interviews with booster club officers and school officials indicated there were areas where they agreed on the role and the scope of the booster club. In other areas, there was sharp disagreement over the role and place of the booster club in athletics, booster club activities, and other functions of the booster club.

The first area of inquiry dealt with who decided the scope of activity and goals for the booster club. All booster club officers interviewed responded that they were responsible for these areas but that they accepted limited input from the school administrators. The president of BC15 noted, “The school has no part of the determination of booster activities. They do advise, but we decide.”

The delineation of responsibility was not so clear with the school administrators. Two of the principals expressed their desire to have more control over the booster clubs. The principal in HS15 talked about the need for booster club officer meetings with him where “. . . we would review the budget, we would review the bills, (and) we would have . . . accountability all the way across the board.” The principal of HS19 flatly stated, “I would like to see the booster club be more accountable to the administration at the school.” The principal in HS1 stated that the booster club was very informal and that it

needed to be more formalized with “. . . a board, formal procedures, and more oversight by the school administrators and the school board.” The principal from HS15 stated, “They need to come to me and be better at approving their program so that it fits with the school.” In every school, the researcher noted some tension concerning control of the booster club and the desire by school administrators for more control over booster club goals and direction.

Next the respondents were asked about the fundraising activities of the booster club. Every respondent agreed that a major role of the booster club was to raise money for the athletic programs. Differences appeared when asked about how the money should be spent and who should decide how the money should be spent. All booster club officers answered that they should be able to decide how the money was spent. BC19 president stated, “We raised the money, and we will decide how it is spent.” BC15 officer stated, “We have had difficulty when the principal decides he will tell us how to spend ‘our’ money.”

The principals had a different philosophy on the spending of booster club money. The principal of HS1 stated that he knew where the money could best be used and that the booster club was good to come to him for advice on how to spend the money. (It should be remembered that this particular booster club had to have the principal’s signature to access its money) The principal of HS15 stated that the money was raised on behalf of the school, and so the school administrator should be a major player in deciding the best place to spend the money. The officers of this booster club, BC15, held very fast to the control of the money, and in no circumstance were they willing to let the school administrator know exactly how much money they had in their fund balance.

The next area of inquiry was about the role of the booster club in helping foster school spirit. It was easy to find consensus between the booster clubs and the school administrators in this area. Every respondent stated that there is a role for the booster club in fostering school spirit in the schools. HS1 involved the booster club officers in pep assemblies, and the women of the booster club helped the cheerleaders organize spirit activities. The BC1 president replied, “We love involving students in spirit activities like pep assemblies and cheer competitions. We just love being a part of it.” The researcher noted the distribution of T-shirts and other spirit activities by this particular booster club. The other two clubs, although acknowledging a role in the creation of school spirit among students, were not as involved in actual student activities.

Another role designated for the booster club was to gather the community and the parents to help organize their support for the school teams. Principals especially appreciated the efforts of their booster clubs in promoting school spirit in the community. The principal in HS15 talked about the booster club’s “meet the players night” held in the fall. The town is treated to a free dinner in the park and a chance to meet the athletes who will compete in the fall sports. BC15 also made calendars that contained the school’s sports schedules and distributed them all over the town.

BC19 sponsored several tail-gate parties for the community with the objective of promoting school spirit in the community. The principal of HS19 stated, “The booster club is extremely important in gaining the support of parents and the community for our sports programs.” BC19 promoted spirit clothing and was particularly active in selling this clothing to parents and patrons.

Observations of the three booster clubs confirmed a visible presence at many sporting events and meaningful efforts to promote the school and its teams. The major efforts of all three booster clubs in the qualitative study were generally confined to football, boys' basketball and girls' basketball. Occasionally there was a presence at wrestling. There was little or no booster activity at volleyball, soccer, track, baseball, or softball. Booster club activity seemed to galvanize around activities where the community was more involved and where the crowds were large.

A role for booster clubs was sometimes identified as involvement in other school activities. BC19 was involved in some of the club sports in the school when they tried to get these clubs to participate in fundraising and to apply for booster club money. An effort was made to involve parents of club sport activities in the booster club with lackluster success. The BC19 president also noted, "We have sponsored dances at the school."

In summary, booster club officers often see a greater role for booster clubs in the school than do school administrators. Boosters want to make the decisions concerning goals and scope of the booster club. School administrators want more input into booster activities. Both groups identify fundraising as a major reason for the existence of the booster club. Booster officers, however, are much more inclined to see booster money as their money and as money to be spent at their discretion. All parties agree that booster clubs provide a valuable service to the school in promoting school spirit and community support for the school teams.

Research Question Four: What influence does the athletic booster club have on the administration of the sports program and on the administration of the school?

Concerning the administration of the school, there was strong agreement by both booster club officers and school administrators that the booster club had no role in the administration of the school. There was no evidence in any school that the booster club had any role in school administration.

Booster influence on the sports program was not so clear. The results of the survey showed that all administrators and all booster officers reported that the booster club had little or no influence on the administration of the sports programs. The qualitative research showed, however, that this is not necessarily the case. School administrators were unanimous in stating strong opinions that the booster club had no role in the conduct of athletics. The principal in HS1 seemed almost offended when the question was asked and stated a flat “No” indicating to move on to the next question. The principal in HS19 stated, “They do not have a role or influence in the sports program, nor will they ever.” The principal in HS15 calmly stated, “They have no role.” When he was asked if he ever foresaw a funding crisis so deep that the booster club would be asked to help recruit and pay for coaches he stated, “I would really hate to see it come to that. It would create problems that I hate to think about.” He elaborated that the booster club response likely would be, “The minute I put a nickel down, I get a nickel’s worth of say. Everybody will have their nickel’s worth, and we will have created anarchy in our coaching.”

The booster club officers were not so resolute in their denial of influence on athletics. Every booster club official who was interviewed said that the booster club had no official role in administration of athletics. However, they were, for the most part, avid fans as well as boosters, and they did not shy away from strong opinions about the local

athletic programs. The president of BC19 was invited by the school administrator to sit on the committee to select a new football coach. This president stated, “I was asked to be on the committee, but it was apparent that I was to listen, not talk, and I really had no part of the final decision of who the coach would be.” When asked if she felt she should have had a bigger role in the decision on the hiring of the coach, she replied, “If not, why was I on the committee?” A booster officer from BC15 responded to the question, “We do not have an official role, but we have influence. They need our money.”

The interesting dynamic that emerged was the tendency of the school administrators to carefully guard their territory and the tendency of booster club members to use what influence they could garner. The tension on this issue was always there, sometimes stronger than at other times, but it was always there.

