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AN INVESTIGATION OF PUBLICITY PROGRAMS OF
INTERSCHOOL ATHLETICS IN AA
SCHOOLS OF TEXAS



LITTLE

1960

AN INVESTIGATION OF PUBLICITY PROGRAMS OF INTERSCHOOL
ATHLETICS IN AA SCHOOLS OF TEXAS

By

Clarence Little Jr.

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement
For the Degree of

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in the

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C. L. Jr.

DEDICATED

To my wife, Evelyne, whose constant concern and inspiration made the completion of this paper possible, and to my son, Clarence Bernard.

C. L. Jr.

Table of Contents

Chapter		Page
I	Introduction.....	1
	Statement of Problem.....	3
	Purpose of Study.....	4
	Limitations.....	4
	Procedure.....	4
	Definitions of Terms.....	5
II	Review of Literature.....	6
III	Treatment of Data - Presentation of Data.....	25
IV	Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendations.....	36
	Bibliography.....	41
	Appendix I.....	44
	Appendix II.....	48

AN INVESTIGATION OF PUBLICITY PROGRAMS OF INTERSCHOOL ATHLETICS
IN AA SCHOOLS OF TEXAS

Introduction

Schools operating by the consent of the people should maintain a constant communication between the school and the people it serves. If the public understands a program, it is more apt to be a more satisfied, sympathetic public. Well-informed parents are far less critical than those who are misinformed or uninformed.

An upsurge of public interest in the nation's schools is taking place throughout America. Seldom have so many people demonstrated keen and vital interest in the public schools, and seldom have the schools stood in greater need of public understanding and support.¹

Today's publicity men in the area of athletics are faced with many extremely important problems. Some of these are the continuing accusations of overemphasis, de-emphasis, and many other asserted faults of interscholastic athletics, hurled by critics from all sides.

Public relations activity is all around us. It is the fight for ideas, the forces of persuasion which all groups exert upon one another. Whether you like it or not, you're in a public relations struggle too-- a struggle to win public understanding and support.²

Publicity is important and necessary, but it should be sought and

¹American Association of School Administrators, Public Relations For America's Schools, Twenty-Eight Yearbook, Washington, D. C., 1950, p. 5.

²Richard M. Baker, "Public Relations in Recreation," Recreation 50:300, October, 1957.

used for constructive educational purposes, never as agency of personality projection or of student exploitation. It is unworthy of the great purposes of community-centered education for personality aspiring teachers or administrators to seek advancement of their own status by advertising of their small part in this democratic movement for social betterment. Publicity can and should be used only as an educational means of acquainting the general public with the purposes, plans, procedures, findings, and activities of the projects undertaken, and to interpret fairly the whole philosophy of the modern, life-centered school.³

Interscholastic athletics play an important role in today's schools. It is a definite part of the expanding school curriculum and must be recognized as such.

According to Leslie W. Kindred⁴ student activities are high in public relations values for the following reasons:

1. They dramatize news potential for the aspects of school life in which people are interested.
2. They bring parents and patrons into the school where they can see for themselves what pupils are doing and what they are achieving.
3. They assure a continuing interest by parents whose children are participants.
4. They enable skeptics to acquire a first hand picture of the school at work and the experiences pupils receive under the direction of competent teachers.
5. They permit parents and patrons to decide whether or not pupils are undergoing sound preparation for present and future living.

³Edgar G. Olsen. School and Community. (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1949), p. 265.

6. They are the strongest arguments against propaganda on the fads and frills of modern education.
7. They do more to help parents understand how the school influences the growth and development of pupils than printed literature.
8. They develop school spirit among students.
9. They develop local pride in the school system.
10. They offer excellent opportunities for parent and lay participation in the school program.

As one thoughtful writer expressed it,
 "If in this world you wish to advance,
 Your merits you wish to enhance,
 You must stir it and stump it
 And blow your own trumpet,
 Or, trust me, you haven't a chance."

Statement of Problem

A great majority of schools in the United States are supported by taxation. There exists a responsibility on their part for reporting their activities to the public. Inasmuch as interschool athletics is a part of education and because of the many phases in which the community is interested, public administrators may create situations to inform the public and gain the support that is needed. Too many people having the responsibility of informing the public of the importance of athletics have failed to do so. Thereby, causing unfavorable publicity as to the educational part that athletics play in today's school and democratic living.

⁴Leslie W. Kindred. School and Public Relations. (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1957), p. 269.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to accomplish the following:

To develop awareness of the importance of athletics in a democracy.

To give to the public the information to which it is entitled about its athletic teams.

To obtain financial support.

To correct misunderstanding and inform the public of plans, policies and regulations.

Limitations

This study was limited to the 54 AA High Schools of Texas. The data will also be limited to the aspect of publicity which have to do with interscholastic athletics.

Procedure

In this survey, the questionnaire method is used. The writer drew twenty-eight questions relative to publicity.

The questions asked were to be answered either yes or no, varying in nine instances, where they were asked to list or check their answers.

Some of the questionnaires were given directly to the individuals enrolled at Prairie View A & M College during the summer session of 1959.

The remainder of the questionnaires were sent by mail accompanied by a letter of explanation concerning the questionnaire. A total of

fifty-four questionnaires being placed in the hands of interschool publicity heads.

Upon receiving the questionnaires from the individuals concerned, the information will be compiled in the order of the questions on the form sent out.

