



Training, recruitment, and retention of speech coaches in the Montana high school forensics program
by Laura Nesbitt Lowe

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education in
Curriculum & Instruction

Montana State University

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Abstract:

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MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY – BOZEMAN
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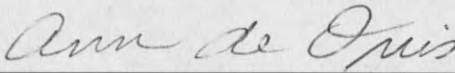
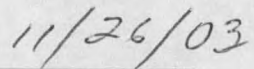
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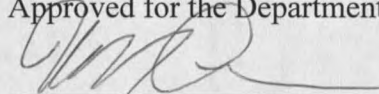
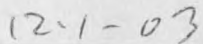
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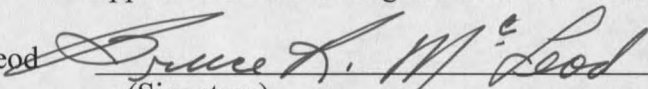
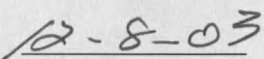
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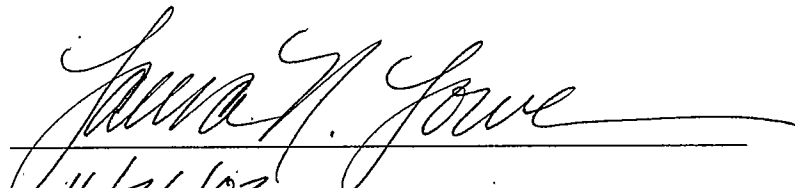

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe the current status of coach training, recruitment, and retention in the extra-curricular forensics program sanctioned by the state high school association in Montana. Describing the current status of these coach issues answered three areas of questions: whether administrators can find qualified individuals, what training current coaches have, and what patterns are associated with longevity in the program. Findings are reported from two surveys, a document analysis, and a canvass of college level opportunities for speech teacher training and forensic competition. In addition, one portion of the literature review resulted in an extended search for national coaching and participation numbers, a search in which the lack of answers exemplifies the fragmentation noted in literature reviewed for this study.

Significant results include the high percentage of surveyed administrators who indicated that there are fewer applicants for speech positions than for other MHSA program coach position openings. Over half of the surveyed speech coaches felt they had not received any training at all, and less than one in six felt they had received any training since being hired to coach. Document analysis showed a relationship between program consistency at individual schools and the ratio of speech coach pay to basketball coach pay. At post-secondary institutions in Montana, college level opportunities for speech teacher preparation are declining and only one of the post-secondary institutions offering this curriculum training also offers students who might be future teachers and coaches the opportunity for forensic competition.

CHAPTER 1

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Burnout is hardly inevitable, whatever the profession. It is the attitude toward what one is doing—its value, its recognition, its rewards—or the lack of same that shapes whether we burn or burnout. However, it is good to remember the observation of University of Haifa (Israel) psychologist Ayala Pines, ‘In order to burn out, you first have to be on fire’ (Parson, 1997, p. 418).

Introduction

Competitive forensics offers high school students a co-curricular boon to academic competence, lifelong self-confidence, and future job skills. Speech contests in Montana have brought students together from across the state since 1904, and now include debate and drama competition as well as a variety of speech events. Interscholastic forensics has grown from its humble start as an event held only once annually to a full season of simultaneous tournaments dotting the state each weekend from October through the end of January. Long before dawn, Saturday after Saturday, hundreds of teenagers shiver with chill and nerves, climbing into busses for travel to day-long tournaments. Physical discomfort is secondary to getting there and doing well. Tournaments are long days, filled with emotion and disappointment. Originally dubbed a “friendly contest” by host University of Montana (Seelinger, 1987, p.1), high school forensics still hums with the exhilaration of teenagers meeting strangers and making

friends. The crucible of face-to-face competition hones skills more than equaled by the self-confidence that first falters and then comes back again to improve. Yet forensics can happen only if an adult will coach the team.

While the students' experiences in forensics are the beginning and end of the story, the focus of this study is on the adult who enters, maintains, and leaves the position of speech coach. Details differ in each coach's experience, yet stages of the cycle are common to all who coach. Somehow, they become coaches; in some way, they juggle the demands of being coaches; and finally, at some point, they each come to the end of coaching. While every coach either thrives or endures through this process as an individual, the cumulative effects of multiple solo coaching cycles reverberate and influence other aspects of the larger system. This one small extracurricular program in the high schools of a geographically huge but thinly populated state offers a chance to examine the functional organization of a subsystem within an educational network of systems.

Problem

High school forensics in Montana faces unique challenges in its union of co-curricular content and extracurricular experience. Popular with students as well as with parents, and requested as an extracurricular option in many districts, the program faces logistical difficulties at the school, division, and state levels. Some of the recurring frustrations are unchangeable due to the geography of Montana and the character of forensic activity itself, while others are subject to reform and improvement.

The coaching situation in forensics reflects larger trends in American education, in extracurricular coaching generally, and in the national state of forensics. The national teacher shortage has been widely reported in both popular and professional publications. Within this general picture, other changing dynamics are at work, such as the alterations in the proportion of women entering the teaching field as compared to other professions (Fine, 2001) and a decreasing number of teachers willing to coach, let alone willing to be career-long coaches (Frost, 1995; Martens, 2000; Munksgaard, 1997; Odenkirk, 1986). Montana administrators have noted both publicly and privately that teachers hired to coach frequently resign from their extracurricular assignments after gaining tenure (Tanglen, 2001). Montana principals and superintendents are increasingly faced with the imperative of finding an individual qualified for a coaching position and then sorting out the academic teaching assignments later (METNET, personal communication, June 19, 2001). Concern about the quality of sports coaching is motivating an athletic coach certification movement both nationally and internationally (Sawyer, 1992; Stewart & Sweet, 1992; Whitby, 1993), and Montana has joined the ranks of the states in which high school coaches must now pass certification process. Most states, however, including Montana, have no minimum requirements for forensic coach training.

Coach training is a particularly critical factor in the success of Montana forensics due to the organizational structure of the state's program. In contrast to other interscholastic high school competitive programs, many functional aspects of forensic activity at the state level depend on the voluntary membership of the statewide coaches' organization, Montana Forensics Educators Association (MFEA), to initiate decisions

about scheduling and rule changes. Although the MHSA forensics and drama committee has veto power over recommendations from the MFEA coaches' organization and can choose to not bring recommendations from the MFEA annual coaches' meeting to the MHSA board for approval, the MHSA forensics and drama committee is limited to simply overturning the MFEA coaches' vote and does not have the power to initiate management decisions. At the division level, the speech coaches at many high schools organize aspects of scheduling and program decision-making that are equivalent to decisions handled by athletic directors or administrators in other competitive MHSA programs. Athletic programs under the MHSA rely to a great degree on event rules developed by the National Federation of High Schools (NFHS), but the only aspect of national federation coordination directly adopted by the Montana forensics program has been the annual policy debate topic (Haugen, 2000). Rule changes in 17 separate events are decided on the Montana state level in a process initiated by MFEA. The forensics and drama committee of the Montana High School Association (MHSA) has veto power on recommendations from the coaches' organization and can refuse to bring items approved by the MFEA before the MHSA's governing body, the Board of Control. Due to this largely coach-driven activity structure, in which administrators have what amounts to a veto power, the quality of coach preparation is a particularly vulnerable fulcrum for overall program stability. Varying levels of individual training and perspective combine for a cumulative impact on the health and functional success of a state's program.

Purpose

The purpose of this descriptive study is to present as complete a picture as can be discovered about the status of high school speech coach training, recruitment, and retention in the state of Montana. Examining available evidence of coaching preparation and longevity may add to the identification of factors contributing to coaching success and stable high school forensics programs. Ultimately, the researcher hopes that this study might contribute to the accumulated understanding needed for successful management of secondary school organizations through insights into the current situation in one extracurricular activity.

Research Question

What is the current status of speech coach training, recruitment and retention in the MHSA forensics program? The primary objective of this study is to explore the quantity, quality and timing of coach training and other influences on coach recruitment and retention. This research question represents several associated concerns. Can administrators who seek coaches to direct forensic programs in their high schools find qualified individuals? How have current coaches been prepared for the coaching assignments they fill today? Where, when, and in what ways are coaches being trained, and what patterns are associated with coach longevity in Montana high schools today?

Introduction to the Study

From the perspective of high school administrators, successful personnel management of extracurricular coaching staff is an important public arena in which program stability and strength builds parent and community support for schools. While forensics may have a uniquely different public constituency than athletics, it is an important one in many communities and potentially important in many others. With the nation undergoing a crisis of confidence in education, and the K-12 system in Montana facing serious funding difficulties, all school programs must be managed as productively as possible. This study should help illuminate the current employment and training status of coaches in competitive forensics, a less visible program under the management of high school administrators.

Forensics is a collection of systems (Bartanen, 1994). In Montana high schools, every forensics program operates as a smaller system encompassed within the system of a larger school organization. As such, forensics is subject to the common culture and community priorities of the overall school setting, sharing funding and staff resources with other extracurricular and co-curricular systems. In addition to these shared and intersecting dynamics between high school coaching in forensics and athletics, college forensics is a second and separate system, centered outside of the secondary school, which overlaps and influences high school forensics. While athletic coaching literature addresses basic themes applicable as a framework for the individual coach (Coakley, 1978; Lyle, 1999; Martens, 1990), forensic literature makes only limited forays into

addressing individual coaching questions, focusing more on program-level ramifications of the coaching issues central to this study (Frana, 1989; Lee & Lee, 1990; Leeper, 1997). Although many aspects of forensics and athletics are dissimilar, this study is based on areas in which all high school coaching shares important dynamics.

Interscholastic high school speech programs combine academics and practical experience within a competitive framework. Contradictions inherent to this combination are relevant to the current study. Despite its laboratory exercise of teachable, curriculum-oriented skills, the management of competitive forensics in a majority of Montana high schools today lies outside of the school day schedule and outside of a class framework. Thus the coach's time commitment and the team's out-of-class focus are similar to athletics. Yet the competitive format, level of time involvement, and semantics that make much about a speech program parallel to extracurricular athletics do not change the fact that these two activities are perceived as very different in the mindsets of many coaches and administrators.

When organizing for any extracurricular program needs, administrators must be able to distinguish perception, however common, from the actual realities faced by staff members, especially when those realities impact program stability. All high school coaches, whether athletic or forensic, must not only teach event-specific skills to prepare individual students for competition, but must also manage administrative duties in order to lead their teams as organizations. These administrative duties include program advocacy, fundraising, scheduling, planning, budgeting, disciplining, and inspiring young people as a group (Bartanen, 1994; Martens, 1990; Newcombe & Robinson, 1975;

Stewart, 2001). This study is intended to contribute to administrators' understanding of the training and retention status of coaches in one high school program out of the many that vie for administrative attention and concern.

Definitions

Montana High School Association or MHSA: The governing authority for all sanctioned extracurricular activity in accredited Montana high schools. Montana High School Association coordinates and issues notification of policies, scheduling, rule changes, and other statewide aspects of the forensic program as well as of all other sanctioned competitive programs, including sports and music competition. (Haugen, 2000; Montana High School Association, 2001).

Montana Forensic Educators Association or MFEA: The voluntary professional organization of forensic coaches. The MFEA membership meets once a year to calendar and discuss rule changes. This group follows constitutional procedures and bylaws, making recommendations to the MHSA Forensic and Drama Committee, which then decides whether to take the recommendations to the MHSA Governing Board (Montana Forensic Educators Association website www.mtforensics.org, 2002; Haugen, 2000).

"Forensics," "Speech," "Speech and Drama," "Forensics and Drama," and "Speech, Drama, and Debate": Terms used in Montana to refer to the activity at the center of this study. Although some participants and coaches have their own variant distinctions, these terms are often used interchangeably, and for simplicity's sake, the term "speech team" will be used in this study.

“Coach” and “Director”: Two terms used interchangeably in this study. “Director” was used more often in the past and is used more often today in the context of college forensics. In the 1970’s, one commentator stressed “the deleterious effect” of the term *coach* rather than *director of forensics*, because of its analogy with athletics (McBath, 1975, p. 159), but in the day-to-day reality of Montana high schools, coach is the term commonly used and understood to mean the individual leading the speech team.

The National Federation of State High School Associations, or NFHS: The national administrative organization for high school athletics and fine arts programs, which operates out of central offices in Indianapolis, Indiana, to serve more than 50 member state high school associations. The NFHS publishes playing rules for 16 sports and provides many other services to benefit the 17,346 member high schools in the U.S. (National Federation of High Schools, 2001a).

National Federation Interscholastic Speech and Debate Association, or NFISDA: One of several specialized activity and athletics committees operating under NFHS. A forensic specialist acts as NFHS’s liaison to the NFISDA advisory committee, helping to coordinate speech, drama, and debate programs at the state and national level. To speech and debate coaches who choose to become members, NFISDA provides several services including the opportunity for awards, the Forensic Educator publication, and insurance. Reasonably priced videotapes and other materials for coaches are available through the organization (National Federation Interscholastic Speech and Debate Association, 2002).

National Forensic League, or NFL: A national honorary organization for high school forensics competitors formed in 1925 in Ripon, Wisconsin, to honor students for

their accomplishments in interscholastic debate, oratory, and public speaking. The annual National Speech Tournament, or "nationals," has been continuously hosted since 1931, other than during World War II, and the organization claims many prominent and influential Americans as members (National Forensic League, 2002).

Montana Association of Secondary School Principals, or MASSP: A professional organization to assist middle school, junior high school and high school principals, affiliated with the School Administrators of Montana and the National Association of Secondary School Principals. A state convention in April and other regular state and regional meetings provide inservice, materials and support to help educate students and create effective schools (Montana Association of Secondary School Principals, 2003).

Assumptions and Delimitations

The researcher's focus on the coaching cycle is based on a comparison between two categories of high school coaching, athletic and forensic. Despite forensics traditionally having been a co-curricular activity, the purposes of this study are better served by using the extra-curricular athletic coaching model as a framework than by using that of the co-curricular music director. Though there are many co-curricular competitive programs in Montana high schools, only music and forensics are supervised and sanctioned by MHSA. Significant differences between speech coaches and music directors are evident in the number of individuals certified in the specific curriculum area, the ratio of competition to performance in the allocation of student time, and the degree to which preparation for competition occurs within the school day. These three factors,

along with historic and current trends linking the development of athletics and forensics, are detailed in Appendix A.

Focusing on the coaching cycle in Montana high schools necessitated that several related topics not be covered. Among the significant issues in forensics which have been avoided in this study are changes in the academic discipline of communications studies evident at the college level, and philosophical differences represented by the distinction between “coach” and “director” noted in the definitions section. Other issues that have been avoided include funding, public attitudes toward forensics, frustrations between AA and ABC coaches, and the schism between debate, drama, and speech interests, though each of these issues influences the health of the statewide program.

Summary

Training, recruitment, and retention are aspects of an individual coach’s experience that influence program stability. This exploratory study focuses on describing the current status of coach training issues that limit the ability of high school administrators to maintain competitive forensics in Montana high schools. While national trends in high school staffing impact all coach management in Montana, recruitment, training, and retention are critical to the stability of speech programs at individual schools as well as to the continuity of the statewide program as a whole. Key to understanding the current status of these coaching issues in the forensics program is assessing whether administrators can find qualified individuals to coach speech, determining what preparation currently functioning coaches have had, and finding

patterns related to coach longevity and program stability. Because forensics is a system amidst larger systems, finding answers to these questions requires a preliminary look at the larger context of the activity. The literature review will therefore undertake the discovery of a theoretical framework for understanding coaching issues in high school forensics.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

All competitive high school programs currently face shortages of coaches in the employment pool and increasing numbers of untrained coaches. High school administrators are dealing with the ramifications of this dynamic in both athletics and forensics. The process through which an individual becomes a coach and overcomes role-related problems is central to retention and recruitment issues in high school programs.

Themes key to this study were summarized by the statement of John Lyle, a British athletic coaching expert, in his assertion that coaches

become more expert through experience, interaction with others, and a mix of formal and informal education and training opportunities. Without a greater knowledge of successful coaching practice, role priorities and the personal attributes necessary, those responsible for coach education . . . and the coaches themselves will be less likely to be responsible for expert coaching practice (1999, p. 4).

A fundamental reality of this study is the shortage of literature on high school forensic coaching. The majority of journals in the field of speech, such as Communication Education, Communication Quarterly, Communication Studies, Southern Communication Journal, and the Quarterly Journal of Speech, are oriented towards communications in other contexts, such as media, interpersonal communication, and conflict resolution. The

limited material available on forensics coaching deals primarily with the college director, as in the American Forensics Association's Argumentation and Advocacy, the Forensic of Pi Kappa Delta, and the National Forensic Journal. Studies with data are generally older or focused on college programs. High school forensic publications such as the NFL's Rostrum and NFISDA's Forensic Educator focus on how to coach specific events or anecdotal stories, and these categories were excluded from this review.

In contrast to most forensic coaching literature, which focus on the needs of the program and not on the needs of the coach, important aspects of the research questions relating to the individual coach were found primarily in athletic literature. Inclusion of this material was essential, since consideration of coach training solely from the perspective of program needs ignores the personal dynamics of individuals faced with occupational expectations, and overlooks much established coaching literature on role conflict and retention. Two categories of themes are considered in the preliminary review to this study: first, those shared by all high school coaches, both athletic and forensic, and second, those shared by forensic coaches at both college and high school levels.