In summary, both school administrators and booster club officers agreed that there is no role for the booster club in the administration of the school. Principals have a strong opinion that there is no role for the booster club in hiring personnel and in the administration of the athletic program. Booster club officers are very interested in the athletic programs of the school and are willing to use and exert influence whenever there is an opportunity to do so.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine the characteristics of athletic booster clubs affiliated with 2A and 3A classification high schools in southeastern Idaho. Administrators and booster club officers from all 2A and 3A schools that had booster clubs were surveyed to determine the strength and scope of the booster club. Data from

the surveys were used to determine three successful booster clubs to be studied in-depth in the qualitative research phase.

School administrators and booster club officers from three successful booster clubs were interviewed, using an interview guide protocol. The data were recorded, analyzed, and formed into categories using the general inductive approach. Emergent themes were constructed, which gave insight into the characteristics of successful booster club culture in southeast Idaho. The booster clubs were observed in their context and artifacts were collected. All of the above data were used to define the characteristics that these successful booster clubs shared.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Athletic booster clubs in southeastern Idaho are important to the schools, students, and communities they serve. The purpose of this study was to examine the characteristics of athletic booster clubs affiliated with medium-sized high schools in southeastern Idaho and the relationship the clubs have with school athletics and school administration.

The research questions that guided the study were as follows:

1. What are the underlying characteristics of successful athletic booster clubs in 2A and 3A schools in southeastern Idaho?
2. How are the athletic booster clubs in southeastern Idaho organized and managed?
3. What similarities and differences exist in the perceptions of school administrators and athletic booster club officers concerning the role of the booster club?
4. What influence does the athletic booster club have on the administration of the sports program and on the administration of the school?

This chapter summarizes the research, discusses the findings, and draws conclusions from the research. Recommendations are then made for school administrators, booster club officers, and booster clubs in general to identify best practices for booster clubs and help booster clubs more fully reach their potential. Recommendations for further research conclude this chapter.

Summary

The research was a mixed methods study combining qualitative and quantitative techniques to answer the research questions. The study began with the researcher identifying the 2A and 3A schools in Regions 5 and 6 of southeast Idaho. The principals of the schools were contacted by phone to determine if there were functioning booster clubs affiliated with the schools. If there were such clubs, contact information was obtained for the booster club officers. A school administrator and a booster club officer from each school were then invited to participate in an online survey. Sixteen of the nineteen schools had functioning booster clubs; three reported having no operating booster club. If there was not a functioning booster club, the school was dropped from the study.

The surveys were loaded onto an online survey service, and an e-mail with a link to the survey was sent to each principal and to the affiliated booster club officer. There was an 80% return rate for the online surveys. The remainder of the schools and booster clubs were sent a copy of the survey by mail with an enclosed pre-addressed envelope. After phone calls and encouragement from the researcher, every school was represented by at least a school administrator. Two schools were identified by the principals as having no available booster club officers. The principal or athletic director was functioning in that role for these schools.

Data from the surveys were analyzed to determine which clubs could be considered to be successful. Each booster club was awarded points on a scale from 1 to 4 for having elected leaders in place, for the frequency of booster club meetings, for the level of fund raising, and for the perception of success by booster club leaders and school

administrators. The results were tabulated, and three of the booster clubs with the highest scores were chosen for the qualitative portion of the study.

The qualitative study was ethnological and emic, thus seeking to understand the characteristics and culture of a local booster club from the viewpoint of the booster officials and school officials involved in the booster club. The three principals were interviewed at their offices, using a structured interview guide protocol. Booster club officers were also interviewed, using the structured interview guide protocol. Two booster officers were interviewed in their homes, and six were interviewed at their schools. In the case of one booster club, two booster club officers along with the president of the booster club were interviewed. A tape recorder was used to record the interviews. The researcher also took notes of the conversations. Questions were open-ended to encourage participants to expand their answers and to reduce interviewer bias.

After the interviews, the data were transcribed into written form by the researcher. Then using the general inductive approach (Thomas, 2006), the data were read and reread, categories were created as themes emerged from the data, categories were consolidated, and generalizations were made from the data. These generalizations were then used in conjunction with the quantitative data to answer the research questions.

In order to further imbed the researcher in the culture of the booster clubs, the researcher attended booster club meetings and activities, visited concessions operated by the booster club, and took pictures of the booster club activities (See Appendix I). The visits were not confined to the three subject booster clubs but were done across a wide variety of the 2A and 3A schools involved in the quantitative study.

Summary of Findings

Research Question One: What are the underlying characteristics of successful athletic booster clubs in 2A and 3A schools in southeastern Idaho?

The characteristics of three successful athletic booster clubs from the ranks of 2A and 3A schools in Regions 5 and 6 of southeastern Idaho were examined. The following results were found to underlie the successful athletic booster clubs in the study:

- Successful athletic booster clubs had strong, consistent leadership.
- The community, not just the parents of athletes, supported the efforts of the athletic booster clubs.
- The athletic booster clubs had some form of written guidelines to steer the operation of the booster clubs.
- The athletic booster clubs were involved in fundraising programs that were active and productive.
- The athletic booster clubs were structured organizations with regular membership meetings.

Research Question Two: How are the athletic booster clubs in southeastern Idaho organized and managed?

The following results indicated how successful athletic booster clubs in 2A and 3A schools in southeastern Idaho were organized and managed:

- The athletic booster clubs had elected booster club officers in place with an active president providing leadership and direction.
- The athletic booster clubs held regular membership meetings to keep members informed and to solicit members' involvement in booster club activities.

- The athletic booster clubs provided training for future booster club officers and leaders.
- Booster clubs had a good working relationship with the administrators of the local high schools.
- The athletic booster clubs had defined systems for allocation of booster club funds to the athletic programs in their schools.
- The athletic booster clubs had some form of financial controls and safeguards to protect booster club funds.

Research Question Three: What similarities and differences exist in the perceptions of school administrators and athletic booster club officers concerning the role of the booster club?

The similarities and differences that existed in the perceptions of booster club officers and school administrators concerning the role of the booster clubs were examined with the following results:

- School administrators and athletic booster club officers saw a major role for the booster club as raising funds and providing financial support for school athletic programs.
- The athletic booster clubs were seen by school administrators and booster club officers as important to promoting school spirit in the community and among the students.
- School administrators and athletic booster club officers regarded the booster club as a vital force in garnering support of the parents of student athletes.