The findings, summary, and conclusions are based upon the content of the questionnaire as presented by the respondents.

Definition of Terms

Public Relation- is an art and a science which deals with the difficult problem of how an individual or an institution can get along satisfactorily with other people and institutions.⁵

Publicity - "Public-school relations" and "publicity" have the same connotation. In public affairs, though, the use of the word publicity must be guarded because to many people it suggests press - agency covering up defects.⁶

⁵Rex F. Harlow, and Marvin M. Black, Practical Public Relations. (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1947), p. 10.

⁶Ward G. Reeder. The Fundamentals of Public School Administration. (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1951), p. 700.

Chapter II

Review of Literature

The school has always needed the understanding and sympathetic support of its community; never has it needed these more than at the present time. The community, has always needed the keen understanding, an interpretation of itself which only its school can give.

Education has become a co-operative process. The home, the school, and the community should be concerned about the development of rightful relationship. These relationships can only thrive through business and industry.

Williams and Brownell¹ state that while the wheels of progress in public education produce a constant change in materials and methods, a widespread popular understanding of the need for these changes or indeed of what they actually are is sadly lacking. Improved expenditures demand greater expenditures of public money, and these funds can be obtained only by the sanction of officials whom the taxpayers have placed in positions of administrative or executive responsibility.

Too often members of the department of health and physical education are so absorbed in the affairs of daily routine that they neglect to acquaint the public with information relative to activities for which support is sought. Knowledge of the program is essential to any real understanding of its worth, and continued intelligent support rests upon reliable information.

¹Jesse F. Williams and Clifford L. Brownell, The Administration of Health and Physical Education. (Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders Company, 1946), pp. 393-395.

Oftentimes the public is shunned until an emergency occurs. Wholesome publicity depends upon knowledge and understanding of all the factors involved. Only through continuous and reliable publicity may public comprehension be guided to an unfailing support. To acquire this is worth striving for; to be satisfied with less is to lose where failure is tragic and destructive of professional morale.

Since public education is essentially a community enterprise in which the people should participate actively, it is essential that the nature and needs of the school should be kept constantly before the adult group. Moehlman² has this to say:

As a democratically organized activity, the welfare of the public school as a social organization rests upon the understanding and confidence that this institution can develop in the people. Understanding grows out of knowledge and knowledge in turn out of familiarity. There are two methods by which the purpose may be accomplished. The first is through the development of actual and continued participation of the parents in the work of the schools in a program of adult education paralleling their changing interests in the development of their children. It is necessary that the adult be kept constantly aware of the always perfect and gleaming past.

The second method of accomplishing this program is through a continuing factual informational service adjusted to all levels of community need and appealing to all community interests.

American schools have extended their mission and services until they touch more lives than before. But, many of the "whys" of education

²Arthur B. Moehlman, School Administration. (Dallas: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1940), p. 511.

have moved further and further away from the public grasp. According to Harral:³ Growth of American schools is one of the world's phenomena. Many citizens are critical of current educational practices. An irrate group of Indiana parents organized the "Citizens Committee for improving the schools." Their complaint: Their children just are not being educated.

These controversies mean but one thing: Administrators and others must strengthen their public relations programs. As long as education justifies itself in the minds of those who are instrumental in financing it, the financing will continue. Schools without large budgets, full-time workers, and elaborate facilities can enjoy increased public understanding by stressing sound services and procedures.

Jacobson says:⁴ Athletic contests are the most spectacular members of the extra curricular family. Many opportunities for school interpretation are available through the extra curriculum.

Voltmer and Esslinger⁵ say: The physical education administrator is responsible for the public relations of his department. In fact, this is one of his most important responsibilities. Whether he wills it or not, he and other faculty members, the school secretary, custodian, and equipment room manager are all involved in public relations in every contact they have with other people. Since these contacts have signifi-

³Stewart Harral, Tested Public Relations for Schools. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1952), pp. 3-4.

⁴Paul B. Jacobson, William C. Reavis, James D. Logsdon, The Duties of School Principals. (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1951), p. 359.

⁵Edward F. Voltmer, Arthur A. Esslinger, The Organization and Administration of Physical Education. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1958), p. 423.

cant implications for the department, it is the responsibility of the administrator to concern himself with them and to do everything within his power to assure that the overall effect will be favorable and enhance the program. Good public relations aid and abet the program; poor public relations damage and, in some cases, bring about the elimination of the program.

Voltmer and Esslinger⁶ list six principles which constitute a sound basis for any public relations program in physical education that is going to be effective.

1. The public relations program must be based on truth.
2. The best foundations for good public relations is a sound program.
3. The public relations program should be continuous.
4. Public relations is a two-way process between the community and the schools.
5. A knowledge of what the public thinks about the schools is essential.
6. The effective public relations program involves all school personnel.

The following statement emphasizes principle 4. American Association of School Administrators say:⁷

When the public relations program of a school system rests on a foundation of sound classroom accomplishment, it is like a house built upon a rock.

⁶Ibid., pp. 423-427.

