



- Chris Kennedy Schools of West Vancouver, Superintendent

As we return to school this fall, we are applying the many lessons learned from the last three years. There is a worry that we will simply snap back to pre-COVID times without implementing what we have learned throughout the pandemic.

In our district, we are holding onto many of our COVID adjustments, from keeping some meetings online, to building in flexible time for students and staff schedules, to focusing more on well-being.

This same reflection should be happening in all our jurisdictions as we look at school sports.

It also just seems like the right time to reassess what we did pre-Covid, by asking ourselves questions like: are we offering the right sports to meet the current needs of our students? Are our leagues achieving what we want? Are we happy with the mix of practice and competition, and are we satisfied with the level of competition with our school sports? Over the last three years, almost every sport was impacted for at least two of those years, and instead of racing back to 'the way things were', it seems like the ideal time to be revisioning and evolving our vision for school sports.

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AD DIGEST

As COVID eliminated school sports to varying degrees, we were reminded of just how important these activities were for social connectedness, and how for young people, and their coaches and families, school sports are crucial to social, emotional, and physical well-being. I would regularly hear from parents that school sports are the glue that connects their children to school. The importance of school sports is not just a gut-feel that many of us have, a 2021 University of Wisconsin study, found that athletes who were able to continue to play sports during the pandemic were less likely to report anxiety and depression symptoms than those who didn't have the opportunity to participate.

Beyond reinforcing the value and importance of school sports, these are some opportunities, lessons, and takeaways:

- Livestreaming sporting events in schools for health and safety reasons, while not new, engaged more students and families, and efforts should be made to continue once health and safety rules are relaxed.
- In 2020-21, when most jurisdictions did not allow inter-school competition, many sports saw increased participation for what amounted to yearlong practicing. These are students we should be looking to keep engaged in school sports now that we are returning to traditional league structures.
- There was a reset on competition. School sports doubled-down on their values of being about student growth, development and wellbeing, and further distanced themselves from the for-profit, win-at-all-costs programming we see from some community sports vendors. Building on the reset of competition, we also witnessed increased levels of participation, more students involved in each sport, no cuts, and a reemphasis on well-being and school community.
- As the rigid edges of hyper-competitive athletics were softened during COVID, we noticed and observed a more inclusive and accepting school athletic community.
- · As we build our school sports back to pre COVID levels, students and families are showing a greater appreciation for the opportunity to play and for their coaches, that make school sports possible.
- Teachers and other volunteers found more sustainable routines during COVID. I often heard coaches say they found balance. As we work to reengage these key people, we might need to adjust the expectations in order to encourage them back.

What lessons did you learn during COVID, and how are you applying these lessons to meet the needs of our students, families and schools?

Chris Kennedy is the Superintendent of Schools of West Vancouver, British Columbia. He has coached school sports for 35 years and served various administrative roles including President of BC High School Boys Basketball. He is on Twitter @chrkennedy and on email at ckennedy@wvschools.ca



CIAAA CERTIFICATIONS



Canadian Registered Athletic Administrator

CHANTALE LEWIS

The Study, QC

RONALD TSE

Vancouver Christian, BC

GARY BAKER

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Canadian Certified Athletic Administrator

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Activating Your Membership

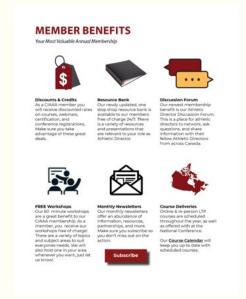
Reminder that membership activation is required each new school year. As partner provinces, ASAA, BCSS, SHSAA and PEISS Athletic Directors memberships are provided to Athletic Directors at no charge. If you have not received your activation code for membership, please email info@ciaaa.ca.

Check out these tutorial videos to help activate and utilize your annual membership.



Be sure to check out our **Athletic Director Welcome Package** for detailed information on the CIAAA, including Membership Benefits, LTP Courses, Certfication & Masters Programs.





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Resource of the Month

UNIFORMS

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SIGN OUT SHEET

INVENTORY TRACKING

Find these templates & more in the CIAAA Membership Resource Bank.



Want an LTP Course or Workshop in your Area?

The CIAAA is here to help!

We will schedule courses & workshops in person or online, whenever works best for you and your schedule! We won't say NO!

Reach out to info@ciaaa.ca and start the conversation!
We are happy to make course suggestions and find something that works for your group, school or district.

Group Discounts available.









The CIAAA is excited to announce the 2023 National Athletic Directors Conference will be back in person. Packed full of Leadership Training Courses, Workshops, Exhibitors and Networking, all in beautiful Vancouver BC!

Save the date and apply for Professional Development Funds!

April 20 - 22, 2023 Coast Coal Harbour Hotel

Registration & Hotel Booking codes will be available soon.

ATTENTION ATHLETIC DIRECTORS! Call for 2023 Conference Workshop Presenters

The CIAAA is looking for volunteers to develop 60 minute workshops to present to an audience of Athletic Directors at our National Conference. Presenters will receive an \$125 honorarium in gift cards or as a conference discount. Grace College Masters Students can often use the development of a workshop as part of your degree.

Note: anyone presenting a workshop agrees that the CIAAA will retain your presentation on file to present in the future. Initial workshop authors will be properly recognized in future presentations.

Our conference relies on presenters from within our community of Athletic Directors. Please email <u>info@ciaaa.ca</u> if you have any interest in presenting a workshop. We will work to support the development of your presentation in any way necessary.



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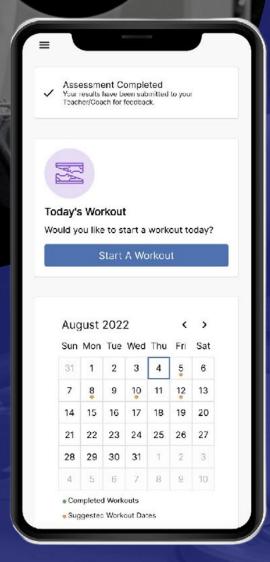






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