- The athletic booster club officers resisted every attempt by school administrators to oversee and manage booster club funds. The booster club officers reserved the right to control their money, but every principal wanted shared decision making and input in the dissemination of booster club funds.

Research Question Four: What influence does the athletic booster club have on the administration of the sports program and on the administration of the school?

The influence that the athletic booster club had on the administration of the school and on the administration of the sports programs was studied with the following results:

- The athletic booster club officers and school administrators all agreed that the booster club had no role in the administration of the school.
- School administrators resisted any influence by athletic booster club officers and members in deciding the scope and direction of the school sports programs, including the hiring of coaches.
- The athletic booster club officials wanted involvement and were willing to expand their role in influencing the athletic programs to the extent that they were allowed by the school administrator.

Discussion

The contributions made by booster clubs, the problems associated with booster clubs, and the occasional contention surrounding booster clubs were important to the researcher because of his experience as a principal in a high school with an active booster club and as a school superintendent in a district with an almost non-functioning booster club. He was in a position to want to study the pros and cons of athletic booster clubs in

Idaho schools. The researcher read quantitative studies on high school booster clubs that provided general information on large numbers of booster clubs, but he desired to understand the inner functioning of individual booster clubs that a qualitative study could address. Hence, the study employed a mixed methods design.

Because there is such a variance in school size in southeastern Idaho, with high schools ranging from 20 students to more than 2000 students, the study was limited to schools in the middle classifications of 2A and 3A. 2A schools have 160 to 319 students, and 3A schools have 320 to 639 students.

School administrators and booster club officers were very cooperative. They all seemed interested in the study and in the findings. As they were engaged in conversation, the researcher came to understand that although there was great potential by the booster clubs to help the local high schools, there also was a lot of confusion and misunderstanding concerning organizational practices, leadership control, finances, and other best practices for booster clubs.

Great booster clubs that were studied as part of the project far exceeded the performance standards of the booster clubs that had been encountered by the researcher in his previous professional experiences. Other schools had no functioning booster clubs, some schools had booster clubs that were barely functioning, and some booster clubs could have been much more of an asset to the local high school athletic programs.

The most important finding was the importance of good leadership. Great energy and dedication were observed in some of the booster club leaders. They were vital to the success and energy exhibited by the booster club and its members. The selfless dedication

to the welfare of the students and to the athletic programs exhibited by many of the booster club leaders was very impressive.

However, it was dismaying to discover the ragged state of financial control in almost all of the booster clubs. Sales tax was not being paid, accounting systems lacked adequate safeguards, books were not audited, leaders felt no accountability to booster club members, community patrons, or the school, and in some cases, the booster club president had sole access to booster club money. The potential for careless use of funds and outright defalcation was prevalent. In one case, a former president “lost” a substantial amount of money, and there was not sufficient accountability to follow up on the loss or to even verify the amount that had been lost. Considering the large amounts of money raised and disbursed by some of these booster clubs, the need for better financial management and accountability is evident.

The research was a pleasant task. Going to the schools and mingling with different school administrators and booster club officers at their activities were enjoyable. Some of the photographs of booster club activities are included in Appendix I. Many booster club burgers were eaten, and booster club cultures and traditions were observed. Much good was found in each community and in each school. It was enervating to participate with students, administrators, and boosters in the context of their athletics. In each small town, the people felt that their kids were the best, their schools were unsurpassed, and their town was the only place a reasonable person would ever want to live.

Booster clubs are a tremendous resource that needs to be supported, encouraged, and helped by school administrators and the community at-large. They can have an

impact on students by building school and community spirit, by involving parents in student activities in a meaningful way, by supporting the financial needs of the school athletic programs, and by providing an example of community service to students.

Conclusions

Conclusions can be drawn from the research and are intended to inform and guide successful booster club practices.

- Leadership is critical in the formation and operation of a successful booster club. The best booster clubs always had energetic and committed leaders. This attitude infused the booster club with a feeling of importance, achievement, and meaning.
- Schools need active and successful booster clubs. In a time of dwindling finances, booster clubs can become an important source of funding for athletic teams and programs. Booster clubs can access alumni and patrons for financial support in ways that the school administration cannot accomplish alone.
- Booster clubs have poor financial controls, which could lead to fraud, misuse of funds, and withdrawal of support from donors.
- Successful booster clubs have written documents to guide leadership and to regulate activities. Formal written by-laws are the best, but some forms of written guidelines are needed to perpetuate the operations and traditions of the booster club.
- Successful booster clubs build school spirit in the community and in the school. Involvement in athletic activities encourages community support for the school and its programs. Involvement in assemblies, parades, and other school activities

supplements the school administrators' efforts to involve students and encourages them to find pride in their school and in themselves.

- Successful booster clubs help build better relationships between students and their parents. Booster activities involve parents in meaningful ways in the activities of their students. Parents can find appropriate involvement in school activities and in school athletics through membership in and support of the booster club.
- In schools with successful booster clubs, school administrators work to establish good lines of communication with the leaders of the booster club. The responsibility certainly runs two ways, but the administrator is the professional and he or she has much to gain from the support of a well organized and successful booster club.
- Successful booster clubs have a good relationship with the high school administration. Effective communication of goals, roles, and expectations enable the successful booster clubs to enhance the student experience.

Implications and Recommendations of the Study

Successful booster clubs enhance funding and involve parents in ways that cannot be otherwise duplicated (Corral, 2001). This study has defined the characteristics of successful athletic booster clubs in 2A and 3A high schools in southeastern Idaho. The implications of this study affect several groups both inside and outside the schools in southeastern Idaho. Booster club presidents and officers, school administrators, patrons and parents, and booster club members in general may all benefit from the findings of this study.

Implications and recommendations for booster club officers. Every successful booster club must have competent and enthusiastic booster club officers. The president is pivotal, and in all instances a highly successful booster club had a president providing effective leadership. Booster clubs need to recruit, train, and elect to office good people as a foundation for any other success that the booster club seeks to achieve.

Successful booster clubs are organized. They must hold regular meetings with agendas and minutes. They must have formal rules for the requisitioning and disbursement of booster club money. They need to set goals at the beginning of each year for fundraising and booster club activities that are clearly communicated to all of the booster club members. They must have a training program, even if informal, where prospective booster club presidents can be prepared and trained. Booster clubs need to provide written documents and by-laws to guide the operation of the club. Appendix B shows a sample mission statement for a booster club, and Appendix C presents sample by-laws that are appropriate for booster clubs.

