

Perplexing Problems

School athletics perplexes and worries much the school administrator. The problems are legion and troublesome. No group of subjects in the curriculum causes the same school rivalries, enmities, student unrest, bad feeling, and upheavals as does athletics at times.

It is strange what effects athletic problems and administration have upon the school superintendent and principal. It is known that school administrators in athletic councils forsake educational standards and advocate policies in athletic control antagonistic to the best educational principles. Many examples of this strange inconsistency could be quoted. In this school subject we seem to permit the interference of the student body, the alumni and the town coach. They seem to play a part in the control.

Some of the questions that we must answer from the educational point of view and handle according to educational principles are as follows:

1. How can we best administer athletics for their educational values and benefits?
2. Are our athletics developing character?
3. Are they educational?
4. Is it wise for a boy of 15 to play football in a strenuous tournament against a man of 21, which we permit in this subject but in no other?
5. Should we not classify students participating in this subject as we do in other subjects as is now done in New York and Michigan?
6. How can we get the best values from athletics and how can we prevent the evils that now arise from the present methods of control and management?
7. Why do we suffer student alumni and town interference which we do not tolerate in any other school subject?
8. Why do we have athletics? Is it to win or is it for its character values? What is really our aim? Of course, we want to win, but can we always win in life? Youth is in school to live life now and to learn in its living now the way to play the game of life later on. They cannot always win—neither should they always lose.
9. Do athletics promote a fine school morale? How can we best promote school morale?