⁷American Association of School Administration, Public Relations for America's Schools. Twenty-eight Yearbook, Washington, D. C., 1950, p. 59.

storms of ill-founded criticism and innuendo will not overwhelm it. Its foundations are sure. On the other hand, the most systematic and skillfully devised publicity cannot maintain the public's confidence or win its approval for a school program that is fundamentally unsound. No shoring up "interpretation" can permanently conceal the shortcomings and failures of misdirected or ineffective teaching. Public relations, under such circumstances, is built on shifting sands. The public cannot hear what is said because it is so acutely aware of what the school program is—or is not.

There are many publicity techniques and media which can be used. The local newspaper is a powerful factor in building public relations. It reaches almost every home in the community. The only cost for this media is the time spent with the press. Harral⁸ gives the following valuable suggestions for preparing news stories: Tell your story briefly, answer the questions who, what, when and why early in the story, make it accurate, paragraph and punctuate properly, get your story in on time, be careful about names, titles, hours and subjects. Athletics is one of the finest tools in the educational chest to help build the bridges between school and the community and receive this twofold support.

Hagman⁹ feels that the desire to maintain, and if possible to increase school revenues inspires much of the interpretative activity of the school to its community. But without minimizing the importance of securing financial support, it may be suggested that public relations

⁸Harral, Op. Cit., p. 127.

⁹Harlan L. Hagman, "Six Major Contemporary Purposes in School Public Relations," (Education: December, 1948), Vol. 69, No. 4, p. 212.

activities limited in purpose to that endeavor are not sufficient for the program of a school with important educational work to do. Efforts to win support may be considered as of higher order than those directed toward gaining financial support. (Publicity for school athletics should stress the educational purposes and values of these activities. Many undesirable practices and pressures persist in athletics because the public has never been educated to anything else.

According to Forsythe and Duncan:¹⁰ Without doubt the easiest obtainable publicity is in connection with the interschool or college athletic program. This type of public relations can be a blessing or a curse, depending upon the policy in effect. Cooperation of newspaper reporters and radio sports announcers is the important considerations. Their confidence is essential if publicity that is for the school and for the athletic and physical educational program is to be obtained. Information that is given to the press must be true. It should not criticize the sportsmanship of play of opponents. Team activity as a whole, rather than undue emphasis on particular players, should be stressed. It should be remembered that players, student bodies, parents, and patrons of both schools will read the news stories or hear the broadcasts.

Voltmer and Esslinger say:¹¹

The public has been educated to a wrong sense of values largely through the medium of the printed word. This same medium must be used to provide the proper prospective about athletics. This can be

¹⁰Charles E. Forsythe and Ray O. Duncan, Administration of Physical Education. (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1951), p. 243.

¹¹Voltmer, Op. Cit., p. 446.

done by feature stories primarily. These cannot achieve the desired pedantic style. The human interest stories involved in athletics can be written in simple, everyday language and can bring out incidents involving sportsmanship, sacrifice, teamwork, courage, loyalty, integrity, idealism, leadership, self-discipline, and unselfishness. Every athletic squad has many incidents which, if represented in nonacademic teams, illustrate the educational values of sport.

Athletic publicity in large universities is handled by a special department or individual having that specific duty. In smaller colleges and high schools this function is handled in a variety of ways. Sometimes, capable students may be assigned to take charge of athletic publicity. A few schools have part-time publicity men. A member of the faculty with journalistic training may assume the responsibility for the publicity program as a part of his duties. Frequently, the director or coach must perform this service himself. It is very important that someone who is responsible to the director or school administrator be assigned to this work if the public is to develop the proper attitude toward promoting the sound educational values inherent in sports. The public has to cultivate the desire to exert its influence in making sound athletic policies stick. The people in the community can be the strongest force in determining that athletics should be conducted chiefly for the good of the players. The right kind of sound interpretive publicity and plenty of it-is the crying need. If the schools and teachers and an informed public would fight intelligently the evils in sports practices, it would not take long to remove the evils and to establish athletics as a worthwhile educational activity of value to participants, to school morale, and to community welfare.

G. Edward Pendray in his Ten Maxims of Public Relations states that:¹²

1. The better people know you, the more they will like you.

¹²G. Edward Pendray, "Ten Maxims of Public Relations," Recreation, 49:83, February, 1956.

2. It is easier to change yourself, than to change the public.
3. It is not enough to do right; you must also let the people know.
4. Talk in terms of people's self-interest.
5. People are interested first in people, then in things, last in ideas.
6. People can be counted upon to act only when they expect to gain something by it.
7. The language of action is plainly heard, though words may be inaudible.
8. Faint heart ne'er won fair reputation.
9. Repetition is essential.
10. Before you start to solve a public relations problem, be sure you know what it really is.

Publicity programs are meeting with more and more competition with other interests. According to Ward G. Reeder¹³ only a small percentage of the time of the average person is devoted to keeping himself informed, the problem of publicity booms more difficult. The first obligation of a citizen is to provide himself with food, clothing, and shelter, and to pay his taxes; to do that requires the major portion of his working hours. In addition to the time spent in meeting his economic needs, in obtaining recreation, and in going to and from work, only a small percentage of the time of the average person is left in which to keep himself informed. Since the school is the only one of the many

¹³Ward G. Reeder, An Introduction to Public School Relations. (New York: MacMillan Company, 1953), p. 7.

activities on which Mr. Average Citizen must keep informed, school officials and employers must take extra pains to make sure that school information received its share of the total time that people have for informing themselves. Voltmer and Esslinger¹⁴ say:

"There is no one public. Formerly, the idea was held that a school or department had relations with a public." There are not many publics differing in size, organization, interests, methods of communication, and systems of control or guidance. Every religious, political, service, social, and professional organization constitute a public. Every individual is, ordinarily, a member of several publics. In planning and organizing the publicity program and in preparing communications to inform the public one must try and reach all his community.