It is important for booster clubs, both leaders and members, to comply with the laws and regulations of the State government. Records should be kept, and sales tax paid as required by law. It would be unfortunate if a booster club were to be indicted for not obeying the law, bringing negative publicity to the school and setting a poor example for students.

Booster clubs need to become 501(C)(3) organizations under the federal tax guidelines. When booster clubs become registered as charitable organizations they can better serve the needs of their donors. This would afford tax benefits for those who

donate to the booster club fundraising activities and providing the booster club with a good tool for the solicitation of donations.

Booster clubs must institute proper accounting procedures for booster club funds to safeguard not only the money but also the booster club officers. This process will include a separate booster club account with no commingling of funds, two signatures on the checks, proper requisitioning to access money, and a yearly audit of the books that is shared with all booster club members.

Successful booster clubs are encouraged to establish a web site to communicate goals, announce activities, and share news with the booster club members and with the community. The website may become a very effective tool for recruitment of new members, for serving the needs of parents of the student athletes, for advertising events, for soliciting donations, and for providing continuity to the booster club.

Booster clubs must actively recruit new members. Every booster club in the study expressed a desire for more members. People need to be asked to join the club, they need to be included in running the booster club, and they need to feel they are supporting the athletic programs and making a difference for their students and for the school.

Finally, successful booster clubs must sponsor a wide variety of fund raisers and activities. They need to be innovative and be willing to try new activities to capture the enthusiasm of the patrons and the students. Struggling booster clubs were observed to often be trapped in an endless repetition of traditional activities with little or no innovation.

Implications and recommendations for high school principals and other administrators. As school administrators work to help students find meaning and

fulfillment in their high school experience, successful booster clubs should effectively support this effort. The booster club can become a significant source of funding for athletics, providing money for uniforms, equipment, fees, and travel. Every high school principal should want the school to have a functioning, successful booster club.

Booster clubs need to complement the principal's efforts to increase school support among patrons and parents. The booster club becomes an effective vehicle for enlisting parental and community involvement in fundraising and student activities. The booster club can encourage and enhance the pride and spirit of the community towards the school and its athletic teams.

School administrators need to recognize the independence of booster clubs and work within that context. Principals must learn to partner with booster club and avoid trying to manipulate and run them.

Because of the many advantages of having a successful booster club, the principal can do some positive things to help the booster club be successful. First, the principal as the educational professional should be the one to initiate, encourage, and enable effective communication between the booster club officers and the school administrators. The principal should encourage regular meetings with the booster club officers to keep them informed of events occurring in the school and to provide input and support for booster club efforts. Second, the school principal must allow the booster officers and members to expend their enthusiasm for the teams within the framework of the booster guidelines. The principals must look at the booster efforts as an enhancement of their own success and not as a source of competition. Third, while understanding the significant role of the booster club in supporting the funding for athletic programs, the principal needs to work

closely with the booster club in encouraging it to raise money and to spend its money in the places where it will do the most good for students. This does not mean that the principal should make an effort to take over the finances of the booster club, but with tact and understanding, school leaders should work to help guide the booster club officers to make the best decisions concerning the disbursement of their funds. Fourth, the wise school administrator would use the considerable influence of the booster club to enhance school spirit among students and the community. By involving the booster club in spirit events in the school and in the community, the booster club becomes more involved and invigorated in carrying out its mission and also becomes a partner in the success of the athletic programs of the school. Finally, the principal should be among the first to show appreciation for booster club efforts and lead his or her school and community in the demonstration of gratitude for booster club contributions.

Implications and recommendations for booster clubs in general. There are implications for all booster clubs that could greatly enhance their chances for success. At the time of this study, no 2A or 3A booster club in Regions 5 and 6 had contact with the officers and/or members of other booster clubs in these regions. It is a shame to see so many good ideas that could greatly help the efforts of other booster clubs being isolated to only one club. A regional organization that met occasionally or even sponsored a blog to share ideas would facilitate this exchange. Booster clubs could share successful fund raising ideas, how they build membership numbers, how they are organized, what their foundational documents look like, and how they solve the myriad of problems that booster clubs face. Since all booster clubs function primarily within their own communities, they would not interfere with each other's booster efforts. There is an

awareness that these people heartily compete with each other on the field and in the gym through their students. However, sharing booster ideas has the potential to make them all stronger without compromising the school's competitive position. An unintended consequence might be a little more civility between communities and a vehicle to promote sportsmanship among the schools.

Recommendations for Further Study

This study has produced several recommendations for further research and study.

- Research in the future should replicate this study in A4 and A5 schools in southeast Idaho to allow a comparison with larger schools in the same geographical area.
- The study should also be replicated outside of the geographical area. Eastern Idaho has some unique characteristics of a very rural and agrarian economic base and a dominant religion. A study of the characteristics of booster clubs in other areas of Idaho and in neighboring states would make an interesting comparison with the characteristics of the successful booster clubs in southeastern Idaho.
- There should be a study of the relationship that does exist and the relationship that should exist between the school board and the local booster club. Although all school functions come under the governance of the local school board, no evidence of policy or oversight by a local school board concerning the booster club was found. Some districts across the country may have policies to guide the booster clubs in their schools, and that information could be useful to small, rural school districts in southeast Idaho.

- Much of the success found in well functioning booster clubs finds its root in the training of the officers. Research should be done in what training is most effective for booster club officers and how that training should be delivered most effectively.
- The degree of Title IX compliance that was found in the subject booster clubs was questionable because of the level of support they give to their various athletic programs. A study would be useful to look at the actual levels of funding and support for boys' athletic verses girls' athletics. This level of compliance could be compared to the reported compliance by each of the subject schools.

In summary, the findings of this study indicate that successful athletic booster clubs are built on a foundation of a solid leadership team, a good relationship with the high school administration, and parental and community support of the booster club and its activities. These results may encourage booster club leaders, school administrators, parents, and patrons to work together to implement these best practices. The final desired result would be these factors working together to provide boosters and parents involvement in the education of children, resulting in enhanced student achievement and positive educational outcomes.