Organization of the Literature Review

The following diagram shows the intersection between the four coaching dimensions reviewed for this study: college, high school, athletic, and forensic. Due to the small volume of literature about coaching high school forensics, athletic high school coaching literature is explored first to establish patterns for coaching. Then, since so little of the literature on coaching forensics concerns the high school level, literature on

coaching college forensics is explored for forensic system characteristics. Finally, the literature on high school forensic coaching is analyzed. Thus, the body of the literature review that follows explores the areas of Figure 1 in the order indicated by the numbers.

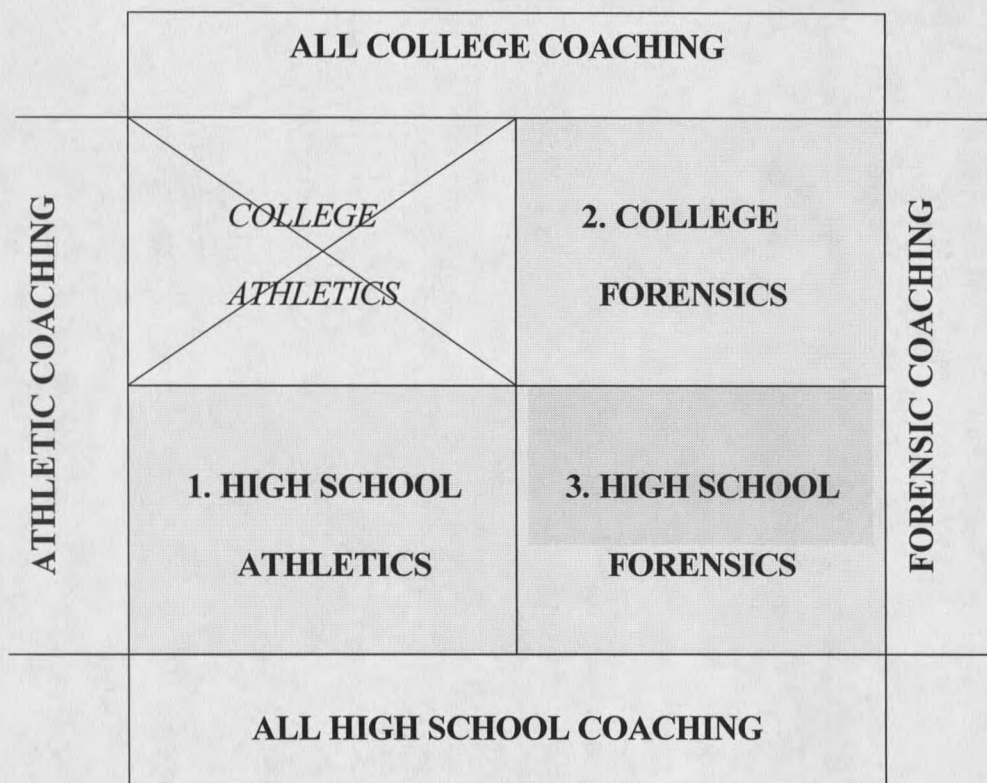


Figure 1. Order of Literature Review. Coaching literature of related activities is reviewed in the sequence indicated by numbers above.

High School Athletic Coaching Literature: Individual Coach Patterns

Overview: Untrained High School Coaches

High school administrators staffing extracurricular programs today face the reality of untrained coaches, a result of increased demand colliding with changes in the teacher-coach employment pool. Nationally, the numbers of high school students participating in extracurricular competitive athletics of every kind are at an all-time high. According to figures from the National Federation of High Schools (National Federation of High Schools, 2002), over 6.7 million students participated in extracurricular high school athletics during the 2001-2002 school year, breaking the previous records set during each of the previous four years (National Federation of High Schools, 1999, 2002). This level of student participation raises the number of coaching positions to be filled, estimated at over one million (T. E. Flannery, personal communication, November 2, 1999). The numbers of athletic events have multiplied in the last 25 years along with the associated coaching positions, with the result that many schools now offer 25 to 30 different sports programs, including several levels of varsity and sub-varsity competitive teams. This explosion in the demand for athletic coaches was foreseen over two decades ago, but the shortage is more serious than it was predicted to be (Frost, 1995; Munksgaard, 1997; Odenkirk, 1986).

Simultaneous shifts in coach demographics have accentuated the hiring crisis. In the past, most athletic coaches were physical education teachers, but by 1986, changes in college preparation were noted as a primary reason for the declining number of physical

education majors seeking teaching-coaching positions (Odenkirk, 1986). By the mid-1980's, the majority of high school athletic coaches were not physical education teachers anymore (Sage, 1989).

Changes in college preparation are not the only cause for disparity between supply and demand in coaching. According to national reports, as well as athletic directors, superintendents, and principals in Montana and Wyoming, it is much more difficult today to find beginning teachers who are interested in coaching than it was one or two decades ago (Frost, 1995; Gillis, 1994; Lowe, 1999; Munksgaard, 1997; Tanglen, 2001; Wishnietsky & Felder, 1989). Karen Partlow, national director of the American Coaching Effectiveness Program in 1994, commented in a National Federation interview that a contemporary study showed "coaching is not a career that is encouraged by parents or teachers. The only people encouraging students to enter the coaching field are coaches themselves" (Gillis, 1994, p. 5). Fewer individuals start their careers today with the idea in mind of being a coach.

In addition to having a smaller initial pool of teacher-coach candidates to draw from, the coaching longevity of tenured teacher-coaches is declining. Even with higher pay, coaches tend to move out of coaching much earlier in their careers now than in the past, largely by their own choice (Gillis, 1994). An increasing percentage of teacher-coaches retire from coaching but keep teaching, leaving administrators in unenviable hiring situations (Odenkirk, 1986). National Federation of High Schools Coaching Program director Flannery said in a 1999 phone interview with the researcher that coaching patterns have changed since the graduates of the 1960's and 1970's started

coaching, when it was generally true that "once you were a coach, you were always a coach" (T. E. Flannery, personal communication, November 2, 1999). He estimated seven years to be the national average for the tenure of an athletic coach, based on statistics from those state associations which require all coaches to be members and which keep track of coach longevity (T. E. Flannery, personal communication, November 2, 1999). Another coaching expert has estimated the annual turnover rate among coaches in the last decade to be as high as 40% (Stewart, 2001).

Pressures from outside the school contribute to the coaching exodus. Increasingly, athletic officials are targeted by parents and competitors acting out a "hyper-competitive" (Frost, 1995, p. 25), "win at all costs" mentality (Lord, 2000, p. 52). Violence contributes to coach turnover (Marshall, 2000) as does the scapegoat phenomenon, in which the players get credit for winning and the coach is at fault for losing (Lackey, 1977, 1986; Templin & Washburn, 1981; Wishnietsky & Felder, 1989). Increasing dependence on parental financial support for extracurricular costs in a time of tight school budgets erodes a coach's ability to emphasize sportsmanship over winning (Frost, 1995).

The shortage of teacher-coaches forces the hiring of many "walk-on" coaches who work outside of education for their primary employment and do not understand the basics of supervision, teaching methods, or legal issues. Some areas of the country have increased the use of non-faculty coaches by more than 400%, despite administrator efforts to keep coaching linked to certified teaching positions (Nasstrom et al., 1984). Frost (1995) notes that the 1986 National Federation handbook indicated one-third to one-half

of the faculty at any particular high school in the country was involved in coaching a sport. In comparison, today's percentage of coaches who are teachers has dropped significantly (Frost, 1995).

For many of those who are coaching today, the primary preparation for coaching is simply having played that sport at some point in the past. In response to this trend, coach mentoring programs, formal certification procedures, and a growing emphasis on quality coaching are diffusing internationally as well as from state to state within the United States (Dietze, 1997; Martens, 1990; Sawyer, 1992; Stewart, 2001; Whitby, 1993). One survey of coach certification programs (Whitby, 1993) commented on the importance of linking coach training to the physical education curriculum by noting that "credibility of certification lies in the endorsement of the program by state athletic directors, coaches and high school athletic or activity associations and by state departments of education" (p. 43).

Becoming a Coach: Preparation and Socialization

The intersection of these two trends, a significantly increased need for coaches on one hand and a reduced number of teachers available and willing to coach on the other, is complicating other long-standing occupational problems documented in coaching literature (Chu, 1981, 1984; Coakley, 1978; Locke & Massengale, 1978; Sage, 1989). Collectively, these issues serve as a framework for insight into Montana high school forensic coaching, beginning with the question of how a person begins to become a coach.

In one study of the processes through which individuals become high school coaches, Sage (1989) found that over 50% of the athletic coaches he studied had already decided to coach before starting college, and most of the others made that decision during college. His interview subjects were 50 male coaches, many of whom were not physical education teachers. Their choices to become coaches were justified "by personal characteristics and experiences, a desire to remain involved with sport, and an ambition to work with young people and serve society" (Sage, 1989, p. 89).

Even for those athletic coaches who majored in the traditional coaching curriculum area of physical education, academic coursework preparing them to coach has been minimal (Sage, 1989). One study by Chu (1984) showed that over 80% of the courses for physical education majors were devoted to teaching competencies and not coaching. Additionally, out of 2,172 graduate physical education courses, only 146 had an indication of coaching preparation anywhere in their descriptions or formal titles. Chu (1981) noted in another study that the "preparation myth" functions to minimize meaningful coach preparation in college for physical education majors (p. 44). Sage (1989) concluded:

Aside from acquiring some knowledge about instructional processes in teaching-oriented courses which may have relevance to coaching, aspiring coaches have limited opportunity to acquire the skills, values, and ideology basic to the practice of coaching, so the process of becoming a coach takes place outside of formal academic institutions (p. 86).

Thus, individual athletic coaches are often hired without any formal advance training, and they must negotiate the process of becoming a coach on their own.

For athletic coaches, a significant source of professional socialization into the role of coach is the experience they have had as student participants observing their own coaches. Coakley (1978) noted that the experience of having been an athletic participant, "combined with the anticipation of entering the ranks of coaching, are the channels through which the traditionally accepted methods of coaching become integrated into the behavior of aspiring young coaches" (p. 241). Coakley (1978) called this process of role learning "anticipatory socialization" (p. 241).

Being a Coach: Role Conflicts for Teacher-Coaches

Role is defined as the dimensions of behavior, attitudes and beliefs associated with a given position (Biddle, 1979, 1986). Assumptions made by others about an individual's role act to shape the specific expectations of that person and the individual's own identification with that role (Sage, 1989; Turner, 1978). Role conflict results from multiple obligations, each with different sets of expectations (Massengale, 1981, p. 23).

Coaches who are also teachers have always been at risk for role conflict due to their dual positions. Coakley (1978) noted that for the athletic coach, "normative limits of role expectations are probably more restrictive than they are for many other positions" (p. 223) and complicate pressure and conflicts inherent to the position. For those coaches who also teach, studies have identified several specific role conflicts: school organizational expectations, coach-faculty strains, personal professional aspirations, and teacher-coach workload (Riggins, 1979). Another study identified that "incompatible expectations resulting from the combined workload of teaching and coaching are the most

commonly experienced cause of role conflict” for those who fill a combined position (Massengale, 1981, p. 23).

One of the most common adjustments to a dual role conflict is selecting one role as the major role (Locke & Massengale, 1978). Every individual identifies sources of positive reinforcement through support and approval. When there are two competing sets of demands on an individual, and those two opposing expectations are both role-related, the degree to which the individual has identified with one role or the other will affect which role will receive a greater portion of energy. Studies (Chu, 1984; Locke & Massengale, 1978) suggest that the teacher-coach role conflict can lead to considerable dysfunction in one or both of the two occupational roles, and ultimately the one with the least potential for negative reinforcement gets the least emphasis, or conversely, the role with the most potential for positive reinforcement gets the most emphasis. Locke and Massengale (1978) suggested that athletic coaches who were also physical education teachers tended to reduce the emphasis they place on their teaching role in order to reduce role stress. “A surprising number of teacher-coaches admit concern over the feeling that the quality of their teaching performance is impaired by the additional demands of coaching” (Locke & Massengale, 1978, p. 173). Others also found that teaching was given secondary priority as a behavior adaptation to reduce the level of teacher-coach role stress (Riggins, 1979), or simply as a matter of preference between roles for both pre-service and experienced teacher-coaches (Chu, 1984). One reviewer noted, “the responsibilities associated with coaching consume the time and energy of teachers such that teachers who appear to be burned out during their physical education classes may

have adjusted their priorities to conserve energy for coaching duties” (Caccese, 1982, pp. 22-23). Locke and Massengale (1978) referred to this kind of teacher-coach as one who simply “rolls out the ball” for physical education class but performs legendary coaching feats with a team (p. 165). A majority of 307 teacher-coaches studied more recently exhibited a similar dichotomy, with decreasing levels of commitment to their roles as teachers during the coaching season and a greater professional involvement related to coaching than to teaching (Morley, Aberdeen, & Milislagle, 2000).

Conflict between two roles is accelerated when there is ambiguity and lack of feedback about expectations, and these are common for teacher-coaches. Occupational studies, including Johnson and Stinson’s 1975 study cited in Riggins (1979) and Jackson and Schuler’s 1985 study and a subsequent meta-analysis (Tubre & Collins, 2000), have found significant negative correlations between job satisfaction and performance and key role variables, such as role conflict and feedback ambiguity. Increased work stress has also been found to directly relate with the degree of role conflict and role ambiguity (Daniels & Bailey, 1999; Fried et al., 1998). Coaching researchers, including Massengale (1981), have noted that the actual job descriptions for teacher-coach roles vary from expectations held by educational organizations for other teachers (Riggins, 1979). As Chu’s (1981) research into organizational expectations showed, “a discrepancy exists between official acknowledgment of the professional role (teaching) and actual work performed” (p. 40). Disparities in a reward system characterized by a “lack of clear role definition and the apparent confusion of school administrators” (Massengale, 1981, p. 23) further complicate role conflict.

Outside pressures on athletic coaches are real and not simply perceived. Athletic coaches can lose their jobs because of coaching inadequacies, and potential dismissal has traditionally had a key relationship to role stress. Older studies identify deficiency areas, including coaching methods and techniques, organizational and administrative ability, ethics, staff relations, winning, and public relations skills (Hafner, 1962). More recently, up to 92% of surveyed school administrators had experience with coaches being dismissed or quitting in studies by Lackey (1977, 1986) and Wishnietsky and Felder (1989). Kroll (1982) cites "inevitable" (p. 7) interpersonal conflicts with administrators, players, and parents as stress factors contributing four times as often to coaches quitting than any lack of technical expertise.

Athletic coaching literature sketches a clear picture of the coach-administrator relationship as being fundamental to successful coaching (Coakley, 1978). Evaluation is one of the most important tools to deal with teacher-coach role ambiguity and role conflict by "clearly defining basic beliefs and goals" (Hungerford, 1981, p. 20). Reinforcement of a common understanding about job expectations between coach and administrator is an essential reason for formal evaluation (Pflug, 1980). Participatory management procedures in high school activity programs use human relationships between employee and supervisor as the key to improved system functioning, by centering on individuals and not simply the roles (McLenighan, 1990). Massengale (1981) stated that even though the role conflict from incompatible expectations for the teacher-coach "is perceived more than actually experienced" (p. 23), differences in perceptions of role expectations can lead to miscommunications and misunderstandings

between coach and administrators (p. 23). Lackey's (1977, 1986) frequently referenced studies contrasted coach and administrator perceptions and indicated significant difference between them. Yet differences in the perspectives of these two roles are not universally unbridgeable. Newman and Miller's (1995) study of the viewpoints of high school coaches and administrators shows that agreement can be found between administrator and coach. Ultimately, the manner in which coaches are hired, evaluated, and supported by administrators makes a difference not only in the quality of coaching but also in the coach's longevity. Feedback about job expectations and performance are important factors in a coach's confidence and success in managing role conflict.

Leaving the Role of Coaching: Intent to Leave and Burnout

An ongoing focus in occupational literature deals with the process of leaving a job and voluntary turnover. Theories such as the unfolding model proposed by Lee and Mitchell in 1994 describe the evolutionary stages of voluntarily deciding to quit a job, and form a theoretical basis for contemporary studies of the ways in which personal, external, and work-related variables contribute to the processes of turnover (Lee, Mitchell, Holtom, McDaniel, & Hill, 1999). While most occupational literature deals with full-time jobs, much coaching is not full-time employment, especially at the high school level and particularly for teacher-coaches. Thus, the concept of voluntary quitting as a process with stages has partial relevance to understanding how a coach develops the decision to quit coaching. Much of the research on leaving coaching has been prompted by the declining percentage of women coaches since Title IX legislation of the 1970's.

Personal, external and work-related variables identified by the turnover model (Cotton & Tuttle, 1986) have been studied with the goal of establishing predictors of progressive stages in an individual's developing of the intent to leave coaching (Sagas & Ashley, 2001).

Though the development of a coach's idea to leave coaching is being studied as a process based in reasoned action, such a departure can also involve the processes of burnout, called "an occupational hazard" (Austin, 1981, p. 35) for educators in general. Coach burnout has all of the components of teacher and administrator burnout as well as additional factors. The recognition of burnout began in occupational literature with Freudenberger (1974) and Maslach (1976, 1978). Extensive literature on educator burnout will not be reviewed here other than to note that it is a three-stage process moving from emotional exhaustion through the depersonalization of others to a negative evaluation of oneself (Caccese, 1982). Relationships between individuals in the system are critical to preventing burnout, as are clear expectations and reduced job ambiguity; this requires that administrators and teachers are "responsive to as well as responsible for each other" (O'Brien, 1981, p. 45). In order to prevent burnout, a teacher must be part of the solution, since "an administrator trying to solve a teacher's problems without the teacher's active participation may be worse than not trying to solve the problem at all" (Kohlmaier, 1981, p. 39).

