

ATHLETIC DIRECTORS: WHAT YOUR HEAD OF SCHOOL WANTS YOU TO KNOW

Presented by Dr. J. Tim Green
Consultant, Southern Teachers Agency

SAIS, January 27, 2022
Charlotte, NC



It's all about perspective. . .





Your view of athletics and its role in your school might be a bit different than the view of your HOS.

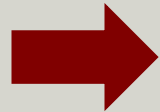
SCOPE OF STUDY



Informal question posed to 20 HOS: What do you want your AD to know about your view of their job?



19 responded in writing, one via phone.



Identified six top responses (noted at least 12 times) and six repeated individual comments.

But before we begin. . .

On SIDE A:

List the top 3 responses that you
think were given by the Heads

The White Mountains, NH

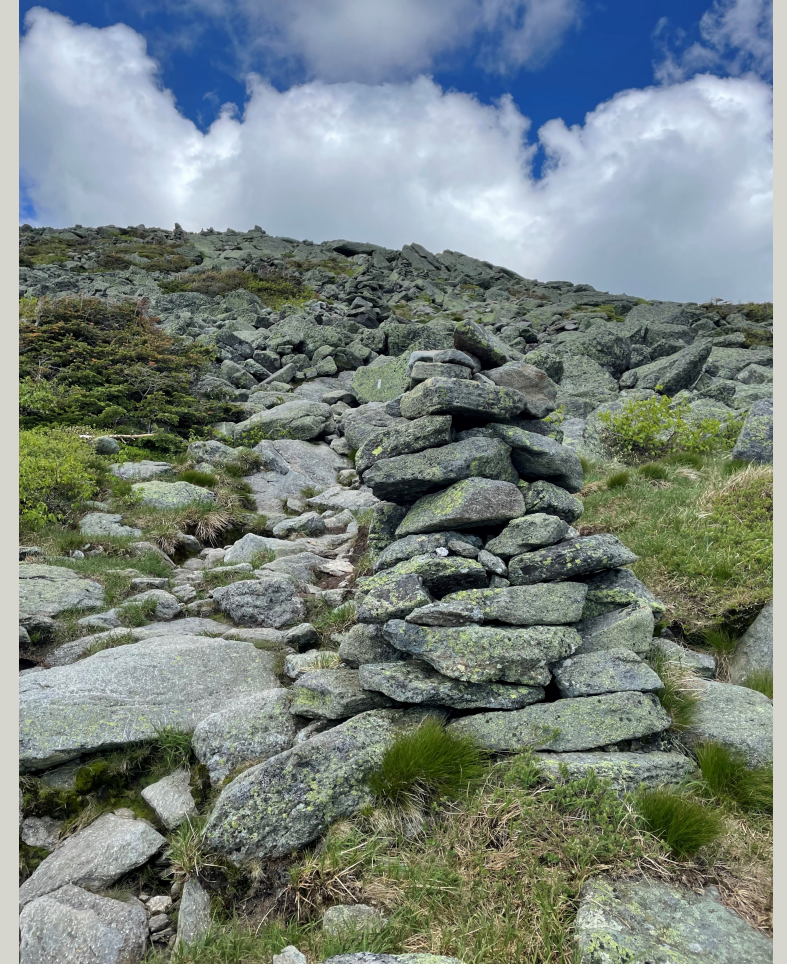
Presidential Traverse

2021





The HOS and AD must be on the same path. . .



. . .even if it is sometimes rocky and uphill.

Head of School Response 1

They want SAFETY to be your primary concern!

- Even more important than winning
- Physical Safety of players and spectators
- Emotional safety of student-athletes



Head of School Response 1

“Heads of School see **risk**
where others see **games.**”



Head of School Response 2



Athletic Departments should operate within the parameters of the school's mission statement.

Winning has a place, but the program must remain educationally based.

Policies must reflect the values of the school:

- cutting policies
- varsity vs. sub-varsity & middle school philosophies
- participation policies
- coordination with other extra-curriculars

Head of School Response 2

“Athletics are the front porch of a school so they should embody and reflect the school’s mission.”



Head of School Response 3



Communication is often a major stumbling block

Between the Head of School and the AD

- Heads do not like surprises
- They need to know the good and the bad
- Knowledge allows them to brag

Between the AD and his staff

- Coaches need to know and understand the school mission and policies

Communication with parents

- Policies, rules and expectations must be clear

Head of School Response 3

“Sportsmanship and representation is not only demonstrated on the field but on the sideline and in the bleachers as well.”



Head of School Response 4



Collaboration between the AD and the HOS is imperative.

- You must *WORK TOGETHER* with the HOS in the planning and operation of your program.

***ADs should understand the budgeting process
and be fiscally responsible***

- Communicate your needs to the HOS and CFO
- Do not spend money the school has not allotted
- Do not seek outside funding without permission
A \$5,000 for athletics vs. a \$50,000 ask for school

Head of School Response 4

“Don’t complain about what you don’t have. Show me a plan that fits the school’s strategic initiatives and let’s work together.”



Head of School Response 4



ADs must understand today's hiring processes and challenges

- Faculty coaches are paid primarily to teach
- Everyone wants teachers that coach, but they are hard to find today

ADs should work closely with the HOS and both the Development office and Admissions Office

- Do not go rogue seeking facilities
- Campus facility planning is a group effort
- Follow all procedures for admissions

Head of School Response 4

“We must recruit students; athletics is an extension of the classroom. Our athletes should fit/add to our school.”



Head of School Response 5



Athletics is one of most important extra-curricular programs at a school.

However, some do not care about athletics at all, and others are jealous of the attention it receives.

- The HOS must support and manage all programs while keeping academics as the priority
- All programs compete for resources, like time and money. The HOS must fairly oversee each one
- Athletics can drive enrollment, giving, and publicity, but that can also go in a negative direction

Head of School Response 5

**“Most view things from
ground level. I view things
from the rooftop.”**



Head of School Response 6

Every HOS referenced the difficulty and complexity of their AD's job—all of them!

- They want the AD to succeed. It makes their life so much easier
- They want to be helpful and supportive
- They appreciate your work and efforts



Head of School Response 6

“It is just a game, but the level of professionalism exemplified and demanded by the AD might be the most visible portrayal of the leadership of the Head of School.”



Supplemental Nuggets of Wisdom



1. “It is ALWAYS about playing time!”
2. “I’m not neglecting you or your program – your email was one of 200 I got today. And it was a slow day.”
3. “Just like parents whisper in your ear about coaches, they whisper in my ear about those coaches or the AD.”
4. “Athletics is just one part of a student-athlete’s day. Understand and support the demands they face.”
5. “The HOS and AD should share the same motto: No Surprises!”
6. “Coaches and Athletics might have more impact on their players than anyone or anything else in their life”

“You have to go to the Lobster Shack!”



**Knowing the expectations, direction, and needs
of your HOS will help you direct your program**

**Your path could be challenging and complex—
or smooth and straight**



Back to Side A

- How many of your choices made the top 6 responses from the Heads of School?
- How many were on the 6 Nuggets of Wisdom?



Side B is your chance!

- Please list 3-5 things you wish your Head of School knew about YOUR job



Southern Teachers Agency

Athletic Services



Athletic Department Assessments
AD Placements
AD Mentoring
AD Training Camp
AD Retreat

Tim.Green@SouthernTeachers.com

SouthernTeachers.com

Your source for:

- Retained Searches
- Executive Coaching
- Operations Assessments
- Athletics Assessments
- The Leadership Study: Parts I, II and III



The Premier Agency for Independent Schools in the South