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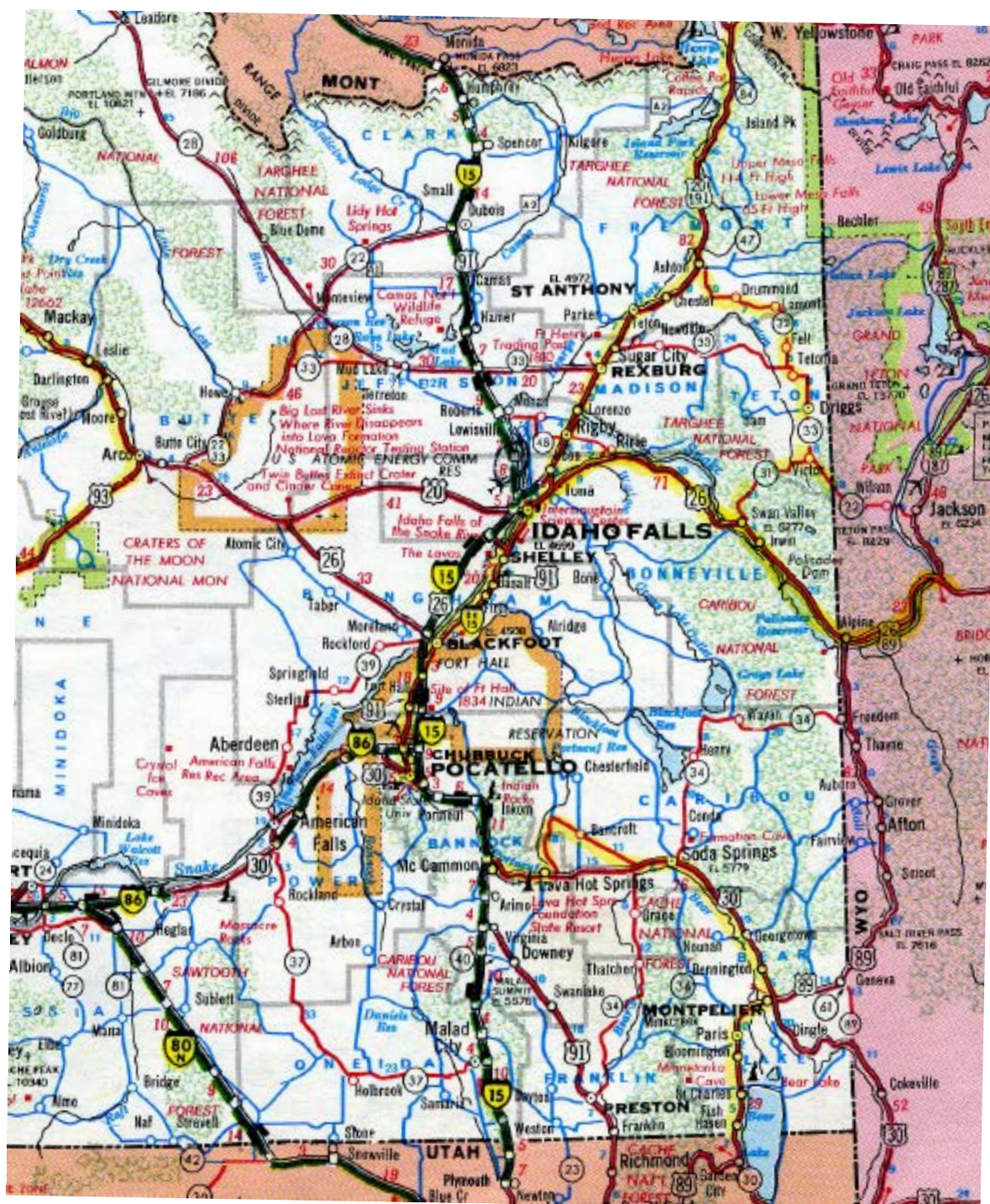
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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Map of Southeastern Idaho



Appendix B

The Mission Statement of the Eden Prairie High School Booster Club



Mission Statement

The Eden Prairie High School Booster Association supports over 50 co-curricular activities at Eden Prairie High School – enrichment and athletic. We believe strongly that student participation in co-curricular activities enhances a student's education and helps develop the total individual.

*E*XTRAORDINARY *P*EOPLE

We encourage all families, parents, staff and supporters of co-curricular activities to join the EPHS Booster Association.

The funds raised now will help support **more than 50 student activities** including theater, debate, speech, athletics, intramurals and band. ***Because of our many sponsors and parent volunteer efforts, the Booster Association was able to contribute over \$85,000 back to Student Activities in the 2010-11 school year.***

Considering all of the reductions in funding for our schools, this contribution has allowed students to continue to participate in activities that might have been out of their reach or discontinued.

**Please consider becoming a sponsor or renewing your
sponsorship for the 2011-12 school year today!**

Appendix C

Sample of Bylaws Presented by the Booster Clubs of America

Bylaws Guide: Part 1

by the Booster Clubs of America

Bylaws Guide For Booster Clubs

ARTICLE 1 - ORGANIZATION

This organization shall be a non-profit, unincorporated association, unless state laws require differently.

The name of the organization shall be:

Booster Club Name

School Name

Street Address

Town Zip

ARTICLE II - PUPOSE

Section 1

The booster club exists for the purpose of broadening the involvement of students, student families and the school, through support for all male and female activities of the inter-school athletic programs. The booster club works to achieve this through active participation of as many parents as possible in booster club programs and in concentrated support for individual sports, working closely with the coaches, athletic director, activities director and principal of the school.

- To support, promote, and maintain a high standard of integrity and good sportsmanship in all athletic activities of high school.
- To foster and promote good will and fraternal spirit among the members.
- To promote and encourage better attendance to all sports activities by the parents, and friends of athletes, the students, and faculty of the high school.
- To promote and encourage more young men and women to get involved in athletics, either as an active participant or as a volunteer assistant such as statistician, etc.
- To raise funds to assist all athletic programs through high school's athletic fund. The athletic director may help to create smaller booster club committees to directly support each coaches program or support a strong revenue producing program to raise the funds to assist all athletic programs and supported volunteers working for the

operation of concession stands, selling of advertisements, tickets, donation on any other legitimate method that the Board of Directors shall determine.

- To assist in holding down expenses to the athletic department by volunteer services to provide people to serve as parking lot attendants, chain gang, admission ticket gates, timers, judges, or any similar activity approved by the athletic department.
- Budgets are to be established at the beginning of each year. The coaches will submit to their respective committee their list of needs, prepared by the athletic director and the school principal. The committee chairman will then present the budget for approval by a 2/3 majority vote of the general membership in attendance.
- All money raised by special fund raising projects to meet the athletic departments requests, will be presented to the school administration in a manner of general agreement with the school administrator and club officers. The agreed plan is as follows:

ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1

Parents and friends of all past or present student athletes, and such other sports interested and acceptable persons who desire membership shall be eligible for membership in the association.

Section 2

There will be a yearly membership dues of _____ per person for regular active members. Dues shall be payable at the beginning of each school year. Dues may be increased or decreased by the Executive Board and a majority vote of the general membership.