A pattern of physical, emotional, and behavioral symptoms characterizes the process of burnout for a coach, and the reaction to coaching stress has been found to be more related to individual differences than to job demands (Pate, Rotella, &

McClenaghan, 1984; Vealey, Udry, Zimmerman, & Soliday, 1992). The greater need an individual coach has to be successful, the greater risk that coach has for experiencing burnout. Higher levels of motivation, dedication and enthusiasm create larger stressors, particularly for success-motivated "minor" sports coaches who get little attention or support from the community and media. Transitioning through the burnout process moves coaches through stages of blame: first, blame for team members; second, self-blame; and third, blame for the situation. In the third stage, coach-administrator alienation emerges when "failure is attributed to lack of support . . . an abundance of time is spent complaining about the administration. Jealousies for the support given to other sports is frequently expressed" (Pate, Rotella, & McClenaghan, 1984, p. 123).

Ultimately, an individual who has moved through these stages is overwhelmed.

"Coaching burnout is a result of a feeling by coaches that they no longer can meet all the demands of coaching" (Stewart, 2001, p. 2). Reducing ambiguity and job overload and defining realistic personal responsibilities all diminish role stress and the risk of burnout (Martens, 1990). Other suggestions to prevent burnout include raising a coach's own awareness of burnout symptoms (Malone & Rotella, 1981), and administrative reinforcement of achievement and community (Olcott, 1981).

Earls (1981) identified a category of educator he called the *distinctive teacher* as one who "consistently demonstrates sincere interest and enthusiasm in teaching, genuine concern for students, and self-study and continued striving to improve as a teacher" (p. 41). He described *distinctive* physical education teachers who have successfully resisted the negative impact of coaching on their teaching and identified changes in behavior that

deter burnout in this type of professional. Recently, mentoring programs to teach coaches how to coach are being developed in school districts so that more experienced coaches can strengthen new coaches (Dietze, 1997). Coaching education programs such as MHSA's online course stress that coaches must be aware of their own needs as well as the needs of their athletes and their programs (Stewart, 2001, p. 2).

Time pressure is a major aspect of high school coaching burnout. In a study by Sage (1989), the researcher noted that "while high school coaching is seen as an extracurricular assignment, it is uniquely different from other extracurricular assignments" (p. 82), in large part due to the 30 to 40 hours a week spent on coaching duties above and beyond the time involved in teaching and classroom preparation. While not all coaches experience burnout, coaches who quit coaching before they quit teaching must go through a process of evolving the intent to leave their coaching positions. The same factors influence individual coaches, whether those factors result in burnout or simply a decision to leave coaching.

While these themes in coach preparation, role-conflict, and burnout come from athletic coaching literature, they frame a general understanding of individual patterns inherent to coaching. The processes are three-fold: first, becoming a coach; second, dealing with conflicts inherent to the role; and third, evolving the reasoned intent or emotional burnout precipitating the end of an individual's tenure as coach.

College Forensic Coaching Literature: Program Patterns

Linkage Between Forensics and Speech Curriculum

The development of speech communications as a separate academic discipline in American universities during the early 20th century was only one stage in the long and checkered history of rhetoric, the educational basis of forensics defined by Webster's dictionary as "the art of expressive speech and discourse" (Gove, 1976, p. 1946). This history, dating to the earliest Greeks, leads many to consider forensics to be the oldest academic subject still taught (Swanson & Zeuschner, 1983) as well as one of the most consistently and characteristically fragmented of all disciplines. In ancient Greece, philosophical schisms over the relationship between rhetoric and truth foreshadowed a history of inclusion, exclusion, and redefinition in the educational curriculum. By mid-19th century, the study of rhetoric, central to American college education since colonial times, was supplanted as English departments replaced oral discourse with the study of literature in an increasingly specialized academic curriculum (Heinrichs, 1995). The pendulum swung back towards oral exercise again after extracurricular student-run debating clubs popularized highly competitive intercollegiate debate competitions. These contests were the origin of modern forensic activities as we know them today, and precipitated the birth of communication studies and the reintroduction of speech into academic coursework. In 1914, a professional speech communication organization broke away from the National Council of Teachers of English, evolving through several name changes into the Speech Communication Association. Beginning in 1920, "Department

of Speech” became the title of choice for college programs, and this “new” academic emphasis coincided with the debut of commercial radio broadcasts and a burgeoning interest in speech communication research and training (Heinrichs, 1995; Newcombe & Robinson, 1975; Potter, 1963; Reid, 2000).

Since the rebirth of a defined speech communications curriculum into 20th century education, extracurricular forensic competition has faced shifts in favor and sponsorship that echo the continuing redefinition of speech communications as a discipline (Dittus, 1991; Frank, 1997; Klumpp, 2000; Ziegelmueeller, 1995). Although the history of American forensics is beyond the focus of this study, transitions in the professional and academic understanding of communication studies have combined with unrelated social and economic changes as well as with shifts within higher education to alter the directions of both communications studies departments and competitive forensics programs at the college level. These shifts in college curriculum have subsequently had multiple impacts on extracurricular forensics in high schools today.

For decades, secondary speech teacher training textbooks (Brooks & Freidrich, 1973; Klopff & Lahman, 1967) emphasized the importance of linking competitive “out-of-class” high school forensics to the educational curriculum. The first national conference on forensics, held in Sedalia, Colorado in 1974, emphasized that forensic coaches should be academically qualified and professionally active, since “the directing of forensics is a teaching function and should be so recognized” (McBath, 1975, p. 368). College textbooks for pre-service high school speech teachers have stressed since mid-century that a certified teacher should direct an out-of-class speech program that is “only part of a

carefully organized and integrated speech program, the major part of which is class instruction, and should not be regarded as a substitute for curricular speech instruction” (Klopf & Lahman, 1967, p. 4). Several authors warned that problems would arise if this counsel were disregarded. Specific cautions about the harmful consequences of letting an out-of-class forensics program become extracurricular instead of co-curricular included these six, credited to Johnson in 1952 when later reprinted by Brooks and Friedrich (1973):

- The existence of an activities program without any real understanding by teachers and pupils of the function it should perform
- No consistent evaluation of the activity in terms of fundamental objective
- Failure to keep the program vitally related to the curriculum . . .
- Overemphasis on competitive aspects of the program
- Devotion of too much energy to the promotion of a national organization
- Inadequate recognition of teachers’ duties in the activity program in considering teachers’ loads (p. 314).

A list of suggestions for coping with the shortage of speech coaches in 1989 began with a statement on the primary importance of making speech part of the high school curriculum, thus ensuring both the presence of an individual trained in speech communication and at least a minimum level of philosophical and staff support for competitive forensics (Frana, 1989).

Recommendations for college forensics coaches parallel the continuing cautions for secondary schools to maintain a strong curriculum connection. In discussing post-

secondary forensics, the 1984 Second National Conference on Forensics lamented “the tendency of some institutions for forensic coaches to be treated as part-time faculty, para-professionals or as members of a support staff rather than as regular faculty members who are central to the educational mission of the institution” (Parson, 1997, p. 418) and recommended that the debate coach be a “fully qualified member of the faculty, subject to the same opportunities and rewards as other professionals” (p. 418).

Linkage Between High School and College Programs

College and high school forensics are dependent on each other in two separate but linked arenas. One is defined by curriculum, the other by activity. In the first arena, college speech departments have traditionally supplied formal curriculum preparation for teachers who will then also serve as co-curricular coaches of the high school activity. Currently, however, the academic discipline is being transformed into variations of communication, many of which have nothing to do with public speaking, argumentation, or performance. In the other arena, participation in college forensics gives future coaches informal preparation analogous to prior sport participation for athletic coaches. Currently, however, many college forensic programs have not survived the loss of academic linkage, funding challenges, and transformations in the status of their directors. While some programs have been revived or even begun anew through the dedicated commitment of an individual or group, the world of college forensics has changed significantly since the 1970's (Derryberry, 1993; Frank, 1997; Littlefield, 1991).

Nurturing the links between college and high school forensics is "essential to the continued existence of forensics as an educational activity at either level" according to Fritch, Leeper, and Rowland (1993, p. 17). They continue:

If forensics is to continue to survive, the relationship between high schools and colleges must be a strong one. Without high school forensics, intercollegiate forensics would face a future with a lack of participants. Without intercollegiate forensics, high schools would face a future without a claim to educational value. In order to provide a solid future for forensics, the dissimilarities between high school and college forensics must be overlooked, and a new common agenda must be established (p. 19).

Other commentators agree that the health of each system depends on the other. "The importance of the bond between secondary and higher education forensics programs cannot be overstated" (Reppert, 1991, p. 3). Many areas of linkage between the two activity systems are noted by Bartanen (1994): colleges provide judges for high school tournaments, new teachers to be coaches, and innovations in practice, while high schools provide new students to be participants and revenue from college-sponsored camps and handbooks. In a larger sense, each system's existence gives a certain justification to the other (Bartanen, 1994).

Both activity and academic arenas are changing at the college level, as current trends in higher education raise the stakes for college forensic programs. Nationwide, fewer faculty positions are tenured now than before, having dropped to less than 25% according to Leeper (1997). The stability of the college forensic director's position is key to continuing administrative support and financial backing. Ziegelmueller (1997) notes, "With only a few exceptions, the better funded programs are at institutions with long standing commitments to forensics or at schools where a single director of forensics has

been there for many years" (p. 413).

Due to the increasing "corporatization" of higher education and the power of the budgetary bottom line, the employment status of college directors of forensics has to be fiscally justified to a far greater degree than before. Leeper states, "The pedagogical reasons for hiring a director with a doctorate must be made equivalent to the cost of paying for that director" (1997, p. 406). Forensics programs involve relatively large expenditures of both time and money on relatively small numbers of students, and public opinion pushes administrators to justify that forensics develop job skills. Ultimately, this hones the public relations and marketing skills of college program directors who must legitimize forensics in order to ensure adequate funds and staff (Cardot, 1991; Leeper, 1997). Thus the administrative duties of the forensic coaching position are expanding at the college level.

For college forensic directors, the conflict between administrative coaching duties and academic teaching expectations is similar to the role conflict faced by high school teacher-coaches. It was noted by an observer in 1986 that coaching itself was counterproductive to traditional academic faculty evaluation, especially when evaluation standards for faculty forensic directors were not delineated clearly in the first place (Porter, 1986). According to Chandler (1993), professors unable to maintain professional academic standards of research and publishing due to the excessive time demands of active coaching have contributed to the perception that "debate coaches cannot be scholars" (p. 66), to the increasing percentage of full-time non-academic college coaches who do not teach, and to the loss of graduate programs (p. 66). Chandler (1993) also

noted that the intensity of coaching “cannibalizes the best and brightest among us” and diminishes the professional academic credibility of forensic coaches “as legitimate participants in the communication discipline” (p. 66).

Some of the most noted college forensic coaches and speech leaders in the nation have suggested that debate and forensics are coming to be seen as the “intellectual backwater” of the communications discipline (Zarefsky, 1994, p. 311). Frank (1997) verifies the increasingly “tenuous presence” (p. 9) of forensics at many AAU and research universities. His research shows that even at schools with graduate degrees in speech, programs are receiving diminishing support in the form of tenured department faculty (Frank, 1997).

Fragmentation in Forensics

Changes at the college level in both the academic discipline of communications and extra-curricular forensic activity emerge as conflicts in funding, stability, and status, and these conflicts challenge the link between forensic activity and academic curriculum. Another difficulty inherent to the nature of forensics is the continuing fragmentation that permeates every level of both college and high school systems. Bartanen (1994) summarized the similarities between high school and college forensics into three areas: dependence on each other as mutual suppliers, essentially common practice, and the degree to which they are both fragmented (pp. 23-24). A variety of speech and forensic organizations at the national level overlap in slight variations of purposes and objectives. A recent college textbook identified “splintering off and forming new associations”

(Friedrich & Boileau, 1990, p. 16) as one of the two major directions defining the field of communication during the twentieth century. Zarefsky (as cited in Fisher, 1993) noted the tendency of national forensic entities to splinter when members become frustrated with the direction of the organization and then separate into a distinct group with different objectives. Parson (1995) noted that the increasing number of organizations led to an attempt to facilitate communication through an umbrella organization called the Council of Forensic Organizations in 1984. Klumpp (2000) reported that the concern over continuing "balkanization" (p. 24-25) of the national forensic community was a motivation for much of the American Forensic Association's reorganization during the last decade. Bartanen (1994) observed that national organizations in forensics do not serve purposes similar in any way to national athletic organizations. Despite a certain amount of standardization resulting from national tournament competition guidelines, he characterized national organizations in both college and high school forensics as "mostly bureaucratic rather than visionary" (p. 24), chiefly administering organizational functions such as point tallies and tournament management.

This fragmentation has distinct impacts on the practice of high school forensics. In an overview of possible approaches to deal with the shortage of high school coaches, Frana (1989) chided the NFL for not working more closely with the National Federation of High School Associations, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and the National School Boards Association, as well as for not re-establishing ties with the Speech Communications Association and the American Forensic Association. Frana (1989) stated, "NFL can indeed use its national position to do more than sponsor a

national tournament” (p. 25). One of the most consciously positive commentators reviewed for this study (Fisher, 1993) critiqued the Speech Communication Association and the American Forensic Association, two organizations which had “the expertise and the financial clout to make significant contributions on several of these high school forensics concerns” (p. 8) but from which “little concrete action has been evident” as of a decade ago. After reluctantly seconding Zarefsky’s observation that the national forensics community tends to splinter when complaints are not addressed, Fisher pointed to the reasons behind the fledgling National Debate Coaches Association as a case in point, asking, “Why do high school debate coaches feel compelled to form yet another organization, except because the organizations that ostensibly represent their interests have become insensitive or focused elsewhere” (p. 8). To deal with the multiplicity of voices in forensics, national organizations have hosted periodic development conferences where resolutions are proposed, debated, voted upon, and ultimately published for dissemination. Bartanen (1994) concurs that despite the valuable contribution these conferences have made to the discussion of issues, still “there is little agreement regarding educational objectives and standards for forensics” (p. 25) at either the college or high school level.

National fragmentation impacts the high school forensics coach by contributing to a kaleidoscope of allegiances from state to state and in some cases, even within the same state. Bartanen (1994) noted both the advantages and perils inherent in this fragmentation:

Unlike sports programs, forensics programs can more easily define themselves in ways that benefit them. They can define success as something other than 'how high school X down the road is doing.' Assuming the teacher is able to articulate sound educational values, this is a real advantage. Only when the teacher does not have an educational philosophy does he have to depend on artificial measures. . . . The downside of this phenomenon is that there is much wider room for undesirable and unethical practices to exist. No forensic organization has a code of conduct or ethics to rival that of the NCAA in college sports (p. 26).

One consequence of national fragmentation is the heightened importance of state and regional organizations and the integrity of each coach's professional training. In the absence of a strong organizational framework, the coach's own grasp of curriculum objectives and his or her grounding in educationally appropriate methods and ethics is key to the nature of competition.

The reality of national fragmentation is revealed in the researcher's effort to find national participation numbers, a process documented in Appendix E. First at the high school level and then at the college level, many practical barriers were encountered in the search for a quantitative picture of the national context within which the Montana high school forensics program functions. The narrative in Appendix E illustrates the extent to which fragmentation is an inherent dynamic for this activity.

High School Forensic Coaching Literature

Past Studies of Forensic Coach Training and Preparation

In the last 40 years, few quantitative studies of forensics coaches focus on the high school level, though these few have value as snapshots of past forensic coach preparation (Cameron, 1964; Hensley, 1972; Klopff & Rives, 1965; Lee & Lee, 1990; Prochaska,

1981; Schmidt & Fine, 1991). In the December 1997 NFL Rostrum, Rosenthal reviewed 19 articles dating back to the 1920's in an attempt to identify the most important coach characteristics noted in the forensics literature. Her research revealed that education and experience, combined with formal forensic training, were the most critical characteristics of a successful coach. Not surprisingly, these characteristics echoed the recommendations made in 1975 by the American Forensic Association regarding forensics coach qualifications (McBath, 1975). These three key AFA suggestions were that forensic directors should have had personal experience as participants; formal instruction on philosophy and on the direction of forensics; and that current forensic coaches should keep updating their knowledge through ongoing workshops, courses and participation in a variety of professional organizations.

Six of the articles reviewed by Rosenthal (1997) give quantitative snapshots of coach preparation, including at least to some degree high school forensic coaches. Two of the three key areas of coach preparation were tracked in these six articles, specifically, training through pre-service coursework and experience as a forensics competitor. By reviewing these six studies in chronological order, a rough idea may be sketched of past coach preparation on the national level.

Cameron (1964) looked at the backgrounds of 156 college forensic directors and found that 84% had been forensic competitors in college, and that a high percentage of their advanced degrees were in speech: over 75% of the M.A. degrees and 90% of the Ph.D.'s (Cameron, 1964). In 1965, Klopf and Rives published a study of both high school and college forensic directors. The 507 high school coaches they surveyed were

all NFL-affiliated, and 55% had earned their highest degree in speech, compared to 88% of the college directors in the same study. Over 76% of the coaches taught either speech classes only or speech classes as well as other classes, 41 and 35% respectively, and only 31% did not teach any speech classes at all (Klopf & Rives, 1965).

Hensley's (1972) survey of 306 NFL high school coaches found that over 63% had either majored or minored in speech. Over 54% of those surveyed had been high school forensics competitors, and 47% had been college competitors, with only 97 of the 306, or 31.6%, never having had any personal experience as a competitor. Hensley compared his results to those from a small study of 45 Kansas coaches that included some non-NFL coaches and found the formal preparation of the two groups to be similar.