This concept of public is important in publicity because the approach to a specific group demands upon its nature and interests. A successful approach to one group may prove ineffective with other groups. One of the lessons which specialists in publicity have learned is that the various media of communication must be planned for specific groups. Because the events of interscholastic athletic programs have such a wide interest appeal, the athletic staff is in a position to set the tone of the school's relationship to the public.

According to Vannier and Fair:¹⁵

The news released to the public by the coach should observe these principles in the interest of good public relations and in the interest of sound educational practices:

¹⁴Voltmer, Op. Cit., p. 127.

¹⁵Maryhelen Vannier, Hollis F. Fair: Teaching Physical Education. (Philadelphia; W. B. Saunders Company, 1957), p. 342.

1. Avoid highly emotional statements about the abilities of individual players, the team's prospects, and the evaluation of an opponent.
2. Avoid giving undue emphasis to a players injuries.
3. Avoid making excuses for poor performance and failure to win.
4. Stress team play and the contribution of all players to the success of the team.

Worth¹⁶ says:

"The greate immediate need of American Educa-tion today is not money teachers, or buildings, but the key to all three-- public understanding of the great oppourtunities the student has for citi-zenship through the extracurricula activity pro-gram.

Singleton¹⁷ reports:

That the community, not just the schoolhouse is the real theater of education. Public school-ing is not justified alone by its benefit to the individual or to his life after school, but by his development as a citizen. In this respect, our best testing area is in the field of student act-ivity.....Here we have not only the three "R's", but the enthusiasm of "Doing" that carries home to the parents; that gets down town to the business men, and carries good public relations to a whole community.

The parents, the man of industry, and the com-munity in general, want to know about the child's school from the broad aspect of philosophy and curriculum to the most minute details of classroom procedure and extracurricular activities.....It is true that to win the game gains the best publicity.

¹⁶Jean Worth, "Greatest Need is Public Understanding," Nation's Schools, 60:48, August, 1957.

¹⁷Merle D. Singleton, "Public Relations via Student Activities," School Activities, 183:4, February, 1959.

But win or lose, the student enthusiasm of the game carries over into the community. In most places, the merchants not only know about the games--- but are interested in the time, place, and outcome. In most instances they cooperate willingly in the ticket sales, advertising, presales, and actual donation, if the need arises. Athletic competition of all kinds offer every community this kind of excellent public relations.

.....There is nothing that will produce a well-rounded student as well as his participation in one or more activities carried out under the auspices of the school. The students go out into the community with their enthusiasm and with their accomplishments. They in turn will bring the community into their world and into their school. The student council, with the support of the rest of the organizations in the extracurricular program, has to bring to the adults the realization of just how this extracurricular program contributes to the child's development, because in their day, schooling was quite a different procedure. But with careful guidance and wholeheartedness of youth, the public is sure to cooperate. Athletics, being a definite part of education, needs the right type of publicity.

Sullivan¹⁸ says:

For the most part, the majority of people think that athletic publicity and advertising have as their main purpose the increasing of the "gate" and the exploration of the individual participants. Perhaps this has been the truth in many cases and it should be remedied.

In the Longmeadow Public schools.....The Athletic and physical education programs demand wise publicity if they are to maintain the position they rightfully deserve in our school curriculum.

¹⁸Kenneth G. Sullivan, "Selling High School Athletics," Clearing House, 24:271-2, January, 1950.

It has been proved that the school systems showing the best publicized programs are the least affected by retrenchment measures.

The athletic director in any school must follow the general plan for publicity outlined for the school system as a whole...The people must know what the school men are trying to do and understand it as well as possible if they are going to cooperate. Too often we shun the public until an emergency occurs and then hastily organize a campaign to raise funds or to oppose some resistive force. Campaign publicity smells strongly of propaganda. Regular, orderly presentation of reliable information, aimed to give a true picture of the problem concerned, proves its worth in the long run.

Miller¹⁹ reports that:

Educational progress in America rests almost entirely upon the understanding which the American public has of its school system. The democratic nature of our institution makes this truth axiomatic and places upon those in charge of our public schools responsibilities that are far reaching.

Education of the nation must do their full share to bring about on the part of the public an accurate understanding of the ideals, accomplishments, and needs of the public schools. This can be obtained on a national scale only when it is obtained in the tens of thousands of communities which make up the nation. Without such understanding there cannot be that community support which is essential to the realization of the splendid possibilities of the public schools.

Edmonson²⁰ and others:

It is a serious mistake to assume that the general public understands the objectives, the scope, or the achievements of the secondary school.

¹⁹Clyde R. Miller, Fred Charles, Publicity and The Public School. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1924), pp. 1-2.

²⁰J. B. Edmonson, Joseph Roemer, and Francis L. Bacon, The Administration of The Modern School. (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1933), pp. 441-442.

