

## Better Office Management May Result in More Time

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How many times have you been asked for a certain form by a coach or student while walking down the halls of your school? Did you spend valuable minutes trying to find a phone number of an individual you needed to contact? Athletic directors are asked to handle numerous tasks each day that requires us to be organized and efficient in order to communicate with parents, students, administration and coaches in a timely and efficient manner. The following simple techniques will save valuable time and allow you to focus on other important tasks that come across your desk and need your attention each day.

### **Bulletin Board outside Your Office**

A useful idea is to have a small bulletin board installed near your office so that important information can be seen daily by everyone who passes by. Items of importance might include:

Team tryout information

Current fundraising activities

Game news

Newspaper clippings

Indoor practice schedule

Team meetings and locations

Spending the first few minutes each day updating the bulletin board allows everyone who walks by a chance to see daily news quickly and efficiently. Another important feature which you can incorporate on this bulletin board is a pad of paper so people can leave necessary notes. Also post a notice to allow individuals to locate you when you might be away from your office for an extended period of time.

### **Folder Bins on Office Door**

On your office door you can attach six plastic bins that can be purchased at any stationary store which contain forms most often requested by various individuals. It is much easier and a time saver to simply tell individuals they can pick-up a copy of what they need from the labeled bin rather than walk back to my office to get a form. In our setting, the most frequently needed forms include:

Extracurricular Activity Fee Remittance Form

Physical Form

Letter Jacket Order Form

Grade Sheet Form

Hall of Fame Nomination Form

Emergency Medical Cards

Obviously, you would want to tailor the available forms to your setting.

### **Enclosed Show Case with Information**

Many questions often arise from athletes, coaches, parents and staff that could be answered by simply having the information available in a central location. Twice a year, update this show case located next to your office with useful information that improves communication with everyone. After a few years, everyone will know that they should look in this location for important dates, times and other necessary bits of information.

This information could include:

Complete athletic schedule for each season.

Coach's directory for each sport and location where the coach works.

Athletic season pass information.

On-line school store information so that spirit wear can be purchased.

NCAA information and important dates.

School calendar and daily bell schedule.

Monthly indoor practice schedule.

Required forms and start dates for tryouts.

Important websites to visit for further information.

### **Electronic Message Board**

For roughly \$5000.00, you can purchase an electronic message system to show schedules and important messages. This message board is directly connected to an office computer which allows an athletic director the opportunity to add, delete or change messages instantly. Each week the upcoming athletic schedule and any other important messages are added to the message board. When a change occurs, the correction is placed in flashing lights so everyone can notice the change. This entire process takes just a few minutes each day but helps avoid many interruptions while working in the athletic office.

### **Detailed Wall Calendar**

As athletic directors, the ability to plan and retrieve information is critical in doing our job. Athletic contests requires planning for both home and away contests and one simple tool to help provide this information is a detailed monthly wall calendar.

A wall calendar is a great place to record athletic contests and meetings in one central location that can be referred to often and easily each day. It is important to record information in pencil, since changes and postponements do occur on a daily bases. This calendar can also be used as a guide for the next school year since many events such as team pictures, award nights, booster club meetings, etc., tend to occur at the same time each year.

Every athletic director probably develops his or her own codes and abbreviations, but the few hours spent developing a complete wall calendar is time well spent as the hectic school year unfolds. Here is an example of three events and the codes that go along with them.

Key:

JV/V BSO = JV and Varsity boys' soccer (A) = Away contest  
WW = Opponent which is Walt Whitman 5 & 7 = Game times  
#14564 / 4pm = Bus ticket number and time leaving/returning

VFB = Varsity football (H) = Home contest  
WJ = Opponent which is Walter Johnson 6:30 = Game time  
(R) = Referees ordered (S) = Security needed  
(P) = Police needed (\*\*)= Special need/locker rooms for  
visiting team and referees

Booster Club = Booster Club meeting 4pm = Time  
Rm 124 = Location Fin. Report = What special items I need to  
bring

### Sept 5

JV/V BSO (A) WW 5 & 7 #145564 (4pm/9pm)  
VFB (H) WJ 6:30 (R) (S) (P) (\*\*)  
Booster Club 4pm Rm124 Fin. Report/

### **Large Organized Bulletin Board in Office**

Another useful tool in order to locate information fast and efficiently is the use of a large bulletin board located on the office wall. Using a bulletin board that is labeled and organized allows for anyone to find necessary information within seconds and ensures that my assistant athletic director or coaches have all phone numbers and information when they are running a contest in my absence. Some of the information that can be included on the bulletin board:

Sports listed by season.

State playoff schedule and important dates.

Rescheduling a contest checklist.

Booster Club directory and phone\ e-mail list.

Phone and e-mail directory of officials.

School phone numbers for staff.

Coaches directory and phone list.

County athletic directors phone list.

Sport directors for each sport in Montgomery County Public Schools.

Financial Codes used for deposits and check request.

Police phone numbers.

Charter and school bus phone directory.

Newspaper and other important phone numbers.

## **Multi-Level Filing Cabinet**

Have you ever found yourself looking for a copy of a purchase order prior to calling a vendor or trying to find a deposit slip from a soccer game to verify your monthly statement from the finance secretary? If this process takes you more than two minutes to find all the necessary paperwork, you probably need to examine your filing system so that it becomes more efficient and provides you time to handle other duties and responsibilities.

For example, a large five level filing cabinet may prove to be the answer. Each level holds specific items in an organized manner so that finding anything is done quickly and efficiently. If you have such a filing cabinet, it could be organized in the following manner:

### **Level 5 (Top Shelf) Awards**

Boxes of letter pins are neatly stacked in alphabetical order in the back. Certificates, all of the different ones that you may use, can be placed in the front.

### **Level 4 Varsity Letters**

Varsity letters are neatly stacked in this shelf along with the numbers needed to hang on the team championship banners which are located in the main gym.

### **Level 3 Files**

Located in the front are the monthly financial folders with a divider separating each month. Using three folders for each month-one for income, one for expenses, and the third for the monthly reconciliation sheet provided by the financial secretary. All receipts, invoices, statements, bills, check requests, etc., are placed in the appropriate folder based upon the month each transaction has occurred.

All other files are placed in alphabetical order with dividers separating each letter. The first letter of the file for alphabetical placement and keep each file name brief and specific. It is recommended that your files be cleaned out twice a year in order to condense files and remove old and outdated material. This is done at the end of each semester!!!!

Set aside a specific time or amount of time each day to file all of the accumulated paperwork. By filing all of the necessary papers in the appropriate location, this effort will save time and frustration in the long run.

### **Level 2 Office Supplies**

Keep all office supplies and other small items in this drawer. Some of these small items would include extra locks, shells for starter guns, light bulbs, air canisters, and other items that someone might need.

## **Level 1      Tools**

A small supply of basic tools is kept in this drawer for minor repairs or assembly of new items can be quickly performed.

### **Shelves for Often Used Forms**

In another corner of your office you might use a four-tier shelf for forms and pamphlets that are frequently requested by students, parents or coaches. These shelves would contain all the most commonly used forms in our school system:

Purchase Orders

Bus Trip Tickets

Emergency medical cards

Physicals

Coaches Manual

Announcements

Team Picture Packets

Volunteer Coach Packets

Booster Club Request

Parent-Athlete Handbook

Financial Forms

These simple suggestions are inexpensive and easy to incorporate and will save valuable time during the course of a school year. The ability to save time and improve communication with others will allow the athletic director the opportunity to take on and complete other tasks that often arise on a daily bases.