A 1980 study of 113 public junior and community college coaches found that 85% had degrees in speech, and 59% had personal experience as forensic competitors (Prochaska, 1981). Less than ten years later, Lee and Lee's (1990) interview study of 32 high school coaches who had qualified competitors for the 1986 NFL Nationals found that eight, or 25%, had no formal preparation before commencing to coach, whereas 12, or almost 38%, had extensive preparation, meaning experience debating and either graduate or undergraduate degrees in speech communication. The remaining 12, or almost 38%, had "some preparation" (Lee & Lee, 1990, p. 14) in speech events or coursework.

In 1990, Schmidt and Fine surveyed over 100 high school debate coaches, all of whom directed teams affiliated with the NFL. Of these, 49% said they had debated in high school and 43% in college, with 57% identifying their own enjoyment of debate as

student competitors as a major reason for accepting their positions as debate coaches (Schmidt & Fine, 1991).

Much is missing from this literature and many questions could be asked about the nature of the data and what it reveals during almost 40 years. These studies are few in number and limited by their lack of consistency in focus. In addition, any high school data studies are limited to one group of coaches, those affiliated with NFL. Despite these limitations, these six studies echo the professional recommendation that both informal preparation through personal competition in forensics and formal preparation through coursework before hiring are important for high school coaches. In 1965, 55% had speech degrees (Klopff & Rives, 1965); in 1972, 68% had competed and 63% had either a major or minor in speech (Hensley, 1972); in 1986, 76% had competed and/or taken coursework (Lee & Lee, 1990); and in 1990, 57% had competed (Schmidt & Fine, 1991). While variations between the surveys make any longitudinal conclusions invalid, one consistent characteristic of all the surveys is that over half the coaches indicated that they had either or both formal and informal preparation.

Current High School Forensic Coach Preparation

Long-standing recommendations have pointed to the need for improved formal preparation of high school forensic coaches through increased pre-service coursework (Ross, 1977), but college academic programs training speech and forensics coaches have been reduced in both number and depth in the last three decades. These college course cutbacks have been noted as having happened not only nationally (Hassencahl, 1990) but

in Montana as well (Twohy, 1988). In addition to the decrease in formal training opportunities, forensic activity and the opportunity for informal preparation through participation is diminishing. The result of diminished formal and informal training opportunities is that many new coaches have not had adequate pre-service preparation and are not aware of the expectations they are assuming (Frana, 1989; Lee & Lee, 1990).

While administrative support and director longevity are critical to sustaining college forensic programs, simply having a coach at all is essential for the continuation of high school programs. Over a decade ago, Forensic Educator published "Confronting the Coming Coach Shortage" (Frana, 1989), articulating a plea on behalf of the many secondary students who "do not really have the guidance of a trained (no matter how loosely we define the term) forensic educator" (p. 23). Frana recounts the following sequence, which functions as an "answer" to the coaching shortage in too many cases: a school district advertises for a coach when one resigns, conscripts from staff if there are no applicants, and ultimately drops the program if no one can be persuaded to coach. The key question of the article was: who will be the high school coaches?

The graying, veteran coaches—forensic 'lifers'—growing fewer with each passing year? . . . their replacements, some of whom are highly qualified, but so many who have been placed in a coaching position against their desires or better judgement? Those big of heart and/or short of tenure who will simply do the minimum to keep the program going? And what happens when more veteran coaches retire; when the unwilling receive tenure or reprieve; when others become family persons or want to pursue other, likely more lucrative, interests? Who will replace them? And if replacements are found, will they be competent? Will they be comfortable with the position and responsibilities? Will they provide a positive force and direction? (Frana, 1989, p. 23).

Frana (1989) noted that “the presence of a qualified coach—in some cases even the presence of a responsible adult called a coach—is central to the viability of a high school forensics program” (p. 23) and even more basic sense, to the very existence of the program in the first place. He recounted a sobering situation in Illinois, where only five new forensic coaches had come to high school districts in the entire state over a period of several years, with just two out of those five coming directly from college (Frana, 1989, p. 24). Fritch, Leeper, and Rowland (1993) noted, “In the past several years, high school programs have increasingly been forced to hire debate coaches without debate experience or hire college debaters who are not high school teachers.” (p. 18). Reppert (1991) referenced a study of Kentucky high school programs which found that poor funding exacerbates coach burnout, especially when the assigned faculty members have little knowledge or interest in forensics. Cardot (1991) recounted his surprise at being called in to help a home economics teacher who had been asked to coach a high school team because her husband was a speech communications professor, even though neither one of the couple had ever seen a forensics contest.

A positive correlation between training and coaching satisfaction was one of four significant factors found in a 1989 study into the reasons why debate coaches quit (Gill, 1989; 1990). In replicating Rives and Klopff's 1965 study of college and high school coaches, Gill (1990) used the eight predictor variables identified in the earlier study by active coaches when they suggested the concerns they believed caused speech coaches to quit. Aside from training, the other factors with significant correlations to coach satisfaction were time demands, travel, and competitive standards, though only time had

sufficient significance to be considered a predictor for satisfaction. The degree to which training influenced satisfaction was not determined, though the researcher asserted, "it appears that the lack of adequate training will result in a shorter time spent coaching" (Gill, 1990, p. 186). In referencing this study by Gill, Hassencahl (1990) suggested that the link between training and coach satisfaction could be linked in the following way: the less training a coach has, the more time may be required to coach, since developing coaching skills takes time. Due to the predictive strength of time involvement on coaching satisfaction and the greater time required when a coach has not received training, she noted that the study's findings suggested, "Lack of adequate training may indeed be a factor in determining whether a coach quits forensics" (Hassencahl, 1990, p. 9).

Recommendations for High School Forensic Coach Training

Recent forensic literature focusing on high school programs has included suggestions for alleviating the problem of untrained coaches (Fisher, 1993; Frana, 1989; Fritsch, Leeper, & Rowland, 1993; Lee & Lee, 1990). Three approaches have been outlined: state and regional high school association networks, ties between colleges and high schools, and community building among coaches.

State and regional high school organizations offer the most promising management structures for coach training programs, according to several writers. A 1992 review of positive steps taken in high school forensics during the preceding three years noted several improved opportunities for coach training spearheaded by state

associations, such as the Minnesota Debate Teachers Association funding of "a workshop for new coaches that actually pays participants to attend" (Fisher, 1993, p. 7) and other steps toward increasing program funding with corporate sponsorship and foundations for private donations. Frana (1989) also suggested that untrained coaches could best be helped at the state level by state coaches' associations. He recommended a regional effort as more realistic for the majority of untrained coaches than workshops at NFL Nationals that do little to help coaches who cannot qualify contestants for that level of competition in the first place. The importance of state and regional association was also stressed by Fritch et al. (1993), who noted that regional differences in goals and expectations is a greater issue at the high school level than at the college level. They also suggested that surveys be sent to high school coaches within each state to focus the goals of the state's programs and "begin to examine ways of improving the relationship" (p. 17) between college and high school programs once goals are clarified at the regional level.

Strengthening the ties between college and high school forensic programs was suggested as another way to deal with an increasing lack of experience and preparation in the backgrounds of high school coaches. This approach would strengthen the traditional program links with curriculum and colleges. One format for this arrangement would involve having top college coaches and professors leading regional seminars on topics of coaching concern in that area, as well as seminars on program leadership and how to develop a forensics philosophy. Both college and high school programs would benefit since "a clinic focusing on the interchange of educational strategies could only serve to further clarify the expectations of the activity, while increasing the quality of instruction

at both the high school and college levels” (Fritch, et al., 1993, p. 18). Another potential advantage of this college in-service program noted by the authors was the possibility of improving administrators’ perceptions of forensics by reinforcing the co-curricular nature of the activity as well as by structuring a coherent, disciplinary approach to professional development.

Community-building was also noted as part of improving high school coach training practices. Frana (1989) emphasized that a sense of community would be most effective in helping to acclimatize those coaches who have no background in forensics. Fritch et al. (1993) suggested that professional interaction between college and high school forensics should happen between the educators and not just between programs, since “the key to a strong forensics community lies in the relationship between educators at the two levels” (p. 17). In their recommendation of a college-high school cooperative training program, they suggested that the benefits of developing a common professional agenda and community between forensics at the secondary and post-secondary levels would be far greater than simply the improved training of high school coaches alone. Significantly, their recommendations for formats in which college faculty could help with high school coach training included the high school athletic coaching clinic model. In stating, “the athletic clinics serve both an educational and a social function” (Fritch et. al., 1993, pp. 17-18), they reference the potential goal of building community among coaches, as would be possible in an arrangement with advantages beyond educational purposes alone.

An important final note in this review highlights the undeveloped insight noted by Karen King Lee and Ronald Lee (1990) in their interview study of 32 high school debate coaches at the 1986 NFL Nationals Tournament in Oklahoma. They observed that the time commitments of forensics “assure a high turnover rate among coaches” (p. 15) and require increased attention to the retention of coaches and systematic programs for the high school teachers who become untrained coaches. In a unique observation, they noted that the continuing large number of untrained teachers in high school forensics has created a dynamic in which the “professionalization of coaching has the unintended side effect of shrinking the activity” (Lee & Lee, 1990, p. 16). Reduced numbers of college debaters and the virtual disappearance of college debaters majoring in education compound the unwillingness of high school administrators to even try and bring in new faculty specifically to coach forensics, resulting in a permanently diminished number of trained high school coaches. Their implication that the world of high school forensics has changed beyond a traditional co-curricular paradigm is strengthened by the suggestion that formal preparation, although desirable, simply cannot be seen as a necessity for coaching in the current reality. Simply put, teachers with little background do run successful programs. The most suggestive observation in their study was that untrained coaches actually coach differently than those who have been trained, by using coaching frameworks in which the coach is helper and not expert, and by focusing more on skills than on content (Lee & Lee, 1990). The caution implicit here is that attempts to address coach training and retention problems should not be based on the assumption that an untrained coach is the same as a trained coach, just without training.

Evaluation of the Literature

Common trends are seen in all high school coaching. Athletic coaching is separating from its traditional curriculum linkage of having teacher-coaches certified in physical education. This trend is parallel to the growing separation between forensic coaching and its traditional curriculum base of speech communications education. Pressure to hire from an increasingly shallow employment pool is motivating athletic program managers to deal with the problem of untrained coaches. Forensic program managers are facing similar hiring conditions. Yet the chasm between athletics and forensics is so complete that only one reference to athletic coach training as a model for dealing with coaching issues surfaced in the forensic literature reviewed for this study. Yet athletic literature is comparatively rich in studies of coaching dynamics and accessible research on the processes of becoming, being, and leaving the coaching role.

Literature themes specific to forensics reveal little more than glimpses into high school coaching, but do highlight focus questions applicable to training and retention at this level. First, how real is the curriculum connection today? Identified in the past as key to successful high school programs, does speech curriculum have a functional linkage to coaching realities in Montana today? Second, are there connections between high school and college systems in the state, and if so, are these linkages helping to prepare, support, and enhance the professional development of high school coaches? Third, how much impact does the fragmentation of forensics have on high school coach training, recruitment, and retention in Montana?

The shortage of literature on high school forensic coach training, recruitment, and retention is almost complete, even to the point of making it difficult to find any written references to a coaching shortage accepted as fact by everyone in the field with whom the researcher spoke. Six older forensic coaching profiles (Cameron, 1964; Hensley, 1972; Klopff & Rives, 1965; Lee & Lee, 1990; Prochaska, 1981; Schmidt & Fine, 1991) focused on high school coaches, but the goals of these studies were to compare coaching practices, salaries and programs. More recent journal references to high school coaching center primarily on "how to" coach specific events (Dayton, personal communication, June 4, 2001) or prescriptive recommendations for the problem of untrained coaches from the perspective of the system. This pattern to the literature leads to two observations. First, without data as a basis for understanding the current situation, opinions about what should be done are of little use. Nothing can be fixed without understanding what the current status is, and understanding the current status will involve data collection and analysis. Second, analyzing high school forensic coaching solely in terms of larger program needs cannot effectively resolve a situation involving coach-level issues if the needs of coaches are ignored. Supplying more program health ingredients alone will not solve the problem without including coach health to the attempted remedy. To be effective, a solution must address individual dynamics and the needs of the coach in addition to the needs of the program.

Summary

In all high school extracurricular programs today, the supply of trained coaches is not meeting the demand (Frana, 1989; Frost, 1995; Odenkirk, 1986). Athletic literature explores the occupational cycle of coaching, showing stages that are most easily identified chronologically even though the substance of each process extends beyond that stage in actual practice: first, becoming a coach; second, managing during one's tenure as a practicing coach, and third, coming to the point of leaving the coaching role (Coakley, 1978; Massengale, 1981; Sage, 1989). Cumulatively, extending the retention cycles of coaches is key to the overall program health. The more quickly individual coaches move through the full cycle and leave coaching, the more difficult the hiring situation is for program managers. When the "inflow" applying to coach is reduced and the "outflow" leaving coaching is increased, the affected program will inevitably change. Either the program will progressively shrink, or its nature will alter, or some adaptive measure will be made to redress the dynamic. High school athletic managers are adapting to the pressures in the current coaching crisis through training and certification programs designed to help the coach as well as the program (Stewart, 2001). High school forensics, also facing challenges in the current coaching dynamic, has virtually no literature research base from which to evaluate the current situation.

The research design for this study is framed by the intersection of athletic and forensic themes in the literature review. This intersection creates a grid of the individual and program dimensions of extracurricular speech team coaching. Athletic coach

literature identifies an individual process through which each person moves while becoming, being, and leaving coaching. Forensics literature suggests program dimensions strengthened by curriculum and college linkages, and weakened by fragmentation.

Much of athletic literature's research into the training-recruitment-retention cycle focuses on the perspective of an individual coach:

- Before coaching begins, participation in the activity can start the individual's anticipation of becoming a coach, and preparation may or may not include formal training through coursework;
- Once functioning as a coach, an individual faces conflicts in role identity, task expectations, ambiguous feedback, and overload. Success in managing these issues depends to some degree on a coach's relationship and communication with administrators and peers; and
- The exit out of coaching is a process involving stages and may involve burnout, in which case progressive blame of students, self, and the larger situation may develop.

These three chronological stages in the coaching perspective of an individual are shown from top to bottom of the left-hand column in Figure 2 below. To the right of the "individual" column, the other two columns show forensic literature themes, which focus on the program rather than the individual.

- Curriculum linkage has been important;
- College and high school forensics systems have been interdependent; and

- Fragmentation is system-wide at both the college and high school levels.

The reality of fragmentation as a system-wide dynamic at both high school and college levels is illustrated in Appendix E, a description of the researcher's attempt to find quantitative evidence of national trends in forensics. Begun as part of the literature review, this quest outlasted all other components of the study and ultimately surveyed college directors. The results of this portion of the study reiterate themes found in the literature that are represented in the grid.

The groundwork for methodology in this study is represented by the grid's map of relationships among themes found in the literature of coaching and forensics. Both individual and program sides of the grid are bordered by dissolution, representing the end of the individual's coaching as well as the dissolution of a program.

Figure 2. Visualization of Literature Themes. Researcher's map showing intersection between individual coaching cycle stages from athletic literature and program dimensions found in forensic literature.

**INDIVIDUAL
DIMENSIONS**

PROGRAM DIMENSIONS

*Researcher's Extension of Individual Coaching Cycle
Stages into Program Themes From Forensic Literature*

Individual Coaching Dynamics from Athletic Literature	Stage of Individual Coaching Cycle	Curriculum Linkage <u>BASIS FOR...</u>	College Linkage <u>SUPPORT FOR...</u>	Fragmentation	Dissolution of the forensic program as part of a larger system.
	<i>Becoming a Coach Preparation (Training & Experience); Socialization</i>	Anticipating what a speech coach does; visualizing role	Formal training (coursework); Informal preparation through experience as competitor		
	<i>Being a Coach Role conflicts: Task & Feedback Ambiguity; Overload</i>	Understanding educational objectives, teaching methods and content 'how-to'	Understanding expectations; feedback about how effort is valued; help in coping with load		
	<i>Leaving the Role of Coach Intent to leave; Burnout</i>	Realistic standards for evaluation by self and supervisor; prevention of burnout	Ongoing professional inservice ; growth of community among peers		
	Dissolution of the individual's participation in coaching				

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This research study is a descriptive case study conducted in a naturalistic framework, the preferred approach due to limited previous research and the constraints of a single focus area with ill-defined boundaries and no previously developed theory. Traditionally, case studies have been used in the exploratory stages of investigations (Yin, 1994). Gay (1996) called the case study “the in-depth investigation of one ‘unit’” (p. 219) whether that unit is an individual, group, organization or program. Naturalistic inquiry seeks to illuminate the current situation or status of a phenomenon or system in an exploratory approach, without preformed theory. Lincoln and Guba (1985) support the use of naturalistic inquiry when the “phenomena of study . . . *take their meaning as much from their contexts as they do from themselves*” (p. 189, emphasis in the original).

Rationale for the use of case study research design and methodology in this study has two primary supports: the contextual circumstances of the research subject and the nature of the available evidence. According to Yin (1994), the case study is particularly appropriate in research that “investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p. 13). The shortage of research on high school forensic coaching makes the

definition of a line between subject and context difficult. The absence of literature is directly in the area of focus. Since high school forensic coaching is at the intersection of two systems, i.e., all high school coaching and all of forensics, the conditions in these two systems provide a context for studying difficulties in high school forensic coaching. Yet the contextual conditions themselves, in either or both of these two larger systems, may form the research problem.

The second justification for case study methodology in this investigation is the nature of evidence available for study. High school coaches in Montana are difficult to track whether they are athletic or forensic. In order to examine the status of coaching, a variety of approaches must use a range of types of evidence. According to Yin (1994), the case study's "unique strength is its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence—documents, artifacts, interviews, and observations" (p. 8). Creswell (1998) noted that a case study "involves the widest array of data collection" (p. 123), reiterating Yin's (1994) assertion that a mix of quantitative and qualitative evidence is appropriate in case studies.