It is also a false assumption that the public appreciates the difficulties faced by many schools in their efforts to provide an appropriate education for all the children of all the people. A well-conceived program of public relations is therefore necessary. The suggestion:The problem of high school publicity is now recognized as an important one for the school administrator is indicated by the number of books and articles on the subject that have appeared in recent years. In all probability, this increased attention to the problem is due in part to the success of the federal government in its publicity programs. The increased attention given to advertising programs by corporations has also affected the thought of school administrators regarding the necessary and value of programs providing for the interpretation of the school to the public.

In a democracy, the citizens must ultimately determine local policy with respect to education. Important questions concerning the scope and nature of public education are being raised continually, and our citizens should be prepared to decide them wisely. They must therefore have and understand the purposes, the scope, and the achievements of the school.

Johnson²¹ says:

The physical education teacher may be a more potent public relations agent than some of the other teachers because he may be more likely to come into direct contact with the public. This is particularly true in the case of male physical teachers who also coach. It should be stressed that each coach will be placed in the position of appearing before the public on far more occasions than will the person who is not engaged in teaching. For this reason it is mandatory that the high school coach's conduct be exemplary in terms of the influence his actions have on the public relations aspect of the school program.

²¹Granville B. Johnson, Warren R. Johnson, and James H. Humphrey, Your Career In Physical Education. (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1957), p. 217.

The attitude of the pupils toward their school physical education program is a most important factor in public relations. As a consequence, pupil attitude is likely to have a great influence upon the relationship that exists between the school and community. This is still another reason why they will want to develop as fine a physical education program as possible and one that is most meaningful and meets the needs of pupils. In that the program will be discussed so often by pupils when they are outside of the school, the success of public relations rests largely with the type of program that has been provided for them.

Public relations should be viewed as a two-way course. This means that your policies and actions will have an influence in one way or another upon various groups of people in the community. Through attitudes, opinions, criticisms, and suggestions, these various groups of people will reflect their feeling about the school in general and the physical education program in particular. Consequently, unless you maintain desirable public relations with the community you may experience difficulty in gaining community support for the school physical education program.

With regards to the contributions of athletics to the educational purposes Rohn²² says:

Athletics of the type usually exemplified by the high schools with their carefully planned and directed schedules of training and competition should be of great educational value. In any case if they are detrimental and antagonistic to the best interest of education they should be eliminated. However, as conducted in most educational institutions, athletics are far more than simple play or recreation and serve a very useful purpose.

Athletics help to develop social response, neuro-muscular coordination, and ethical character; important objectives of all public school training.

²²Henry E. Rohn Jr., Patron Opinion of the Athletic System of Riverton High School, (Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Wyoming, Zaramie, 1955), pp. 7-8.

Further, desirable habits can be promoted, and thus provide a field of great potential value for the educational program.

Carter²³ contends that:

Attendance at most schoolboy football games can be greatly increased by better publicity. Too many schools rely almost entirely on the sports pages and their schedule posters, though numerous other methods of publicity are available. Adequate use of these methods can be greatly benefited by the scholastic football program.

Attendance should be a primary concern of the coach. Getting people to attend the games is not only the first step in promoting an understanding of football's contribution to the educational process, but is also a financial necessity. Since most schools depend heavily on gate receipts to finance their athletic program, good attendance is a "must" in establishing a first-class program.

Coaches and school administrators should remember that many people have only a cursory interest in football. To them, football is just another form of prospective entertainment and to attract them the school must compete with movies, television, and forms of well publicized entertainment.

Here are ten ideas which, though not widely used by schools, lend themselves readily to football publicity. They require only a small amount of time or money and can be administered, if necessary, by student volunteers. Several of the ideas require community participation or donation, but of the type that can be easily obtained.

1. Public bulletin board
2. Lapel buttons
3. Motor parades
4. Prepared radio announcements
5. Mail
6. Automobile advertising
7. Clinics
8. Theater advertising
9. Displays and exhibits
10. School bus advertising

²³Joel W. Carter, "Ten Unusual Expedients for Football Publicity," Scholastic Coach, 26:52-53, September, 1956.

How can we obtain a continuing public interest in education?

Pace²⁴ says:

Is the most important of the major issues and questions in elementary and secondary schools. Without public interest, schools cannot help but falter, as a child falters if his parents are uninterested in his progress and his future. It is in the creation of a strong public interest in education that all of us, educator or noneducator, have a definite responsibility.

Athletics too much to build a better school and community spirit.

Uthoff²⁵ says:

The sports program is also a link between the school and community. Parents and just plain fans turn out each week to cheer on the school's efforts. In many communities football and basketball seasons have developed into a great weekly social event where friends see each other when they would not ordinarily do so.

Pattington²⁶ says:

"I saw your name in the paper yesterday." How often we hear that remark among the pupils of many of our schools! And the value to those pupils is far beyond the power of dollars and cents to measure. Publicity for the sake of publicity-----No, but publicity for work well done, for advertising the worthwhile things being done, accomplishments of a well planned program-----Yes.

A well planned publicity program should receive the same consideration by the school administrator as does any part of his administrative duties.

²⁴Clint Pace, "Winning Public Assistance for the Public Schools," The School Executive, 75:21, July, 1956.

²⁵Harry Uthoff, "Athletics Belong in our Public Schools," The Texas Outlook, 48:23, May, 1959.

²⁶M. G. Pattington, "It Pays to Advertise," School Activities, 17:164, January, 1946.

If it is correctly planned and carried out, he will find that his returns will more than justify the effort and time spent.