Section 3

A special sustaining membership may be established for persons unable to volunteer their efforts but can support the school athletic program through a tax-free membership gift. There are three levels of contributions and memberships are to be renewed each year for non participating supports. Establish three levels of contribution.

1. Gold level is worth \$_____.
2. Silver level is worth \$_____.
3. Bronze level is worth \$_____.

Section 4

All active coaches, the Principal, the Activities Director, and the Athletic Director shall automatically be considered ex-officio members of the association and the Principal, or a representative of the Principal, shall be a member of the Executive Board of the Association.

ARTICLE IV - OFFICER ELECTIONS

Section 1 - Officers:

Officers shall consist of a President, Vice President, Treasurer, Recording Secretary and Corresponding Secretary. There shall be such additional officers, committee chairpersons, and other officials as the President shall appoint from time to time.

Section 2 - Election of Officers:

Election of officers shall take place at the meeting of the Association to be held in April of each year or as near there to as is reasonable (the election meeting). The slate of officers should be presented to the membership at the March meeting or a meeting proceeding the election meeting (the Nomination Meeting). The proposed slate shall be nominated by a nominating committee, hereafter defined, and the committee may nominate more than one proposed officer for each position. The proposed nominations may be accepted by the nominating committee in their sole consideration from the floor during the Nomination Meeting or the nominating committee may generate nominations itself. The full slate or slates as nominated by the nominating committee must be accepted by the Executive Board will be presented and voted upon the Election Meeting.

Section 3 - Nominating Committee:

The nominating committee shall consist of five members; two shall be elected by the Executive Board; two shall be elected from the floor at a general meeting of the Association to be held preceding the Nomination Meeting; and one shall be the principal of the School.

Section 4 - Term:

Officers shall serve for one year and not for more than two years, consecutively.

Section 5 - Eligibility:

Only members in good standing shall hold office or vote in elections, unless this provision is waived by the Executive Board.

Section 6 - Voting:

Voting shall be by secret ballot at the Election Meeting. There shall be an election committee of three, appointed by the President of the Association on the day of the election of officers.

The duty of the election committee shall be to pass out the ballots, collect the ballots, count them and the chairman of that committee is to read the final count to the Association. In the event there is more than one person nominated for any one office, then whoever wins the majority of votes cast shall be deemed winner of the election. In the event there is but one nominee for any particular office, and that nominee does not receive the majority of votes cast, then the Executive Board shall appoint an eligible member to serve in that office, and hold that office until next regular election, or in the alternative, the Executive Board may determine to hold another election for that particular office. The President, with the consent of the nominating committee, may forego the secret balloting and call for election by voice vote if he deems that the electors are clearly in favor of such procedure.

Section 7 - Installation:

Installation of officers shall be at the May meeting or final meeting of the school year, at which time the new officers shall take over their duties in all matters affecting the next subsequent school year.

Section 8 - Annual Meeting:

The annual meeting of the Association shall be the last meeting of the school year which, ordinarily, will be held in May. At the annual meeting, all annual reports shall be received and the new officers, retiring board, and the newly elected officers and new board, if organized, shall hold a joint session. At the joint session, the retiring officers and board all transfer all books and papers in their possession and belonging to the Association to the new administration, and otherwise advise the new administration as to the status of affairs of the Association.

Section 9

Past presidents who are still members of the Association shall remain on the Executive Board.

ARTICLE V - DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section I - President

It shall be the duty of the President to preside at all regular and special meeting and all Board meetings. The President shall perform all of the duties of the office; shall appoint all committees and committee chairpersons and shall be an ex-officio member of all committees, except the nominating committee. The President shall also sign all contracts, checks and disbursements, subject however, to the approval or ratification of the Executive Board. He shall be able to disburse funds up to \$_____ with the approval of one other Board member. The President shall have regular meetings with the school principal and athletic director as determined by the group.

Section II - Vice President

The Vice President shall act as President in the event of his absence, death, or incapacity and shall assume his duties for the balance of his term unless replaced by the Board. The Vice President's line of succession shall be as designated at the time of their elections.

Section III - Recording Secretary

It shall be the duty of the Recording Secretary to keep a record of all regular and special meetings, and all Board meetings. It shall also be the duty of the Recording Secretary to maintain a procedure book which is a record of the activities of the Association compiled into a permanent form.

Section IV - Corresponding Secretary

It shall be the duty of the Corresponding Secretary to conduct the correspondence of the Association, keep a list of the membership's current address, send out all notices when not

hereinafter provided for and send special letters, unless otherwise provided for in the standing rules. A sustaining membership program shall be maintained and regular reports will be given to the Treasurer.

Section V - Treasurer

It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to receive all monies due to the Association and deposit same in a place approved by the Association. The Treasurer shall disburse the funds of the Association only for purposes approved by the Association, from time to time. The Treasurer shall present a statement of account at all regular meetings and at other times when requested to do so by the President and shall make a full report at the annual meeting. The accounts of the Treasurer may be audited by a committee approved by the President.

ARTICLE VI - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1

The executive committee shall consist of the elected officers.

Section 2

The duties of the executive committee shall be to transact emergency business in the interval between executive board meetings.

Section 3

The majority of the executive committee shall constitute a quorum.

Section 4

Meetings of the executive committee shall be held as needed.

ARTICLE VII - EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1

The executive board shall consist of the officers of the association, the chairmen of standing committees, and the principal of the school or a representative appointed by him. The chairmen of the standing committees shall be selected by the officers of the association and the principal of the school or his representative. The members of the executive board shall serve until the election and qualification of their successors.

Section 2

The duties of the executive board shall be:

- a. To transact necessary business in the intervals between association meetings and such other business as may be referred to it by the association.
- b. To create standing committees.
- c. To approve the plans of work of the standing committees.
- d. To present a report at the regular meetings of the association.

- e. To prepare and submit to the association for approval a budget for the fiscal year.
- f. To approve any bills within the limits of the budget.

Section 3

Regular meetings of the executive board shall be held monthly during the school year, the time to be fixed by the board at its first meeting of the year. A majority of the executive board members shall constitute a quorum. Special meetings of the executive board may be called by the president or by a majority of the members of the board.

ARTICLE VIII - MEETINGS

Section 1

Regular meetings of the association shall be held

_____ (day of month and hour)

each month during the school year, unless otherwise provided by the association or by the executive board. (Number) _____ days notice having been given.

Section 2

Special meetings may be called by the executive board, (number) _____ days notice having been given.

Section 3

The annual meeting shall be in (month) _____.