Additionally, Yin (1994) said that the case study may be the most appropriate research method with which to study "the complexity of organizational phenomenon" (p. xv). This study approaches coach training, recruitment and retention as one process within a state high school organization that is managed by administrators and susceptible to reform and improvement at both school and state levels. When no research has been done and no theories about a problem have been proposed, the best beginning is broad exploratory data collection and analysis as a precursor to theory development and

improved practice. Just as the archaeologist does not know where to begin digging until a preliminary, systematic survey process has identified which areas might be most productive for future exploration, this study has used as many research methods and sources of evidence as possible in order to capture a broad perspective of the current status.

Research Design

This study is a single-case design with embedded units of analysis. Since the research question inquires into the status of speech coach training, retention and recruitment in one high school program sanctioned by the MHSA, this study's focus is the single case of speech coaching in the current Montana program. There are other state high school programs that could be studied, including other states' forensic programs and other extracurricular programs within Montana, but based on the extensive literature search done by this researcher and a doctoral-level examination of literature concerning forensics done by Sternhagen (1996), no evidence of any empirical study of a comparable high school program is accessible in the literature. The coaching situation in this one activity program in one state may be unique and a rare case with unusual conditions; alternatively, it may be a "revelatory case" (Yin, 1994, p. 40) shining a light on common problems that have simply not been studied before. In either situation, the single-case study is an appropriate research design in the absence of any common patterns for theory development identified through previous research. The case study can also be an appropriate methodology in exploratory or pilot research, when the single case research

by itself “cannot be regarded as a complete study on its own” (Yin, 1994, p. 41). Yin (1994) suggested that in an organizational study, process units “embedded” (p. 41) within the program’s own functional structure be used as subunits for analysis (p. 41). Within the single case research study, an embedded design with multiple subunits for analysis is the best device for focusing a case study inquiry and for avoiding the abstraction and slippage that are pitfalls of a “global” and operationally unanchored study (Yin, 1994, p. 42).

Procedure

A preliminary interview study in the fall of 1999 investigated the question, “What are the primary functional concerns in the MHSA forensic program?” Experienced speech coaches and high school administrators were questioned in an open-ended interview format by phone and in person to identify primary frustrations of the program among those with long and successful experience. Ten problem areas in MHSA forensics were outlined, five of which had no resolution suggested and five of which did have remediation proposed in at least one of the interviews. Out of these five problem areas for which some strategy had been suggested, the issue of coach training, retention and recruitment was chosen for further study by Jim Haugen, executive director of the MHSA, in August of 2000 (Haugen, personal communication, August 25, 2000) as he felt this was the area of greatest need in the program.

The initial approach for this second stage of the investigation was to map a visual grid of quadrants within the focus area of coach training, recruitment and retention,

surrounded by an outer grid defining the context of Montana's forensic program. These outer squares included high school coaching in general, as well as forensic coaching in other states and at the college level. While the outer grid units were searched first for context-setting literature, the center area was intended to define the research boundaries for the study itself. Procedural steps were possible where the research question could be addressed by accessible evidence and sources.

Participants, Evidence Sources, and Data Collection Methods

Administrators hire coaches and must replace them when they quit. High school principals were surveyed with a brief questionnaire during the annual Montana Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP) meeting in April 2001. After minimal demographic questions about the school and length of service in their positions and districts, the questionnaire focused on the principals' perceptions of the frequency with which speech coach positions need to be filled in comparison to coaching positions in other MHSAs programs and the difficulty of finding applicants for those positions. The principals were also asked for their perceptions of whether candidates for speech coaching positions are trained, and if so, how.

Current speech coaches were surveyed with a brief questionnaire during the annual MFEA organizational meeting in April 2001. This questionnaire requested demographic information about the schools and coaches and asked questions about the circumstances of their recruitment, training, employment, and intended longevity. The respondents were also asked whether they had any other coaching experience and if they

would be willing to discuss their coaching in further contacts. After current coaches were surveyed, Montana colleges with competitive forensic programs or undergraduate teacher preparation coursework qualifying for Office of Public Instruction (OPI) secondary endorsement in speech communications were contacted to identify what formal training and informal preparation opportunities were currently available to new teacher-coaches coming into coaching positions in the MHSA program.

In addition to the surveyed individuals and program materials collected, physical archives and documents were used as evidence sources. These materials included MHSA records of high school registrations and correspondence files; MFEA membership lists, dues lists, and organizational files; and extracurricular contracts in districts as identified in MEA, MFEA, and MHSA files and selected for stratified sampling. The selection of districts for contract analysis was the only use of sampling logic in the study, due to the small universe of Montana forensics and yet paradoxically unidentifiable populations in the focus area of research. Additionally, idiosyncrasies of available data collecting opportunities and the uneven quality of records mandated using every piece of evidence available.

While peculiarities of this naturalistic research setting justified using case study methodology in the first place, the irregularities themselves presented challenges. Cautions regarding the collection and management of data were observed. Yin (1994) noted that traditional prejudices against case studies as empirical research are based on a historic lack of rigor, and the three key methodological safeguards he promoted to ensure construct validity and reliability were used in this study: multiple sources of evidence

with triangulation among them, a database of evidence, and the maintenance of a chain of evidence. Data collection followed the visual framework described earlier, although some quadrants were not explored and others took more time and resources than expected. Despite being less preferable than a theoretical orientation, this visual grid-mapping conceptualizing strategy was a necessary approach due to the lack of theoretical propositions and the limits inherent in any one available source of evidence.

The lack of published literature about high school forensic coaching affected the research design in three significant ways. First, difficulties in establishing the line between the surrounding context and the focus phenomenon of high school forensic coaching in Montana meant that the research design had to include a broader perspective than it might have if the boundary of the subject area was more clearly defined in advance. For example, is high school forensic coaching an identifiable, separate endeavor subject to study on its own or does it simply echo college level issues and problems? On the other hand, how much of the coaching retention situation is simply part of a larger high school hiring problem affecting many secondary positions, including extracurricular coaching? Due to the lack of prior examination, the potential importance of every linkage had to be included.

The second impact of the shortage of literature was to accentuate the practical value of the evidence that was available, even with its shortcomings, and to heighten the necessity for caution in avoiding researcher bias to the greatest degree possible. Some of the sources used in this study would have been avoided if the option to do so had been available, but poor organizational records are better than no records at all, even with the

varying clerical abilities of MFEA leaders over the years. This caution also mandated that when time constraints made both document analysis and interviewing impossible, resources would be devoted to the documents instead of conducting interviews.

Third, the search for simple information during the literature review portion of the study, such as attempts to determine whether forensic participation numbers are growing or declining, encountered one dead end after another. The report of this effort is included with the findings chapter instead of the literature review, since data collection extended throughout the length of the study, information was retrieved chiefly through primary-level research, and what was discovered gave perspective and verification of forensic system characteristics identified in the literature.

Limitations

Limitations to this study were presented by the difficulties of tracking individual speech coaches, and the lack of an identifiable, finite population of speech coaches either now or in the past. There are two record-keeping entities for high school forensics in Montana, MFEA and MHSA. The records of the coaches' organization, MFEA, are the only way to identify individual coaches. Yet an individual can coach high school speech in Montana and not belong to MFEA. The anonymity of speech coaches in general and the error inherent in the MFEA records required that the researcher turn to the annual MHSA listing of schools with registered forensic programs.

MHSA, the state high school organization, keeps records by school and not by coach. Communication and supervision is exercised through the schools and not through

the coaches. Yet these program records also include error. Though a school may be registered, the team may not materialize, leaving records with a phantom program.

Conversely, schools sometimes field teams once the MHSA season starts even though the records in Helena do not show them listed, leaving a program invisible in the records.

Both MHSA and MFEA records were used in this study on the premise that using evidence about *school programs* in order to investigate *individual coach* issues is justifiable given the limits imposed by practical realities in Montana high schools. Without a coach, or in Frana's (1989) words, even "a responsible adult called a coach" (p. 23), there is simply no forensics program in a high school. Because of this relationship between the coach and the program, some of the current study's examination of Montana high school forensic coaching has relied on organizational data about programs and not coaches.

Units of Analysis: School Size and Geographic Divisions

The practical realities of high school management and the day-to-day functioning of Montana high schools have been used as the guiding restrictors for the research design, the selection of collected material and its coding, and the analysis of data in this study. The most accessible of these organizational "program process" units are school size and geographic divisions, both of which figure prominently in understanding Montana forensics. These two descriptors are used as constant units in the presentation and analysis of the data, since size and geography determine the end-of-season competition. Montana's largest high schools qualify as AA under the MHSA system, while schools

categorized as A, B, and C have progressively smaller student numbers. Some aspects of the forensics program is split into two spheres of activity, one for the AA schools, and the other for ABC schools. The smaller ABC-size schools are divided into four geographic divisions, each fulfilling organizational functions that culminate in the divisional tournaments one week before ABC state competition, while the 13 largest AA-size high schools from around Montana meet for a separate state tournament on the same date as the ABC schools' state meet at the end of the competition season. Every AA-size school has a forensic program, 23 out of the 24 A-size schools participate or 96%, 30 out of the 46 B-size schools or 65%, and 37 out of the 98 C-size schools or 38%.

Invitational tournament participation during the speech season is generally not limited to the school's geographic division or size, but at the end of the season, speech teams travel across the state to compete at one of the two state tournaments based on school size. The AA tournament rotates among towns with AA school districts. Between the early 1980's and January 1993, the ABC state meet was held at the University of Great Falls every year. Since 1993, the ABC state tournament has been held from one end of the state to the other, alternating among Sidney, Corvallis, Hardin, Hamilton, Havre, and Laurel.

Timeframe

The initial interview study was done during the fall of 1999, and the literature review searching that began during the interview project continued through spring 2001, when construction of the initial surveys of coaches and principals began in February

2001. The search for a quantitative picture of the national forensic background presented unexpected difficulties and continued through the final writing of the study. Documents and archives in the MFEA, MHSA, and MEA-MFT files were initially evaluated in March 2001 and April 2001. The initial coach and administrator surveys were collected in April 2001, then analyzed and correlated with the MFEA and MHSA records in June 2001. These records were triangulated for the stratified sampling of identified school districts for study of extracurricular contracts. This information was collected in August 2001. The Montana college teaching preparation and competitive program information was collected in the summer of 2001 and double-checked for changes the next summer.

Summary

The case study is a form of naturalistic inquiry, even when activities traditionally associated with qualitative research such as interviews are not used. Methodology for this study was determined by purpose: to illuminate the current situation in one aspect of a larger system, without preformed theory and in an exploratory approach. This study utilized as much available evidence as possible within the limits of the researcher's resources and time, with the goal of recording available data about individual coaches, school programs, and training opportunities in the MHSA-sponsored speech program. Since no other systematic study has explored a comparable high school extracurricular speech program, and since available literature is either indirectly related or sparse, observational data was collected through every avenue possible with attention to avoiding researcher bias. This attention elevated the importance of objective physical evidence

and surveys over the potential information that could have been gathered through individual interviews.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Introduction

This study focused on describing the current status of a little studied program with virtually no literature basis for theory development. By using available literature in two related yet dissimilar systems, high school athletics and college forensics, a preliminary grid structured the researcher's comprehension of the problem area, as seen in the graphic at the end of Chapter 2. Despite its flaws, available evidence was examined in context to illuminate the current speech coach recruitment, training, and retention situation.

Results

This chapter details the results of data analysis in five areas of evidence. The first two areas study the two groups of individuals most involved in managing the MHSA speech program, secondary principals and speech coaches, both approached through surveys taken at professional meetings. The third area examines the results of data analysis done on documents related to high school registrations, professional coach memberships, and extra-curricular stipends. The fourth area of evidence examined here includes formal college coursework available for state endorsement to teach secondary speech and college forensic competition opportunities for college students in Montana.

The fifth area of evidence detailed in this chapter began as the literature review search for numerical participation trends in forensics at the high school and college levels. This aspect of the study is placed in the findings chapter due to the nature of the information retrieved and the insights afforded by the search process itself.

Surveys

Current speech coaches and high school principals were surveyed at their regular April 2001 organizational meetings. Both surveys were limited by the number attending the meetings and by the experience level of the respondents.

Survey of Current High School Principals. The administrative survey (Appendix A) was distributed to the 35 administrators attending the Friday morning session of the annual spring meeting of the Montana Association of Secondary School Administrators (MASSP). The group surveyed was a convenience sample, available at the point in the meeting agenda designated by the executive director of the administrators' organization. The meeting halted while the principals filled out the surveys and the sheets were collected once the group's business continued.

Administrator Demographics. The respondents represented 34 schools, with only one school having more than a single individual at the meeting. Of these 34 schools, seven were either A or AA size (30.4%), 17 were B size (50%), and 10 were C size (29.4%). All 34 schools were members of MHSA, and represent 18.7% of the total membership.

The demographics of the group as individuals showed that 30 identified themselves solely as principals, and five identified themselves as either assistant or vice

principals or as combinations of either principal with superintendent, athletic director, or teacher. The longevity of these administrators was generally short, for while the number of years in their position ranged from one to 18, the mean was 4.80 and the median was three years. The length of time these administrators had been in their districts, while longer than the time serving in their positions, was generally a short period also. Their district experience ranged from one to 33 years, with the mean of 7.94 years and the median of four years.

Administrator Views on the Frequency of Hiring. The first category of questions regarded the frequency of filling speech coach positions, and the first question asked what length of time had passed since the last speech coach hiring. The 30 answers had a range of one to 20 years, with a mean of 3.07 and a median of two. Of the five principals who did not answer this question, four had served in both their positions and in their districts for three years or less, and the fifth was serving in a district with no current team and which did not appear as having had a registered team or coach in any of the available MFEA or MHSA file records.

The second question about frequency of hiring asked how long the immediately preceding head speech coach had held the position. Of the 27 answers, the range was from one to 17 years, with a mean of 4.48 and a median of three years. Eight principals did not answer or answered that they did not know, and these included the five who did not answer the previous question as well as three others. Two of these additional individuals had been hired after the current speech coach began coaching, and the tenure of the other coincided with the last speech coach hiring, meaning that the longevity of the immediately preceding head coach was beyond the administrator's experience in that

district.

The last question about the frequency of having to hire speech coaches asked for a comparison between speech coaches and other MHSA coaches on the basis of frequency of resignations. More than half of these principals, 54.3%, responded that speech coach resignations are about as frequent as those among other MHSA program coaches. Seven responded that speech coaches resign more often than other coaches, five gave no response, and four felt there were fewer resignations among speech coaches than among other coaches. The five non-answers to this question were the same individuals who did not answer the earlier question about the length of time since the last speech hiring at their schools.

Administrator Views on the Difficulty of Recruitment. The second category of questions regarded the difficulty of finding applicants for speech positions. Twenty-seven of the principals answered the fourth question asking if there was a choice of applicants for the last position. Nineteen, or 70.4% of the respondents, said there had been no choice of applicant. Seven, or 25.9% of the respondents, said there had been a choice of applicants. Eight individuals did not give an answer or answered that they did not know whether there had been a choice of applicants to fill the last open speech coach position. According to MHSA records for the 2000-2001 school year, five of these eight had no speech programs currently in their high schools, and the other three principals had started in their positions since the last hiring.

Administrator Views on the Training of Applicants. Asked in question 5 whether there had been applicants who were trained for the speech position, seven gave no answer, 16 said there had been none, five indicated that there had been less training

than would have been desired, and seven said there had been trained applicants.

When asked in the follow up to question five how those applicants were qualified, 20 out of 35 surveyed administrators, or 57.1%, did not answer at all. Seven of these 20 had not answered question 5 about whether there had been any trained applicants. Twelve had said in question 5 that there had been no trained applicants, and one had answered in the previous two questions that there had been no choice of applicants "in-house" but that the "hired person was qualified." Apparently, the last speech coach hired had been from outside the school and was qualified.

Of the 15 administrators who did respond to the follow-up question about how the applicants were qualified, one said "marginally," two referred to "willingness" and "interest in the position," six indicated experience, and six indicated some aspect of certification. Four of the six in this last category mentioned English, one said "teaching certificate," and another merely said "endorsed."

Administrator Views on the Number of Applicants. The last question asked whether the administrator perceived there to be more, fewer, or the same number of applicants for speech coaching positions as for other MHSA coaching positions. Twenty-five of those surveyed, or 71.4% of the total, said there are fewer applicants for the speech positions. In addition to these 25, two answered that there are more applicants, while eight did not answer the question. Seven of these eight non-answers were the same individuals who did not answer questions one or two requesting information from before their administrative tenure began, and included the five who did not answer the question requesting their comparison of speech coaches and coaches in other MHSA programs in terms of frequency of resignation. Looking at only those who

responded, 92.6% of the principals who answered the question said there are fewer applicants for speech coaching positions than for other MHSA coaching positions.

Administrator Familiarity with Program Hiring. Seven gave another individual's name in answer to the option of noting individuals in their district who would be more knowledgeable about speech coach hiring. Two of these references were speech coaches, one current and one former, two were athletic directors, two were principals, and one was a superintendent. There was not a link between how long the respondents had been in their districts and whether they gave the name of another individual as being more knowledgeable about speech coach hiring. For those who gave references to another individual, the mean of time in their positions was five years and the median was four years, while the mean of time in their districts was 6.7 and the median was four years. This compared to the entire group's 4.8 mean years in their positions with a median of three years, and 7.9 mean years in their districts for the whole group with a median of four years. Though this sub-group who made references had longer tenure in their positions than the group as a whole, they also had served for less time in their districts than the entire group. Thus, it was not the least experienced or most recently hired administrators who gave references to other individuals they felt would be more knowledgeable about the program, but those who had less overall time in their districts compared to other principals.