Interscholastic athletic publicity has received criticism for the amount of space offered it in newspapers. Kirkpatrick²⁷ says:

A publicity group discussed this criticism and suggested that in place of criticizing the stupendous amount of publicity accorded these departments perhaps other school departments should try to parallel them in publicity.

Melby²⁸ states:

There is no question but that it has changed. The public is expecting more and more of its schools.

Just one aspect of our changed society, the increased number of working mothers, has demanded more action on the part of the schools in relation to health, character, education, and the general well-being of children. There are also those who criticize us for doing too much.

All of which points up the need for more cooperative relationships among homes, schools, and the community. This area promises to be one of the most important for future development.

Donnelley²⁹ expressed this opinion: We have little reason to be proud of our efforts and success in educating the American public on the place of sports in American life, on the educational values of athletics, and on the public's role as a spectator and participant. This

²⁷Marian Kirkpatrick, "School Publicity Should Reach All People," School Activities, 25:225, March, 1954.

²⁸Ernest O. Melby, Nation's Schools, 51:42, January, 1957.

²⁹J. R. Donnelley, "Relationship Between Athletic Officials and Coaches," Athletic Journal, 37:56-7, May, 1957.

is a program that should be started in the early elementary grades and carried on through the colleges and universities. The schools should offer regular scheduled classes in the appreciation of sports. The parents, students, and the whole community should be involved in the planning and execution of the sports education program.

Chapter III

The data for this investigation was obtained by the use of questionnaires which were mailed to all the AA high schools in Texas. Of the 54 mailed out 50 or 92.6% of the schools responded.

Question number one asked:

What is the position of the person or persons responsible for athletic publicity in your school?

The following table is used to show the position of the responsible person or persons for athletic publicity in the AA high schools of Texas.

Table I

Position of Responsible Person or Persons for Athletic Publicity

Position	Number	Per Cent
Head Coach	19	38%
Public Relations Director	1	2%
Athletic Director	7	14%
Coach and Principal	1	2%
Student Manager	2	4%
Principal	4	8%
School Paper Sponsor	1	2%
Student Council	1	2%
Teachers	1	2%
Art Teacher	1	2%

Table #1 (Cont'd)

Position	Number	Per Cent
Principal and Athletic Director	1	2%
English Teacher	1	2%
Coach of each Sport	1	2%
Business Manager	1	2%
Vocational Shop Teacher	1	2%
Head Coach and Athletic Director	4	8%
Publicity Committee	1	2%
Physical Education Teacher	2	4%
Science Teacher	1	2%
No one responsible	1	2%

This table illustrates that the Head coach, Athletic Director, and the Principals respectively are the persons most responsible for athletic publicity in the AA schools.

The responses for questions number two, three, and four are shown in the following table.

Table II
Types of Newspapers in the Community

Items	Yes	%	No	%
2. Does your town have a daily newspaper?	35	70	15	30
3. Does your town have a bi-weekly newspaper?	13	26	37	74
4. Does your town have a weekly newspaper?	22	44	28	56

Table II illustrates that thirty-five or 70% have a daily paper. Fifteen or 30% have no daily paper. Thirteen or 26% of the communities questioned have a bi-weekly paper. Thirty-seven or 74% have no bi-weekly paper. Twenty-two or 44% have a weekly newspaper, and twenty-eight or 56% have no weekly paper.

Question number five: Is the attitude of community newspapers toward publishing your athletic news favorable? This question was asked to try and determine why there is so little space devoted to AA high school athletic publicity in the newspapers of Texas.

Forty-seven or 94% answered yes, and three or 6% answered no. Relying upon the respondents answers to question number five the fault lies elsewhere.

Question number six asks: Is there a radio station in your community?

Forty-two or 84% of the athletic publicity men answered yes, and eight or 16% answered no.

In trying to determine how many of the schools questioned had their games broadcasted, question number seven was asked.

Are your games broadcast over the radio?

Ten or 20% answered yes, and forty or 80% answered no.

Question number eight: Is there a television station in your community?

Thirteen or 26 $\frac{1}{2}$ % said yes, and thirty-seven or 74% said no.

Because of the size of towns that AA schools are located in one can easily understand why there are only a few television stations.

Question number nine and ten are shown together in table III.

Table III

Table Showing Percentage of Schools Having Alumni or Quarterback Clubs

Item	Yes	%	No	%
9. Do you have an alumni association?	20	40	30	60
10. Do you have a quarter-back or booster club?	25	50	25	50

The information in this table discloses that in item number nine 20 or 40% answered yes, and 30 or 60% answered no.

In item number ten the answers were twenty-five or 50% yes and twenty-five or 50% no.

Question number eleven: Do you have an appreciation of athletic classes for students?

In response to the question 23 or 46% answered yes and 27 or 54% answered no.

Question number twelve: Do you have appreciation of athletic classes for adults?

Three or 6% answered yes, and 47 or 94% answered no. The above responses illustrates that the adults in the communities of the schools questioned are not too well informed.

Question number thirteen: Have you ever conducted a patron opinion survey of your athletic system?

Ten or 20% answered yes and 40 or 80% answered no.

Question number fourteen: Do you sell pre-sale tickets?

Thirty-one or 62% answered yes and 19 or 38% answered no.

Question number fifteen: Do you use letter or envelope heads containing schedules of games?