Section 4

(Number) _____ members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business in any meeting of this association.

Section 5

QUORUMS: A quorum shall consist of not less than two-thirds of the Executive Board and not less than twenty-five members of the general membership. It is noted however, that at times, due to other commitments of the members, it may not be reasonable to obtain a quorum. Under such circumstances, a quorum event, such actions shall be subject to review by a full quorum within sixty days of such action having been taken, at which time the full quorum may reverse the action without a quorum.

ARTICLE IX - STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Section 1

The executive board may create such standing committees as it may deem necessary to promote the objects and carry on the work of the association. The term of each chairman shall be one year and until the election and qualification of his successor.

Section 2

The chairman of each standing committee shall present a plan of work to the executive board for approval. No committee work shall be undertaken without the consent of the executive board.

Section 3

The power to form special committees and appoint their members rests with the association and the executive board.

Section 4

The president shall be a member ex-officio of all committees except the nominating committee.

ARTICLE X - PROPERTY RIGHTS

Membership in this association shall not title or vest any of the members with any property rights or rights having monetary value of any kind whatsoever, including, but not limited to, property rights or monetary rights in the school or in the association.

ARTICLE XI - AMENDMENT

These by-laws shall be approved by a meeting of the regularly called general membership, by a majority vote of those members eligible to vote and actually casting their vote at said meeting. The by-laws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any regularly called meetings. Such amendments may only be recommended by the Executive Board, and shall be presented in writing and read at the regular meeting prior to the time of voting.

ARTICLE XII - RELATIONSHIP WITH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AND ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

The booster club shall operate in full support of the school principal, athletic director and coaches. At no time should the booster club make recommendations or become directly involved in the day to day operation of the school athletic program. The booster club serves only to support the school athletic program and has no way or direction of policy established by the school principal or athletic director.

Appendix D

Procedures for the Athletic Director in Relationship with the Booster Club

ATHLETIC BOOSTER CLUB AGREEMENT

This agreement is entered into by and between the _____ County Board of Education (hereafter referred to as “Board”) and an entity known as _____ (hereafter referred to as the “Booster Club”). Through this Agreement, the parties intend to set forth the Terms and Conditions under which the Booster Club may operate and associate with students, teachers, coaches and school administrators at _____ High School.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- The Booster Club acknowledges that the Board is responsible for the promotion of education and the general health and welfare of all students attending the _____ County Public Schools. In addition, the Booster Club acknowledges that the Board has control and management funds and all public school property in its district and may use its funds and property to pro of all school mote public education (KRS 160.290).
- The Booster Club acknowledges that its activities may affect compliance with Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 (Title 20, U.S.C. 1681-1687, et seq.) by _____ High School and the Board. Likewise, the Booster Club acknowledges that, as a condition of membership in the Kentucky High School Athletic Association, representatives of _____ High School and the Board must verify that the school complies with Title IX. 702 KAR 7:065, Section 2 (13). Accordingly, the Booster Club agrees to provide all information requested by _____ High School, the Board, or the Kentucky High School Athletic Association for purposes of determining Title IX compliance. The Booster Club further agrees to refrain from engaging in any activity which, in the opinion of the principal or athletic director of _____ High school or the Superintendent of the _____ County Public Schools, adversely affect the school’s or the Board ability to comply with Title IX.
- The Booster Club shall, on or before October 15, 2010 (for the 2010-2011 school year), and August 15, 2011 (for the 2011-2012 school year), designate a representative for purposes of communicating with and providing true and accurate information to the Board and _____ High School.

- Upon request of the principal or athletic director of _____ High School, or upon request of the Superintendent of the _____ County Public Schools, the Booster Club shall make available a full and complete list of its members.

- In addition to complying with the principles of internal accounting, and all other relevant statutes and regulations, the Booster Club shall, upon the request of the principal or athletic director of _____ High School, or on the request of the Superintendent of the _____ County Public Schools, provide a full and complete accounting of all moneys raised, as well as a full and complete accounting of all moneys expended. In addition, if requested to do so, the Booster Club shall also provide audited financial records concerning its activities.

- On or before December 15 (for the ensuing school year), the Booster Club shall advise the principal and athletic director of _____ High School of all fund raising activities planned for the upcoming year. To the extent the Booster Club seeks to engage in additional fund raising activities, it shall give at least _____ days notice if the intended activity.

- The principal and athletic director of _____ High School and the Superintendent of the _____ County Public Schools expressly reserve the right to reject any fund raising activity for any reason. The Booster Club agrees that it shall not engage in any fund raising activity which has not been approved or which has been rejected by the principal or athletic director of _____ High School or the Superintendent of the _____ County Public Schools.

- By executing this document through its designated representative, all members, officers, and representatives of the Booster Club agree to abide by the terms and conditions set forth below as well as those additional terms and conditions which may be required by the Board. The designated representative of the Booster Club represents and agrees that he/she will provide a copy of this agreement to all members of the Booster Club.

I hereby acknowledge that I am a representative of the _____
 Booster Club and that I am authorized to act on its behalf. I further agree that this Booster
 Club and its members shall abide by the Terms and Conditions set forth above. I further
 agree to immediately report to the principal and athletic director of
 _____ High School and to the Superintendent of the
 _____ County Public Schools any violation or breach of this
 agreement.

 (Name of Booster Club)

BY: _____

TITLE: _____

STATE OF _____

COUNTY OF _____

Subscribed and sworn to before me on this the ____ day of _____, 20__, by

_____.

 NOTARY

Appendix E

Initial Phone Call to the School Principal

1. Hello. My name is David Risenmay, and I am doing dissertation work for my doctorate at Idaho State University. My subject is high school booster clubs. Do you have a few minutes to answer questions about your booster club?
2. I need to tell you that all information will be strictly confidential, and when it is written up, it will be coded to protect the identity of your school and of your booster club. Do you have any questions about that?
3. Does your school have an athletic booster club? (If no, the call will end)
4. How would you define your booster club in terms of activity and success?
5. Does your booster club have elected leaders in place? How many? What are the offices?
6. How often does your booster club meet with parents and boosters?
7. Does the booster club raise money for your athletic programs?
8. Which programs do they raise money for?
9. Do you know about how much money they raise in a year?
 - a. Less than \$5,000
 - b. \$5,000 to \$10,000
 - c. \$10,000 to \$25,000
 - d. \$25,000 to \$50,000
 - e. \$50,000 to \$100,000
 - f. Over \$100,000
10. Please describe the involvement of booster club at your school activities.
11. Who is the primary contact for the school administration with the booster club?
12. If you have it, what is the contact information for the booster club leaders?