Administrator Willingness to Comment. Fourteen of the administrators indicated that they would be willing to be contacted for further questions, and four of these individuals wrote comments about the speech program in the space provided. In addition, five of those who did not indicate a willingness to be contacted further wrote

comments. Five of those nine comments about the program were related to student interest, noting a lack of student participation or barriers to student involvement.

- “In our district, lack of numbers who want to join the speech team is minimal to non-existent.”
- “We are trying to build interest, but the social support is not the same as athletics and the work required is too much like school.”
- “Dropped program after its initial inception due to its lack of participation.”
- “Excellent program, but we had very few participants.”
- “We have strong drama but little to no speech participants.”

Four of the nine comments were related to difficulties in hiring speech coaches.

- “Season is too long—people are not willing to coach speech because they are on the road from Oct. to Jan. every Sat.”
- “An excellent program, however it almost overlaps two sports seasons. Also, it is during the worst part of the winter travel-wise. The team leaves at early hours 3:30 – 5:00 am and spends long days that makes it tough on both the kids and any coach that has a family.”
- “It requires a tremendous amount of time for the program, especially the coaches.”
- “Brutal position to fill. High burnout – low interest from applicants.”

Program Status Insights. The first approach to analyzing this survey attempted to categorize the administrators’ schools into two categories, those with and those without active programs. Whether or not there was a currently active program was a

logical variable since the administrators' responses were based on their own experiences with hiring. However, the distinction between the two groups became muddled when the schools could not be neatly divided into those with and without active programs. Some of the administrators had experience trying to establish an active program, or trying to keep an existing program active, even though there was no program during the year of the survey. Others answered that their school did not have a program when there had been an active team in very recent years. Still others answered the questions as though their school had a current program when there had not been a team registered or competing for several years.

Summary of MASSP Survey Results. The surveyed principals represented almost 20% of the MHSA member high schools in the state. Gay (1996) indicates that the guideline for descriptive research samples should be 10 to 20%. On average, the last speech hiring was three years ago, with the majority of principals having to hire for a speech program position two years ago or less. As far as the administrators knew, the immediately preceding head speech coach had served for an average of almost 4.5 years and the majority felt the previous coach had served for three years or less.

The response to this survey of administrators supports the literature's indication of a general coaching crisis in high schools, with over half of the principals noting that speech coaches resign with about the same frequency as other MHSA coaches. Of the principals who answered the questions based on experience with hiring for speech, over 73% felt there had been no choice of applicants for the last coaching position. Over 57% of those who answered the question said there had been no trained applicants, and almost 20% more said there was less training than desired. Of the 44% who indicated that any

applicants had been qualified, 40% indicated coursework and 40% indicated experience as the qualification, with the others indicating marginal qualifications or willingness as the preparation for coaching. The most consistent pattern to the answers of any question in this survey was the agreement by more than 92% of those responding to the question that there are fewer applicants for speech positions than for other MHSA program coaching openings.

Survey of Current MHSA Speech Coaches Attending MFEA. The coach survey (Appendix B) was distributed to 87 current speech coaches during the last general session of the annual spring MFEA meeting on Saturday morning, April 7, 2001. All the completed questionnaires but one were filled out and returned during the meeting, and every person in the room filled out a survey except for the executive director of MHSA, the researcher, and a coach's spouse. One coach filled a survey out for her sister, who was also a speech coach but was not in attendance, and one of the surveys was considered to be unusable due to the inaccuracy of the demographic information and the incompleteness of the other answers. The meeting agenda continued as all but one of the surveys were completed within an hour of being handed out. The organizational secretary who had been recording minutes later mailed her survey to the researcher.

Coach Demographics. Demographics of the group showed that the 87 coaches represented 54 schools, or slightly more than half of the schools registered with MHSA to compete in speech during the 2000-2001 season that had ended two months earlier. Almost 30% of the coaches, 29.9%, were from AA schools. Table 1 also shows the distribution of the 61 ABC coaches by division and size.

Table 1

School Size and Geographic Classifications
Represented in MFEA Speech Coach Survey

Size Classifications

<u>Schools Represented</u>	<u>Individual Coaches</u>	<u>Coaches Per School</u>	<u>Speech programs Not Represented</u>	<u>Percentage Represented</u>
20 A-size	29	1.5	3	87.0%
11 B-size	16	1.5	19	36.7%
12 C-size	16	1.3	25	32.4%
11 AA-size	26	2.4	2	84.6%

Geographic Divisions

<u>Schools Represented</u>	<u>Individual Coaches</u>	<u>Coaches Per School</u>	<u>Speech programs Not Represented</u>	<u>Percentage Represented</u>
12 North	16	1.3	15	44.4%
12 South	20	1.7	13	48.0%
8 West	12	1.5	6	57.1%
11 East	13	1.2	13	45.8%
11 AA	26	2.4	2	84.6%

Fifty-five of the coaches, or 63.2%, classified themselves as head coaches or co-coaches, while 32, or 36.8%, identified themselves as assistant coaches. Three schools had co-coaches or two head coaches present, while one school was represented by both the head coach from last year as well as the one from the coming year. Two schools had only assistant coaches represented in the survey.

Length of Coaching Experience. The average length of time all the respondents had coached was 6.5 years, with a range of one through 29 years and a median of four years. Forty-two, or 48.3%, had coached four years or less. This experience broke down by school size and division as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Length of Coaching Experience
Among Respondents to MFEA Speech Coach Survey

Years of experience

All Coaches			ABC Coaches		
By school size	Mean	Median	By division	Mean	Median
AA (26)	7.9	7.0	East (13)	5.1	3.5
A (29)	4.9	4.0	West (12)	6.3	4.0
B (16)	6.7	3.5	North (16)	6.8	2.5
C (16)	6.6	2.5	South (20)	5.3	4.0

As a group, the 26 coaches at the AA schools had the most consistent length of experience, and although the mean length of coaching experience among coaches at all size schools had a three-year range with the greatest difference between the coaches at AA and A-size schools, the median number of years of coaching experience progressively falls with each drop in class size. Among the geographic divisions of ABC coaches, the mean length of experience was deceptively similar when contrasted with the median length of experience among coaches in the different divisions. Coaches had less coaching experience in the eastern and northern divisions.

Coach Views of Their Own Recruitment. The question about coach recruitment showed that out of 87 coaches, 16, or 18.4%, were one of several applicants at the time they were hired: seven of these were from AA schools, seven from A schools, and two from B schools. Thirty-six respondents, or 41.4% of the total group, said they were the only applicants for their speech coaching position: 11 from AA schools, 12 from A schools, five from B, and eight from C schools. The longevity statistics of the two groups were different. For coaches who had originally been among several applicants,

mean longevity was 8.3 years with a median of five years. Coaches who had been the only applicants had a mean longevity of 5.7 years and a median of four years. The average tenure of those who reported having been sole applicants for a coaching position was 31.3% shorter than the tenure of those who had been one of several candidates.

Fifteen, or 17.2% of the respondents, said that coaching was a condition of their employment. Altogether, 47 coaches, or 54% of the group, identified that one or both conditions applied to their situations: they were the only candidates and coaching was a condition of their employment.

Coach Views of Their Own Training and Preparation. Although they were asked to mark only one of the three training options, many coaches marked more than one. For the data analysis, their answers were coded using the first chronological stage marked. In other words, if a coach marked having had training both before and after hiring, the training before being hired was used as the primary coding. Twenty-eight, or 32.2%, indicated that they had received any training before being hired as coach. Another 13, or 14.9%, said that their first training had come after being hired. Forty-five, or 51.7%, gave as their sole answer that they were not trained at all other than through "on the job" training.

The follow-up question inquired where the pre- or post-hiring training had taken place. Of the 28 who felt they had been trained before being hired, half, or 14 coaches, identified "competition" as their training, nine gave a variation of "college" in response, and five other answers included "acting," "MN," a Montana high school, "drama," and no answer. Only three of the coaches received training both before and after being hired, and of the 16 total who gave any indication that they had received training after being

hired, 13 indicated that a head coach, mentor coach, or "other coaches" had trained them, while three named workshops or a college class. Fifty-six, or 64.4% of all the coaches, indicated that they felt they had received no training other than on-the-job, and this included six who also identified previous experience as competitors and five who also indicated they had received training after being hired.

The next question asked how well the coaches felt they had been prepared for their first year of coaching, with answers rated on a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 being "completely unprepared" and 10 being "well prepared." Table 3 shows where the coaches rated their first-year preparation, as broken down by the three areas of primary coding for the training responses. Two of the surveys were unusable for this table: one had all three training options marked with no explanation, and the other had no subjective rating of the coach's preparation marked.

Table 3

Coach Self-Assessment Distributed by Primary Coding of When Training Occurred

	"How Well Prepared Were You for Your First Year of Coaching?"								
	MORE-----				-----LESS				
	10	9	8	7	6-5-4	3	2	1	0
Trained before being hired (28 coaches)	2	3	6	5	12 (42.9%)				
Trained after being hired (13 coaches)		1	1	3	5 (38.5%)	3			
Not trained Other than "on-the-job" (44 coaches)				3	12 (27.3%)	12	5	6	6

Both of these measures were subjective, based in the personal self-assessments of the coaches. It may seem obvious that an individual who feels that he or she did receive training before being hired will also feel more prepared for the first year coaching. An equal number of coaches in two groups, those trained before and those with no training, rated their first year's preparation in the middle of the scale. This number, 12, represents 42.9% of the "trained before hiring" group, but represents only 27.3% of the group with no training.

Coach Employment. Almost 75% of the coaches surveyed were teachers, with 65 of the 87, or 74.7% marking teaching as their employment. Of these teacher-coaches, 53 taught at the high schools where they coached, three in both high school and the K-8 level, and nine at the K-8 level only. Ten of the speech coaches were non-certified employees of their school districts, and this group ranged from aides and custodians to professional specialists and substitutes. Twelve coaches were not school employees, and these included students, mothers and legal professionals.

Forty, or 61.5% of the total number of teachers, marked either English/language arts, speech or a combination including one of these two subject areas. Of the 53 who worked at the high school level, 30 marked English when asked what subject they taught, and 17 of those marked only English. Ten of the 30 English teachers said they also taught speech, debate, drama, theater, communications, or communications arts. Of the six who responded that they taught speech but not a combination of speech and English, two taught speech and journalism, two taught several kinds of speech and theater only, and the other two taught speech and either science or social studies. Apart from English, the high school teacher-coaches taught in these other curriculum areas: seven in social

studies or history, five in full-time library or a combination of library and another area, four in special education, and the remainder in home economics, Spanish and counseling. Four of the 12 teachers who taught full or part time at the K-8 level taught English or language arts, two taught gifted and talented, two did not indicate any subject or grade level, and the rest ranged from French and PE to social studies, special education, kindergarten and third grade.

When correlating coach training and employment, all but four of the 28 coaches who responded that they had been trained before being hired indicated that they were teacher-coaches. Six of these 24 teacher-coaches, while indicating that they had received some training before being hired, also checked the answer option "not trained at all," and each one of these six had written "competed" as the training they received before being hired.

Eleven of those who indicated that they were trained after being hired were teachers. Of these 11, five also marked that they were "not trained at all," two others also marked that they had received training before being hired through competition, and one indicated that prior training had taken place at a state college. Only three of the "trained after being hired" teacher-coaches did not include another response in either the prior training or no training answer option, and those three identified that they had been trained by head coaches or by mentor coaches.

Coach Estimations of Their Own Future Longevity. The respondents' estimations of how long they would continue to coach showed a large percentage saying they intended to work in forensics at least three more years or longer. Twenty-five marked "indefinitely" and 29 chose "three to five years" as their anticipation for future

coaching, with a total of 54, or 62.1%, indicating they would coach at least three more years. In addition, three coaches marked "other" along with answers of either "indefinitely" or "three to five years" and these "other" comments modified their answers with the phrases, "till I am burned out," "till I am married and have kids," and "don't know." Eleven marked that the year just finishing would be their last year coaching, a number representing 12.6% of the surveyed group.

Coaches' Other Coaching Experience. When asked whether they had other coaching experience, 22, or 25.3%, identified sports coaching experience and 12, or 13.8%, identified other kinds of sponsorship positions in drama, Odyssey of the Mind (OM), Youth in Government, Model United Nations, National Honor Society, as well as Family Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), and college forensics coaching. Fifty-one of the coaches, or 58.6%, did not indicate any other coaching experience outside of speech coaching.

Coach Willingness to Comment. Out of the 87 coaches responding to the survey, all but ten gave the researcher their names, phone numbers and email addresses to be contacted later for further questions. Three coaches also listed a total of 16 names of ex-coaches with contact information, with the suggestion that those individuals would be open to interviews about coach training, recruitment and retention.

The opportunity for coach comments on the back of the paper survey yielded six responses that expressed a range of emotions from frustration to optimism about speech coach training experiences.

I am resigning this year because of the extreme time commitment of speech and drama. . . . it is just too much time to put in for a four-month period. It leaves too little time for family.

The forensic program at [high school] is under-supported and under-prioritized. I was recruited as a debate coach merely because at one time in my career I taught speech class (non-competitive) at a different . . . school. I was in NO way qualified or prepared for the undertaking. I was not informed of training camps, meetings, etc. I was not offered funding for training, materials, etc. The position was filled, the administration was happy.

I have had assistant coaches from time to time depending on money available and experience. I have found that there is such fluctuation on staff that an assistant is trained and then leaves.

Comment on front: "prepared, not trained" On back: I was a participant for four years as a high school student. When my coach moved on [to a different school] I would travel there from college to help judge meets. [Then no contact with speech for four years.] There was never any formal training. I also ran my first meet that year following a checklist of things to do before a meet.

One thing that made my transition to coaching easier was that I had competed in high school. I can't imagine coming into this job cold without having experienced a meet before. I would've been terrified. [It would be good] to implement some workshops at the fall coaches meeting to help new coaches understand the different events, how a meet works, and how to host a meet. . . . the addition of MFEA sectionals at MEA-MFT will be a big help.

Why do we go through coaches so fast? High turnover? It's emotionally draining, long hours, low pay, extremely consuming (every weekend Oct-Jan) other coaches can be critical and I love it! But some coaches don't see the rewards: building up students with life-improving training and lifelong skills.

Though only six coaches commented, all of the key themes found in the literature review are echoed in their comments. First, the importance of personal competitive experience as preparation was noted as a basis for confidence in becoming a coach, as well as a differentiation between preparation and training. Second, the role conflicts of overload, task ambiguity, and confused expectations and feedback touch on critical needs of the individual in being a coach. Third, shortened tenure acts as a problem not only for individual program logistics but as an inhibition to training.

Coach Representation Insights. In order to evaluate the group of coaches responding to this survey, the composition and proportion of the respondents should be examined by first determining what percentage of the state's coaches participated, as well as the characteristics peculiar to the coaches involved. Their presence at the MFEA meeting and during the final session of the conference distinguishes them from the larger population of coaches. In addition, when compared to all available past studies of high school speech coaches found in the literature, this group included significantly fewer NFL affiliated coaches.

Estimating how many speech coaches there were in Montana during the survey year starts by determining how many schools supported speech programs. The 2000-2001 MHSA rulebook, published by late summer 2000, listed 100 Montana high schools supporting speech and/or drama programs. By the end of the school year, in spring 2001, the functional mailing list for MHSA update information included 103 schools, however. Combining information from the MFEA membership list with both the MHSA rule book and mailing list shows that as many as seven co-operative arrangements may have been in place between schools: Seeley Lake/Loyola, Brady/Power/Dutton, Baker/Plevna, Medicine Lake/Froid, Bainville/Culbertson, Seeley Lake/Sentinel, and Victor/Hamilton with several of those schools supplying students but no coaches. Because of these cooperative agreements, seven coaches may have operated the programs in the 15 schools. Subtracting these potentially "coach-less" eight from the 103 schools on the mailing list leaves 95 individual programs. If each program had one coach, this would be the minimum number of speech coaches in Montana, a hypothetical floor that is much smaller than the actual number. Although there are several schools with only one coach,

many have more than one coach and most have two. A very small number of A and B size schools have up to four, and AA size schools have anywhere from two to eight. The MFEA membership list at the time of the surveyed meeting showed 176 names associated with 99 school programs. In summary, it is probably safe to estimate that 87 may represent somewhat less than half of the state's speech coaches, though probably not less than one-third of the total number of individuals coaching.

The coaches present at the MFEA meeting differ from the entire body of coaches in a few important ways. First, their presence at the meeting may indicate more interest in the program. Membership in MFEA brings with it the opportunity to vote on rule changes at the spring meeting, but only if the coach is present. The agenda involves a great deal of discussion, beginning Thursday evening in separate AA and ABC meetings, continuing through the day Friday in event and issue committee meetings, and concluding with a combined session of general membership for voting on Saturday morning. Some coaches do not belong to MFEA, but those who wish to participate beyond the school level or who feel strongly about the program must attend to have any voice.

Secondly, fewer coaches are still present on Saturday morning when the general membership votes are taken, and those in attendance may be the coaches who feel most involved in the program. While many teacher-coaches get professional leave in order to miss school for Friday's meeting, Saturday is sacrificed from personal time. If this survey had been distributed on Friday morning as originally scheduled, as many as 15 more coaches would have been present to respond. At least four coaches who had spoken widely about quitting were not at the meeting at all, and at least four additional

coaches were present Friday but not Saturday.