Twelve or 24% used letter or envelope heads containing schedules of games while thirty-eight or 76% do not use them.

Question number sixteen: Do you take movies of your games and show them to interested groups?

Nineteen or 38% take movies of their games. Thirty-one or 62% of the schools do not take movies of their games. Many of the schools are beginning to take movies of their games. The original cost of equipment is the reason why many do not take movies.

Question number seventeen: Do you have in your budget an appropriation for publicity?

Eighteen or 36% had appropriations for publicity in their budgets. Thirty-two or 64% had no appropriations for publicity in their budgets.

Question number eighteen: Is your athletic department independent of the central office?

Twenty-one or 42% answered yes and twenty-nine or 58% answered no.

Question number nineteen: Is your athletic program financed by your board of education?

Thirty-two or 64% answered yes and eighteen or 36% answered no.

Question number twenty: Do you furnish the community with information concerning your athletic objectives?

Thirty-seven or 74% answered yes and thirteen or 26% answered no.

Question number twenty-one: In what manner do local merchants aid in publicizing your athletic contests?

Table IV

Table Showing How local Merchants Aid in Publicizing Athletic Contests

21.	<u>Checks</u>
1. Theater advertising	4
2. Displaying posters and handbills in windows	44
3. Displaying posters on buses	5
4. Printing schedules	44
5. Selling school supplies with team insignia	13
6. Selling T-shirts, sweaters, etc., with team insignia	24
7. Others	

The above table shows that the local merchants aid in some manner in publicizing athletic contests. The numbers in the table indicate the number of checks for each item and not percentage.

Question number twenty-two: Check community service organizations that you have addressed as an athletic publicity man during the last

year.

Table V

Table Showing Community Service Organizations Addressed as an Athletic Publicity Man During the Last Year

Item #	Checks
22	
1. Parent-Teacher Associations	34
2. Mothers' Clubs	8
3. Lodges	6
4. Booster Clubs	25
5. American Legion	4
6. Radio Audience	8
7. Business Men's Club	5
8. Chamber of Commerce	9
9. Others -	
School Boards	4

Table five also indicates the number of checks for each item and not percentage. Parent-Teacher Associations and Booster Clubs received the most checks respectively.

Table VI

School Practices That Were Most Valuable In Public Relations

	1st		2nd		3rd	
	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent
Athletic Contests	38	76	7	14	-	-
Student Council	-	-	1	2	5	10
Athletic Banquets	4	8	-	-	-	-
School Exhibits	3	6	14	28	16	32
Commencement	3	6	12	24	18	36
School Programs	2	4	16	32	11	22

The findings with regards to school practices that were most valuable in public relation as illustrated in Table VI are as follows:

Athletic contests first with thirty-eight or 76% checking this item, school programs with sixteen or 32% checking this item for second, eighteen or 36% checked commencement for third.

Question number twenty-four: As a result of the publicity given to athletics, do you feel such a program is an aid in bringing the community closer together or not?

Table VII

Does Publicity Given to Athletics Bring the Community Closer Together

	Number	Percentage
Very Much	32	64
Some	17	34
Very Little	1	2
None	-	-

Table VII shows that thirty-two or 64% felt that publicity given to athletics brought the community closer together. Seventeen or 34% indicated some, and one or 2% checked very little. There were no responses to none.

Table VIII

Percentage Showing Whether The Interscholastic Sports Program is fully sanctioned by the Churches, Parents and The Community in General

Sanction of Interscholastic Athletic Program	Number	Percent
To a marked extent	25	50
To some extent	25	50
Not at all	-	-

In response to question number twenty-five as shown in the above table, the responses were twenty-five or 50% for the first two items. Item three didn't receive any responses.

Question number twenty-six: Is there a strong sense of personal and individual responsibility for the success of the school program present in the minds of the people as a result of the publicity programs?

Eleven or 22% said very much, twenty-nine or 58% said some, eight or 16% checked very little and two or 4% indicated none.

Table IX

Percentage Using Advertising media Available To The Best Interest of Their Programs

	Number	Percentage
Very Much	21	42
Some	29	58
Very little	-	-
None	-	-

In response to question number twenty-seven the above table shows the number and percentage. Twenty-one or 42% indicated that they are using advertising media available to the best interest of their programs, while twenty-nine or 58% said some. There were no responses for very little and none.

Table X

Percentage showing How Often the Homes of Students Who Are in Their Athletic Programs are Visited

	Number	Percentage
Beginning of each season	26	52
Monthly	7	14
Twice a year	12	24
Not at all	5	10

Table X shows that twenty-six or 52% visit in the homes at the beginning of each season. Seven or 14% make visits on the monthly basis. Twelve or 24% make home visitations twice a year. Five or 10% of the individuals indicated that they make no home visitations.

Chapter IV

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to accomplish the following:

Develop awareness of the importance of athletics in a democracy, to obtain financial support, to give to the public the information to which it is entitled about its athletic teams, and to correct misunderstandings and inform the public of plans, policies, and regulations.

In this survey, the questionnaire method is used. Source of data come from questionnaire results, books, periodicals and unpublished Master's thesis.

There is an upsurge of public interest in the nation's schools. Seldom have so many people demonstrated keen and vital interest in the public schools.

Interscholastic athletics play an important role in today's schools. It is a definite part of the expanding school curriculum and must be recognized as such.