13. I would like to send you a questionnaire to get more information about your booster club and about the relationship of the booster club with the school. Would you be willing to respond to the study and sent it back to me?
14. I am going to study in-depth three booster clubs. If your school and booster club are chosen, would you be willing to participate in this study? Again, all information will be coded to protect the identity of your school and your booster club.

Appendix F

Questionnaire about Booster Clubs for the School Principal and the Booster Club President

1. What percent of your student body participates in one of more sports sponsored by the Idaho High School Athletic Association?

10-20% _____	20-30% _____
30-40% _____	40-50% _____
50-60% _____	60-70% _____

2. Does your school have a separate booster club for any sport? If so, what sport?
Does the booster club support all activities in the school?

3. During the past five years (school years 2006-07 to 2010-11) approximately how much money has your booster club averaged each year in its contribution to your school's activity programs?

_____	below \$10,000
_____	\$10,000 to \$20,000
_____	\$20,000 to \$30,000
_____	\$30,000 to \$50,000
_____	\$50,000 to \$100,000
_____	over \$100,000

4. How does your booster club contribute to activities programs? (Please mark all that apply)

_____	subsidizing coaches' salaries
_____	help paying for bus transportation
_____	subsidizing pay-to-play
_____	paying league fees and dues
_____	buying equipment
_____	buying uniforms
_____	paying for facilities
_____	sponsoring banquets
_____	other _____

5. How are decisions made concerning the expenditure of donations made by the booster club? (check the primary one)
- ☐ school administrator(s) make(s) the decision
 - ☐ the booster club officers make the decision
 - ☐ coaches make the decision
 - ☐ the school administration and coaches make the decision
 - ☐ the booster club and coaches make the decision
 - ☐ the booster club and the administration make the decision
 - ☐ the booster club makes recommendations, but school administrators(s) make the decision
 - ☐ a board/committee comprised of booster club members, school administrators, and coaches make the decision
 - ☐ someone other than those listed above make the decisions
6. How much influence does the booster club have at your school in the selection of head coaches? (check one)
- ☐ no input at all
 - ☐ booster club members occasionally call or see the principal to express an opinion about possible candidates
 - ☐ booster club members meet formally with the principal to discuss candidates
 - ☐ the principal and booster club members interview all candidates, then booster club members make suggestions or recommendations to the principal, who then makes the final decision
 - ☐ booster club members interview all candidates and participate with the principal in making the final decision
7. What are the major sources of revenue for your booster club? (check all that apply)
- ☐ dues
 - ☐ sales of school clothing

☐ concessions at athletic events
☐ donations
☐ special fundraising events (Please describe)
☐ other (please specify) _____

8. Who organizes booster club fundraisers? (check all that apply)

☐ booster club members
☐ booster club members and the school administration
☐ the school administration
☐ booster club members and coaches
☐ other

9. Are students used in fund raising activities? If so, in what capacity?

10. If students are used, who assigns the students?

☐ booster club members
☐ booster club members and the school administration
☐ the school administration
☐ booster club members and coaches
☐ no one

11. Who is responsible to provide supervision of students at these fundraisers? (check all that apply)

☐ booster club members
☐ booster club members and the school administration
☐ the school administration
☐ booster club members and coaches
☐ other

12. How would you describe your relationship with the booster club?

13. What is the biggest problem for your booster club?

What other comments would you like to make about your booster club?

Would you like a summary of this research when it is finished? _____yes _____no

Appendix G

Structured Interview Guide for School Administrator

General:

1. What is your position in the school?
2. How long have you been in this position?
3. Describe your relationship to the booster club.
4. Describe incidents that have occurred that would help to illustrate the working relationship between the school and the booster organization.

Governance:

1. Are there guidelines given to the booster club by the district or the high school?
2. Does the booster club have a set of by-laws or a constitution? May I have a copy?
3. How do you train boosters and booster club officers?
4. Describe the relationship between the booster club and the school administration.
5. Is there shared decision making? How does that work?

Fundraising:

1. How much of the total sports program budget does the booster club raise?
2. Describe a recent fundraising event at your school.
3. Who determines what the fundraising events are?
4. What type of fundraising events does the booster club sponsor?
5. What has been the most successful fundraiser sponsored by the booster club?
6. How do you decide where the money is spent?

7. What are the accounting procedures? Where is the money deposited?
8. Are you comfortable with the fundraising and handling of the money by the booster club in your school? Why?
9. Do students participate in the raising of money?
10. Who is responsible to supervise these students?

Personnel:

1. How are coaches, assistant coaches and auxiliary staff hired?
2. What is the booster involvement in the hiring, evaluation, and firing of a coach?
3. Does the booster club pay the salaries of any coaches or staff?
4. Do you think the booster club should have more or less involvement in hiring and firing coaches? Why?

General:

1. How would you improve the booster club if you had the power?

Appendix H

Structured Interview Guide for Booster Club Officer

General:

1. What is your position in the booster club?
2. How long have you been in this position?
3. Describe the relationship of the booster club and the school.
4. Describe incidents that have occurred which would help to illustrate the working relationship between the school administration and the booster organization.

Governance:

1. Are there guidelines given to the booster club by the district or the high school?
2. Does the booster club have a set of by-laws or a constitution? May I have a copy?
3. How are booster club officers trained?
4. Describe the governance and activities of the booster club
5. Describe the relationship between the booster club and the principal. Is there shared decision making?

Fundraising:

1. How much of the total program budget does the booster club raise?
2. Describe a recent fundraising event at your school.
3. Who determines what the fundraising events are?
4. What type of fundraising events does the booster club sponsor?
5. How do you decide where the money is spent?
6. What are the accounting procedures? Where is the money deposited?

7. Are you comfortable with the fundraising and handling of the money by the booster club? Why?
8. How do you deal with the legalities surrounding funding, taxes, and reporting to the federal and state government?
9. Do students participate in the raising of money?

Personnel:

1. How are coaches, assistant coaches and auxiliary staff hired?
2. What is the booster club involvement in the hiring, evaluating, and firing of a coach?
3. Does the booster club pay the salaries of any coaches or staff?
4. Do you think the booster club should have more or less involvement in hiring and firing coaches?

General:

1. What would you change about the booster club if you had the power?
2. What would you change about the relationship with the school if you had the power?

Appendix I

Booster Club Photos



Booster Club Concessions



Football Complex Funded by Booster Club



Booster Club Meal Night



Booster Club Tail Gate Party