Fewer Montana speech coaches surveyed in this study belong to NFL than any group identified in any earlier high school study in the literature. Reference to only one small study involving any number of non-NFL affiliated coaches was located in the literature (in Hensley, 1972), and that study examined 45 high school coaches in Kansas in 1966, only some of whom were not NFL coaches. Twenty Montana schools belonged to NFL during the 2000-2001 school year, including all 13 AA size and seven of the ABC size schools. In addition, one small school was "affiliated" with NFL, a level below membership which represents a lesser degree of involvement in the national organization, but which allowed one of the students at the school a chance to compete at the district tournament. Not all the coaches at a school may be involved with the NFL organization. Thus an overly generous estimate of NFL-associated coaches in Montana would be just over 50, including the 39 coaches on the MFEA's AA membership list and approximately 14 more, or two coaches for seven ABC schools. However, only 26 AA coaches were present and surveyed at the meeting, so even if 14 coaches from ABC-sized NFL schools were surveyed, there would be a total of 40 NFL-affiliated coaches out of the 87 surveyed. Since several of the smaller NFL schools only had one coach present, it is safe to estimate that less than half of the coaches surveyed at the meeting were associated with NFL.

Competition Experience as Training. The survey questions did not describe training categories into which the coaches should classify their experiences. Deciding what did and did not count as training was left to the individual coaches, resulting in ambiguous responses. For example, of the 20 coaches who indicated that they had

personal competition experience, six noted that they had received no training before being hired despite having been competitors, while 14 of those 20 "previous competitor" coaches indicated that they had been trained before having been hired and that training consisted of having been competitors. Thus 30% of the coaches who indicated that they had competition experience did not consider it to be training, while 70% with competition experience did consider it to be training. Thus these survey results did not show how many of the coaches had been student competitors, since if they did not consider that experience to be training, there was no place in the survey for them to indicate that they had personal competition experience.

Consequently, coaches attending the following year's MFEA meeting, held in Havre in late February 2002, were polled briefly with a half-sheet survey (Appendix C) asking, "Were you a competitor on a high school or college speech, debate, or drama team?" A follow-up question asked for another yes or no answer: "If you were a competitor, has that experience been helpful in your coaching?" The invitation to explain was then offered. Of the 85 coaches responding, 35 indicated they had never personally competed, or 41.2%. Fifty coaches, or 58.8%, responded that they did have personal competition experience. Of the 50 who answered that they had themselves been competitors, nine said their experience had not helped their coaching. Eight of the nine further commented that their personal experiences were too brief, too limited, too long ago, or too different from Montana competition to be of value in helping them as coaches. Of the 41 coaches who indicated that their personal experiences as student competitors had been helpful to their coaching, 39 briefly explained their answers. While several stated specific reservations about the limits of their competitive experience, each

comment indicated something that the individual knew or understood as a result of it. The ways in which their own competitive experience acted as helpful preparation ranged from knowing event-specific strategies to simply understanding the emotions of the students. One individual described helping to shoulder coach responsibilities as a high school competitor in a different state, while several others noted that despite the shortcomings of their competition experience as coach training, it helped them to have "some idea" of a meet or "what it feels like to compete and win and compete and lose," or to just "understand the culture of a speech team." Several indicated that personal experience was most valuable as a coaching motivator, such as the coach who wrote, "I knew/continue to know the value of the program. It makes getting up at 4 am worth it!" Others noted that their own personal competition experiences offered "at least an introduction to these events" as a practical coaching resource, however inadequate that introduction had been. As another coach wrote, "It is the only experience I've had, so I've depended on it for my coaching."

Due to the time lapse and different survey respondents from one year to the next, no conclusions can be drawn between the two sets of responses. There is no way to know if the first group in 2001 would have had a similar percentage, near 60%, with personal competition experience. Hypothetically, if the 2001 group had anywhere near as high a percentage of former competitors as responded to the direct question in 2002, then many in the original survey chose to not classify their competition experience as training. Since only 14 of the 2001 respondents, or 16.1%, indicated that they had received training by being a competitor, while over half of 2002 respondents indicated they had competed, it is possible that over a third of the total surveyed in 2001 may have

competed yet not mentioned it in their responses. At least two individuals known to the researcher to have been high school competitors indicated on their 2001 surveys that they had received no training other than "on the job."

Summary of MFEA Coach Survey. Slightly over half of the surveyed coaches felt they had not received any training at all. In addition, less than one-third of the group felt they had received any training before having been hired, and fewer than one out of six felt they had been trained at all after having been hired to coach. Since the surveyed group may represent the most professionally active coaches in the state, this indicates a very low level of training activity. The researcher's survey error in not asking about competition experience in the 2001 survey seriously damaged an opportunity to determine what percentage of the coaches with competition experience viewed it as training for the role of coach. The responses to a subsequent poll of those present at the next MFEA annual meeting a year later suggest that when responding to the first survey, many coaches may not have considered their competition experience as coach training, despite it being helpful to them in their coaching roles. In addition, a majority of the teacher-coaches, who comprised almost 75% of the total respondents, were teachers of English and language arts or speech. Yet only nine coaches specifically indicated "college" when asked where they had received training before being hired to coach, and this answer is broad enough to have possibly included coursework as well as competition experience.

Documents

MFEA and MHSA Archives. The MFEA files were first used to construct timelines of individual coach longevity. These organizational files were the sole written record of coach names, since the only other resource for developing a sample of ex-coaches lay in the memories of coaches. Ideally, interviews with ex-coaches could have mapped patterns in high school forensic coaching relative to the body of coaching literature by identifying relationships between training and retention, potentially illuminating what attracts individuals into coaching and what factors drive them to quit. All previous studies of why speech coaches quit have been based on surveys of coaches who have not quit. The disconnect between asking the most accessible coaches, who are to a large degree the most professionally involved, to share their opinions about what has prompted other coaches to quit seems to invite error, since those who have already quit may have different characteristics, qualities, and preparation than those who are still coaching.

Due to the nature of the file materials available, however, the research focus had to be altered from individual coaches to high school programs. Once constructed, the timelines of individual coaching involvement clearly showed the inadequacy of the archived files for tracking individuals. Too frequently, file notations showed school names without coach names. Thus the evidence available would simply not support sufficiently detailed research into the longevity and retention of individual coaches.

The timelines could be modified into a physical record tracking school programs, however. When the horizontal lines represented schools instead of individual coaches, variations in the consistency of school programs were clearly visible. Five large grids

were produced, one for each division and one for the AA schools, each representing the chronological record of high schools in that geographic and size category fielding speech teams since 1975.

On the level of the individual coach, there was no resolution to the records situation, but by changing focus to the school program as the entity of study instead of the individual coach, records from the state activity association could supplement gaps in the MFEA files. Both sets of data were inadequate, but unlike the MFEA files, those from MHSA were consistent in answering a simple question: Was the school registered for competition in speech, drama, or both? The lists of schools in the MHSA files are limited to information filed with the state office as of the calendar deadline for each school year, and as a consequence, have inaccuracies resulting from the imperfect workings of high schools. Each summer some schools are registered with MHSA though they never actually send competitors to meets, while other schools do not get registered in time to be included in the MHSA list, even though they actually do participate in season competition. The data for any one given year is not precise in either MFEA or MHSA record, but using the two files as back-ups for each other over the length of time from 1975 to 2001 acted as a double-check for annual omissions, mistaken inclusions, and missing files. Thus the combination of data from these two sources gave a clear, if incomplete, tracing of program durability despite the inadequacies of both records.

When longevity was traced by school program timelines, the combination of MFEA coach memberships and MHSA school registrations suggested different levels of consistency in program activity levels from one high school to another across the state. High schools were then categorized by the researcher into incremental strata, or "tiers":

first, those which had coaches and programs on every available list; second, those which were represented in four or more lists; and third, those represented three times or less. Empty spaces in both sets of records make it impossible to consider the lists generated from such analysis exhaustive, but differing levels of consistency between schools over this 25-year period are clear.

The largest high schools in the state were difficult to quantify by these levels of participation, and a fourth category was set up for the AA-size schools, since the record of coaches in this size school seemed to vary in different ways than whether a program existed at all. In MFEA coaching records, some of the AA schools never had more than one coach shown as members, whereas other large schools consistently had three or more. It was decided to consider the AA schools separately. The ABC schools, including the four that were AA size at the start of the 25-year period under examination but which have since changed classifications, broke into three strata: one small group, i.e., the 18 that showed up in every available list, and two larger groups of schools with differing levels of program consistency in the available records. Forty-six of these ABC-size schools have had more consistent programs, showing up in four or more of the records, and 49 of the ABC-size schools have had less consistent records indicated by three or fewer appearances in the files.

District Contracts. While the original intention of tracking and locating ex-coaches was beyond reach because of limitations in the resources available, the stratification of high school program consistency into tiers suggested another perspective that could potentially shed light on one influence on the individual coaching cycle in the Montana forensics program. Role conflicts include both conflicting demands between

coaching and teaching as well as ambiguity in expectation and feedback. While the documents available did not allow the investigation of individual coach histories, they did establish variable patterns of program consistency in districts across the state.

District extra-curricular contracts provide quantifiable footprints of extracurricular pay, a tangible form of feedback given to coaches by their districts. Pay for coaching high school extra-curricular competition often averages out to be a minimal amount per hour. Coaching researcher Chu (1981) noted a range between \$1.72 and \$.32 an hour and more recently, Billings Gazette sports reporter Fritz Neighbor referenced a range in Montana including a low of \$.25 to \$.50 an hour and in one case \$.23 an hour (F. Neighbor, 1997; personal communication, May 31, 2002). Athletic coaching literature suggests that feedback ambiguity can accelerate role conflict for a coach (Chu, 1981; Dunn & Dunn, 1997; Massengale, 1981), and monetary compensation, while representing only one type of feedback, is a very real part of the reward system in high school organizations. Disparities in pay between similar positions at different schools, as well as disparities between different coaching positions within any one school, are a matter of public record and discussion, and variations in this kind of objective feedback may be related to levels of program activity and consistency.

An inquiry to the Helena MEA-MFT office in August 2000 confirmed that copies of virtually all the school district employment contracts were filed there, and that in most cases these contracts included extra-duty or extracurricular schedules. According to the MEA-MFT research director (T. Billodeau, personal communication, August 25, 2000), previous attempts to compare extracurricular stipends between schools had encountered great difficulties due to the varying formulas used by different districts that made "apple-

to-apple comparison" impossible. However, for the purposes of this study, the relative relationship between the stipends for speech coaching and other extra-curricular assignments within each individual school's own contract would be useful, and this relationship could be expressed as a ratio in order to provide a common denominator for school-to-school comparisons. The amount earned by any one school's coach was not as important for this study as whether speech coach stipends were one-sixth, half, or equal to other coach stipends. Data analysis could focus on comparing the patterns of these stipend ratios as they varied in distribution within different categories, including school size classes, geographic divisions, and tiers of relative program consistency over time.

Demographics of Districts. Out of the 113 high schools for which extra-curricular contract information was sought, usable copies of 90 district contracts were retrieved from the MEA-MFT office in Helena during the first week of August 2001. These 90 districts represented all of the units of analysis for this study, namely school sizes ranging from large to small, or AA through A, B, and C, as well as the four geographic divisions of the ABC size schools. The analyzed contracts included those from 26 Northern, 19 Eastern, 24 Southern, and 15 Western division high schools, and 21 A-size, 23 B-size, and 40 C-size high schools. Six AA-size districts in the state, representing 11 of the 13 AA-size schools in the state, had contracts available in the files, but due to the difficulties encountered in stratifying program consistency cited earlier, the AA contracts were set aside. Thus the contract analysis in this study was done only on ABC-size schools, although it did include information from those schools that had started as AA-size and then had shrunk in size to A class over the years. Most of the contracts were for the 2000-2001 school year, though several were for earlier years.

Data on extracurricular stipends were coded by school class size, MHSA geographic division, and consistency tiers as developed from the documentary record for this study. Information was recorded for head coaches and assistant coaches in these MHSA-sponsored activities: speech, basketball, football, volleyball, track and wrestling. Data on band, vocal, cheerleading, FFA, FHA, BPA, concessions, tennis, golf, newspaper, yearbook and plays were also recorded. By far, most of the contracts designated extracurricular pay using an index format, though some were presented as categories and a few simply stated a flat sum. Incentives for longevity, advancement to tournament competition, and other stipulations varied from school to school, but the initial index, category, or monetary figures for first-year coaching were used for this analysis.

The compensation for two positions, head speech coach and head basketball coach, was converted into a percentage ratio, with the speech coach stipend expressed as a percentage of the basketball coach's. The basketball coach's stipend was chosen as the ratio's base figure for two reasons: it was the one position represented in every single contract, and it was universally the highest or equal to all other highest extracurricular coaching stipends at each school. More than one school paid the football coach less than the basketball coach.

Due to the varied availability of contracts for extracurricular pay, analysis of the stipends by tier could be done for a higher percentage of the schools with the most consistent programs. Sixteen of the 18 tier one schools, or those at which speech programs had consistently been maintained according to every available record since 1975, had usable contracts available. Forty-one contracts were available for the 47

schools in tier two, or those that appeared in more than half the available records since 1975. Thus for tier one, 88.9%, and tier two, 87.2%, high percentages of the schools stratified from the records could have a stipend ratio developed from available contracts. However, only 56.3% of the contracts could be analyzed for the third tier of schools, since contracts were available for only 27 out of the 48 schools with speech programs appearing in fewer than half the records since 1975.

Analysis of Contract Stipend Data. The pay ratio figures were analyzed according to three criteria: school class size, MHSA geographical divisions, and the consistency tiers developed for this study from the available documentary record. In each of the following sets of analysis, the pay ratio figures from schools in a particular classification were averaged to generate a "mean pay" figure for that classification; those schools as a group could then be compared to others in a different group by comparing their means.

The first analysis compares pay ratios by class size distributions. The variations in pay ratios, analyzed by class-size and consistency tier groups, are illustrated in the following table.

Table 4

Pay Ratios Distributed by Class Size and Consistency Tiers

Class A Size	21 A Schools	% of Class Total	Mean Pay
Tier 1	9	42.9%	0.80
Tier 2	10	47.6%	0.77
Tier 3	2	9.5%	0.66
Mean of All Tiers in Class A: 0.77			
Range in Class A Pay Ratios: 0.14			

Table 4 (Cont'd)

Pay Ratios Distributed by Class Size and Consistency Tiers

Class B Size	23 B Schools	% of Class Total	Mean Pay
Tier 1	5	21.7%	0.82
Tier 2	14	60.9%	0.90
Tier 3	4	17.4%	0.71

Mean of All Tiers in Class B: 0.85

Range in Class B Pay Ratios: 0.20

Class C Size	40 C Schools	% of Class Total	Mean Pay
Tier 1	2	5.0%	0.85
Tier 2	17	42.5%	0.67
Tier 3	21	52.5%	0.65

Mean of All Tiers in Class C: 0.67

Range in Class C Pay Ratios: 0.20

The largest single group of schools is the 21 class C schools in the third tier, or least consistent programs. While this is also the group of schools with the lowest mean pay ratio for speech coaches relative to basketball coaches, 0.65, this figure is not much lower than the mean pay ratio for the two class A schools in the third consistency tier, 0.66.

The schools with the highest mean pay ratio are the 14 class B schools in tier two, with an average of 0.90. In fact, the class B schools in all tiers have the highest mean pay ratio, 0.85, and exceed class A and C size schools' mean pay ratios in all but tier one, where the class C schools with the most consistent program histories exceed the pay ratio means of the other two class size groups. Also, Class C size schools have the largest range in pay ratio averages, while class A schools have the smallest range.

The second analysis of pay ratios uses geographic location as the first factor in analysis. When the pay ratios are distributed first by geographic division and then by

class size, without reference to program consistency, mean pay ratios are highest in the western division and in class B schools in the other three divisions, as shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5

Pay Ratios Distributed by Division and Class Size

Eastern Division Schools		% of Divisional Total	Mean Pay
Class A	5	26.3%	0.66
Class B	5	26.3%	0.90
Class C	9	47.4%	0.66

Mean of All Class Sizes in Eastern Division: 0.72

Range in Eastern Division Pay Ratio Means: 0.23

Northern Division Schools		% of Divisional Total	Mean Pay
Class A	2	7.7%	0.81
Class B	7	26.9%	0.84
Class C	17	65.4%	0.66

Mean of All Class Sizes in Northern Division: 0.72

Range in Northern Division Pay Ratio Means: 0.18

Southern Division Schools		% of Divisional Total	Mean Pay
Class A	5	20.8%	0.60
Class B	10	41.7%	0.86
Class C	9	37.5%	0.60

Mean of All Classes in Southern Division: 0.71

Range in Southern Division Pay Ratio Means: 0.26

Western Division Schools		% of Divisional Total	Mean Pay
Class A	9	60.0%	0.91
Class B	1	6.7%	0.64
Class C	5	33.3%	0.81

Mean of All Classes in Western Division: 0.86

Range in Western Division Pay Ratio Means: 0.10

While the overall pay ratio means of the eastern, southern, and northern divisions are very similar, ranging only from 0.72 to 0.71, the western division's mean is significantly higher at 0.86. The southern division has the greatest variation, 0.26, while the western

division has the least variation in pay ratios, at 0.10. The highest mean pay ratio is in the western A-size schools, at 0.91, and the lowest pay ratio is in the southern division class A schools, at 0.60. Since the western A schools have the highest ratio in this analysis, it is not surprising that the western division has the highest divisional mean, since the number of schools representing that division has over twice as high a percentage of A-size schools as any other division. The contrast between A-size schools in the different divisions is worth noting, however, for the mean pay ratios at A schools vary as much as those of either of the other class size groupings.