Athletic publicity men are in a struggle to win public understanding and support. This struggle includes showing the importance of athletics in a democracy, correct misunderstandings and to obtain financial support. Knowledge of the program is essential to any real understanding of its worth. Only through continuous and reliable publicity may public comprehension be guided to an unflinching support. One way of gaining this support is through presenting factual informational service adjusted to all levels of community need and appealing to all

community interests.

There are many publicity techniques and media which can be used. The local newspaper is a powerful factor in building public relations. It reaches almost every home in the community.

Of the 54 questionnaires distributed in the AA high schools of Texas, 50 submitted a response. All of the schools had someone assigned as the publicity man.

Conclusions

The findings of the study revealed a numerous amount of problems.

As a result of this investigation, the following conclusions are reached:

1. There is a definite need for competent athletic publicity men.
2. There is a definite need for adult organizations that support athletic teams.
3. The investigation found a need for appreciation of athletic classes.
4. A lack of patron opinion of interscholastic athletics.
5. List of schools taking movies in the AA high schools is growing.
6. Lack of appropriations for publicity in the school budgets.
7. Twenty-one per cent of athletic departments are independent of the central office.
8. More than half of the athletic programs are financed by the local boards of education.
9. Local merchants aid in these three ways (1) Displaying posters in windows, (2) Printing schedules, (3) Selling T-shirts, sweaters, with team insignia.
10. Athletic contests were most valuable in public relations as determined by the questionnaires.
11. The churches, parents, and community in general sanctioned the interscholastic athletic programs.

12. Fifty-two percent of the students participating in the programs were visited in their homes at the beginning of the season.

Recommendations

The writer wishes to recommend to the department of physical education, that a course be set up in Public Relations. This course would give individuals majoring in physical education or those in the coaching field an opportunity to come face to face with some of the do's and don't's of a good public relations program.

It is believed that this would be a step toward enhancing Interscholastic Athletics and elevating this program to its proper place in the schools of the 60's, and in the minds of the public.

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Appendix I
Questionnaire

Place a check for yes and an x for no. (Note: Y - Yes; N - No)
In other questions place a check beside your answer or fill in
the blank.

- Y N 1. What is the position of the person or persons responsible
for athletic publicity in your school?
- Y N 2. Does your town have a daily newspaper?
- Y N 3. Does your town have a bi-weekly newspaper?
- Y N 4. Does your town have a weekly newspaper?
- Y N 5. Is the attitude of community newspapers toward publishing
your athletic news favorable?
- Y N 6. Is there a radio station in your community?
- Y N 7. Are your games broadcast over the radio?
- Y N 8. Is there a television station in your community?
- Y N 9. Do you have an alumni association?
- Y N 10. Do you have a quarterback or booster club?
- Y N 11. Do you have an appreciation of athletics classes for students?
- Y N 12. Do you have an appreciation of athletics classes for adults?
- Y N 13. Have you ever conducted a patron opinion survey of your
athletic system?
- Y N 14. Do you sell pre-sale tickets?
- Y N 15. Do you use letter or envelope heads containing schedules of
games?

- Y N 16. Do you take movies of your games and show them to interested groups?
- Y N 17. Do you have in your budget an appropriation for publicity?
- Y N 18. Is your athletic department independent of the central office?
- Y N 19. Is your athletic program financed by your board of education?
- Y N 20. Do you furnish the community with information concerning your athletic objectives?
- Y N 21. In what manner do local merchants aid in publicizing your athletic contests? (Check)
- 1. Theater advertising
 - 2. Displaying posters and handbills in windows
 - 3. Displaying posters on buses
 - 4. Printing schedules
 - 5. Selling school supplies with team insignia
 - 6. Selling T-shirts, sweaters, etc., with team insignia
 - 7. Others
22. Check community service organizations that you have addressed as an athletic publicity man during the last year.
- 1. Parent-Teacher associations
 - 2. Mothers' Clubs
 - 3. Lodges
 - 4. Booster Clubs

- ___5. American Legion
- ___6. Radio Audience
- ___7. Business Men's Club
- ___8. Chamber of Commerce
- ___9. Others

23. List school practices that you deem most valuable in public relations, such as school exhibits, commencements, athletic contests, etc.

1st

2nd

3rd

24. As a result of the publicity given to athletics, do you feel such a program is an aid in bringing the community closer together or not? Very much - some - very little
none

25. Do you feel that the interscholastic sports program is fully sanctioned by the churches, parents and the community in general? To a marked extent -- To some extent -- not
at all

26. Is there a strong sense of personal and individual responsibility for the success of the school program present in the minds of the people as a result of the publicity program? Very much - Some - Very little - None

27. Do you feel that you are using the advertising media available to you to the best interest of your program?
Very much - Some - Very little - None
28. How often do you visit in the homes of students who are in your athletic program? Beginning of each season - Monthly
Twice a year - Not at all.

Appendix II

612 San Antonio Avenue
Seguin, Texas
March 15, 1960

Dear _____

As a graduate student at Prairie View A & M College, I am writing a thesis entitled, "An Investigation of Publicity Programs of Interscholar Athletics in AA Schools of Texas."

I am asking that the questionnaire be filled in as accurately as possible and returned in the enclosed stamped envelope at your earliest convenience. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

Yours truly,

/t/ Clarence Little Jr.