In Table 6, analysis of pay ratios using the third criterion, program consistency as designated by the tiers, reveals some patterns not evident in either of the other two analyses shown in Tables 5 and 4. Looking up each column from bottom to top, the mean pay ratios rise within each size class along with the consistency ranking of the school programs in that tier, except for the class B school grouping, where the highest mean is in tier two, 0.90. This mean is higher than any other pay ratio mean in the table. Eleven of the schools in tier two have a ratio of one. Out of these 11 tier two schools with a ratio of one, eight, or 72.7%, are class B size schools. By comparison, two of the six schools with a ratio of one in tier one are class B.

Table 6

Pay Ratio Means Distributed by Consistency Tiers and Class Size

	All Classes	Class A	Class B	Class C
	<i>Mean Pay Ratio (Number of Schools)</i>			
First Tier	0.81	0.80 (9)	0.82 (5)	0.85 (2)
Second Tier	0.78	0.77 (10)	0.90(14)	0.67 (17)
Third Tier	0.66	0.66 (2)	0.71 (4)	0.65 (21)
Total		0.77 (21)	0.85 (23)	0.67 (40)

Table 7

Tier Distribution by Division and Divisional Means Within Tiers

	Total	Eastern	Northern	Southern	Western
	<i>Mean Pay Ratio (Number of Schools)</i>				
First Tier	16	0.66 (4)	0.84 (4)	0.93 (3)	0.83 (5)
Second Tier	41	0.77 (13)	0.78 (11)	0.74 (12)	0.90 (5)
Third Tier	27	0.58 (2)	0.63 (11)	0.60 (9)	0.86 (5)
Total	84	0.72 (19)	0.72 (26)	0.71 (24)	0.86 (15)

Once again, Table 7 echoes the results in Table 5, in showing that the mean of pay ratios in the western division is higher than in the other three divisions. The only exception is the group of three first tier schools in the southern division, which has a mean pay ratio of 0.93, the highest in the table. The lowest pay ratio average is in the eastern division, 0.58 in the third tier. Taken as tier averages by either division or class size groupings, the results in Tables 6 and 7 echo the patterns of pay ratio means shown in Table 5.

When division and class size are disregarded completely, however, the distribution of pay ratios within the consistency tiers showed distinct differences as is evident in the histograms printed in Table 8 below. While six out of the 16 schools in tier one had ratios of one, and the tier's mean ratio was 0.81, every school in tier one had a pay ratio over 0.5. Not one school in this tier of the most consistent programs had a ratio as low as 0.5, for the lowest was 0.54. In tier two, although 11 schools had a pay ratio of one and the tier's mean ratio was 0.78, four schools had a pay ratio of 0.5 or lower. By contrast, the distribution in the third tier visibly differs from that of the other two tiers. Of the schools in the third tier, 29.6% had a pay ratio of 0.50 or lower, and of these, the lowest ratio was .16. While the contracts show that 56.3% of speech coaches

in tier one schools and 56.1% of the coaches in tier two schools have pay ratios equal to 0.8 or less of the basketball coach pay, 74.1%, or almost three-quarters, of the coaches at tier three schools had a pay ratio of 0.8 or less. This contrast in distribution patterns within each tier, not evident in the mean of each tier as a total, is clearly shown in the histograms in Table 8.

Summary of MFEA and MHSA Archives and District Contract Analysis.

Document research was seriously challenged by inadequacies in the physical records available. Instead of being able to analyze individual coach retention data as hoped, the researcher had to accept analysis of school program consistency as the best available option. The opportunity to access district contracts made analysis of pay ratios possible. When these ratios were distributed by geographic division, school size, and consistency tier categories, the higher pay ratio averages were found in three areas: the western division, class B schools, and southern division tier one schools. But by focusing on the distribution of pay ratios within consistency tiers alone, the histogram in Table 8 showed that lower pay ratios were more frequent in the least consistent tier.

Montana College Forensic Activity and Secondary Teacher Endorsement

Programs. If the ideals articulated in forensic literature were reality, all Montana speech coaches would be teachers with academic training in speech communications, in addition to having personal experience as forensic competitors. Although this ideal is not the reality, information from six colleges and universities, available by mail, fax, phone, and online, was examined in order to outline what in-state opportunities would have been available at the time of this study to Montana college students who wanted to either compete in forensics, or who wished to prepare for teaching high school speech by taking

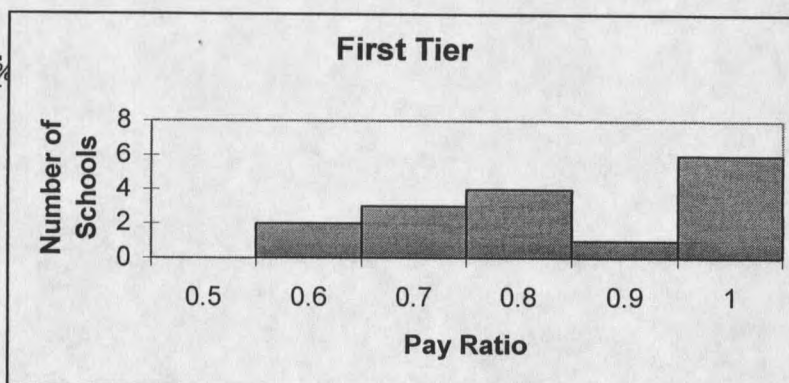
Table 8

Pay Ratio Distributions Within Consistency Tiers

First Tier Histogram and Graph

Bin	Frequency	Cumulative %
0.5	0	.00%
0.6	2	12.50%
0.7	3	31.25%
0.8	4	56.25%
0.9	1	62.50%
1	6	100.00%

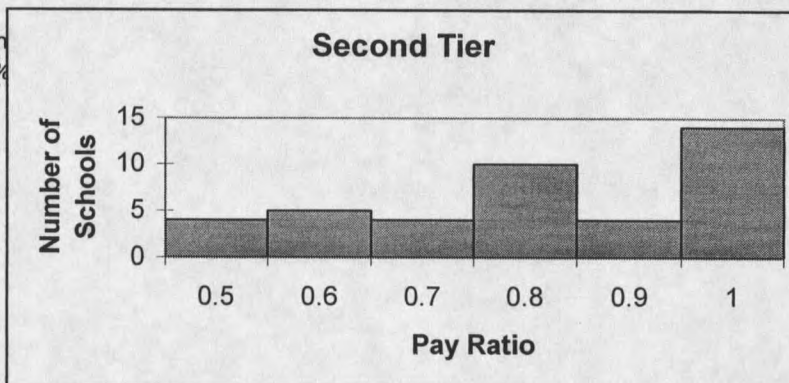
Totals	16
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Second Tier Histogram and Graph

Bin	Frequency	Cumulative %
0.5	4	9.76%
0.6	5	21.95%
0.7	4	31.71%
0.8	10	56.10%
0.9	4	65.85%
1	14	100.00%

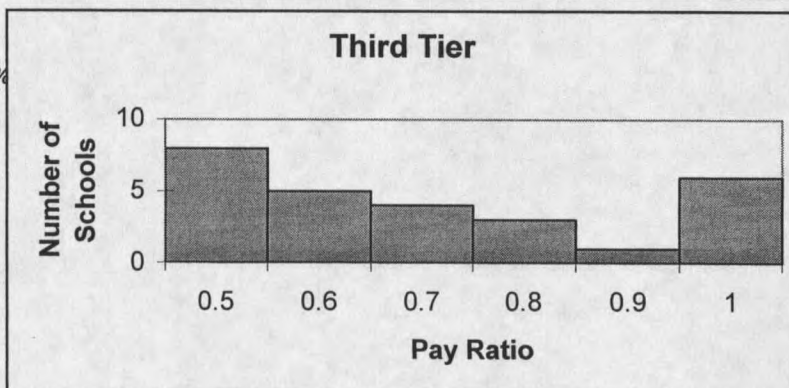
Totals	41
--------	----



Third Tier Histogram and Graph

Bin	Frequency	Cumulative %
0.5	8	29.63%
0.6	5	48.15%
0.7	4	62.96%
0.8	3	74.07%
0.9	1	77.78%
1	6	100.00%

Totals	27
--------	----

Key to Bin Values

0.5 = ratios equal to and less than .5

0.6 = ratios equal to and less than .6 but higher than .5

0.7 = ratios equal to and less than .7 but higher than .6

0.8 = ratios equal to and less than .8 but higher than .7

0.9 = ratios equal to and less than .9 but higher than .8

1.0 = ratios equal to and less than 1.0 but higher than .9

coursework for the teaching endorsement. The post-secondary institutions were: Carroll College, Montana State University-Billings, Montana State University-Bozeman, Rocky Mountain College, University of Great Falls, and University of Montana, at www.carroll.edu; www.msubillings.edu; www.montana.edu; www.rocky.edu; www.ugf.edu; and www.umt.edu.

Competitive College Forensic Activity. Four post-secondary institutions in Montana have supported college forensic programs in the past few years. At the time of this study, two of these programs were at private colleges, Carroll College in Helena and Rocky Mountain College in Billings. Several pages of the Carroll's website highlighted the school's forensics team, the Talking Saints, a program actively recruiting high school students and offering scholarships (Carroll, 2002a). Much could be learned about the team from focus articles and references in general materials available online. Started in the 1940's, the Carroll forensics team had won 12 consecutive regional championships, more than any other team in the region, and regularly qualified at the national level, earning a first place finish in 1999, fourth place in 2000, and third place in 2001 (Carroll, 2002a). This forensics team was ranked in the top five of all university and college teams (Carroll, 2002b) and was being coached by the head of the communications department (Carroll, 2002a).

Rocky Mountain College in Billings was the other Montana private college sponsoring a forensics team, a group coached by the only professor listed in communications studies on the college website faculty listing (Rocky, 2002c). Evidence of the forensics team was found on the Rocky website list of clubs and organizations, which included the campus chapter of Pi Kappa Delta, a college forensic honorary

society chartered in 1920 and the first chapter in Montana (Rocky, 2002a) as well as a chapter of the Quintillian Society, which “fosters interest in forensics activities by promoting public speech programs, encouraging participation in tournaments, holding meetings, and bestowing awards for outstanding speakers” (Rocky, 2002a). Stronger evidence of the team’s existence was in a forensics course, listed in the online catalog as “COM 257 Intercollegiate Forensics,” designed “for students actively preparing for, and participating in, intercollegiate events or debate” (Rocky, 2002b).

In addition to the two private colleges with competitive forensics, two of the public state university campuses had sponsored competitive forensics since the 1999-2000 academic year, and one continued as of July 2002. The University of Montana (UM), the original host of Montana high school speech as a competitive interscholastic event almost a century ago (Seelinger, 1987), had a fledgling competitive collegiate program re-started in spring 2000, largely through the efforts and enthusiasm of a freshman debater who had recently graduated from high school forensics in the MHSA program (Watson, 2001). Previous to its earlier demise in the early 1980’s, UM forensics had been one of the oldest organizations on campus (Watson, 2001). The team was coached by a graduate student, and the chair of the Department of Communications Studies was listed as faculty advisor on both the on-line team roster (University of Montana, 2002e) and team web page (University of Montana, 2002d). The team was sponsored cooperatively by the communications studies department, the Davidson Honors College, and the Associated Students of the University of Montana (Watson, 2001). Online solicitation for monetary contributions to an endowment for the forensics team indicated that the suspension of forensics at UM during the 1980’s and 1990’s was

caused by a lack of funds, and cited the “greatest challenge for the forensics program” (University of Montana, 2001) today as the need for funding to travel to tournaments. The catalog of undergraduate courses included U360, Forensics/Honors, offered every term for one to three credits, stating that the team “travels to regional competitions and hosts on-campus inter-mural debates and speaking events” (University of Montana, 2002b). According to the Dean of the Communications Studies Department (Sillars, personal communication, July 11, 2002), the 30 members on the team traveled to tournaments in Utah, Idaho, Wyoming and Washington during the 2001-2002 academic year, as well as sending some members to a national tournament in Denver.

In contrast to the apparent strength of the fledgling UM forensics program renewal, the MSU-Billings restart was less successful. During the summer of 2001, a website button label on the home page of the communications department chair indicated that a new and “unofficial” debate team was in existence at Montana State University-Billings. The link was never functional through the summer of 2001, and when the researcher tried to find the link in 2002, it no longer existed. The department secretary confirmed by phone in July 2002 that there had indeed been a team briefly but that there was no longer a forensics team at the university (personal communications, July 11, 2002).

Teacher Training for Secondary Speech Endorsement. Unlike some other states, such as Texas (T. Dayton, personal communications, phone interview notes, July 9, 2001), Montana does not require speech to be taught as part of the secondary curriculum. The Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) indicated in June of 2001 that 163 certified teachers were endorsed to teach secondary speech communications in

Montana (J. Meier, personal communication, June 12, 2001). As of July 2002, two colleges in Montana had academic programs leading to OPI endorsement in Speech Communications, a reduction from three one year earlier. The University of Great Falls dropped the teaching minor in speech communications (University of Great Falls, 1999) after the 1999-2000 academic year (J. Fontana, personal communication, July 11, 2002). Carroll College in Helena still offered both a secondary teaching major and minor in Communication Studies as an option in their teacher education program, and Montana State University-Billings offered only the teaching minor for secondary endorsement. Table 9 lists the courses required by each institution for these speech teaching endorsements.

Table 9

Teacher Training Coursework for Speech Endorsement
Available in Montana Colleges as of July, 2002

	MSU-B Minor	Carroll Minor	Carroll Major
Basic Comm.	Comm. Theory	Basic Comm.	Basic Comm.
Group Dynamics	*	Small Group Comm.	Small Group Comm.
Interpersonal Comm.	*	Interpersonal Comm. Th.	Interpersonal Comm. Th.
News/Mass Media	Media Internship Senior Project		Mass Media

Table 9 (Cont'd)

Teacher Training Coursework for Speech Endorsement
Available in Montana Colleges as of July, 2002

Society/Ethics	*	Comm. Ethics	Comm. Ethics
Tchg. Mthds.	*		Methods Tchng Sp. Comm.
Prof./Pub Spkng.	Intro. to Pub. Sp. Adv. Pb. Spkng.	Prof. Comm.	Prof. Comm.
Forensics		Forensics	Forensics
Other	Persuasion Oral Interp.	Gender Comm.	Gender Comm. Intercultural Comm. Resrch Mthds

(Carroll College, 2001; MSU-Billings, 2001, 2002)

(Asterisks indicate previously required coursework titles for the MSU-Billings endorsement.)

Table 9 shows that the end of the competitive forensics team at MSU-Billings was accompanied by changes in the university's required course offerings for the secondary teaching speech minor. The speech team workshop course, which had been listed in 2001 (Montana State University-Billings, 2001), was dropped from the following year's catalog and list of requirements for the teaching minor in speech communication (Montana State University-Billings, 2002). Asterisks in the coursework table above indicate classifications in which course titles were dropped when the requirements were changed. The total number of credits required after the program change was the same, but the teaching methods class EDCI 317, "Teaching Speech and Drama in the Middle and Secondary School," was been replaced by EDCI 310,

"Teaching Middle, Secondary and K-12 Schools." Other changes included one fewer 100-level class and one more 200-level class, an oral interpretation class instead of the speech team workshop, and a change in media coursework from the 200-level to a senior internship (Montana State University-Billings, 2001, 2002).

At the time of this study, some post-secondary schools in the state which did not offer a teaching major or minor did have large communications departments, including the University of Montana in Missoula, where 12 faculty members were on the department listing (University of Montana, 2002c), and web page notes indicate that a 1995 survey of over 400 former communication majors showed that nine percent had gone on to become teachers in "College, Flight School, High School, and Special Education" (University of Montana, 2002a).

Inquiries about both speech communications coursework and forensic activity at Montana State University in Bozeman revealed that in 1994 the decision was made to eliminate the department and degree (M. Babcock, personal communication, June 21, 2001). Remaining faculty and students were moved to the psychology department as the communications program was phased out, and the last faculty member from the original speech communications department retired from the university in 2000. One public speaking course remained, a requirement for psychology majors. According to the psychology department chair, "the entire program is taught by adjuncts", so no additional research or service activities, such as forensic coaching, can be expected (M. Babcock, personal communication, June 21, 2001).

In summary, college forensics in Montana varies from one long-standing, visible program at Carroll College, to two programs of variable strength and visibility, one at

Rocky Mountain College and the other at University of Montana. The brief appearance of a team at Montana State University-Billings has ended, leaving this institution to rejoin the other post-secondary schools in the state which have formerly sponsored forensics competition but do so no longer. This pattern of declining numbers in competitive college forensic activity was echoed by the diminishing number of schools offering formal training for the secondary teaching endorsement in speech communications in the state. While the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) continues to certify the secondary teaching endorsement in speech communications, only two colleges in the state, one private and one public, would certify prospective teachers with the qualifying coursework as of July 2002. At only one of those two colleges did the student have an opportunity for competitive forensic experience.

Discussion of Findings

Areas of research in the current study included surveys of administrators and coaches, the two groups most involved in forensics program management, an analysis of available documents and records at MHSA and MFEA, and the canvass of college-level opportunities in Montana for prospective high school speech coaches to gain formal and informal training. Appendix B reports additional findings gathered through the literature review search for national trends in forensics, picturing the larger context within which Montana high school speech coaches function. These national findings give background to the surveys and document findings. The following discussion is structured on the basis of the individual coaching cycle identified in the literature review, beginning first with recruitment and the individual's training or preparation for becoming a coach, proceeding

next through the conflicts of being a coach, and then ending as the individual ultimately anticipates leaving the role of coach.

Recruitment: Can Administrators Find Qualified Individuals?

While all competitive extra-curricular programs in Montana high schools were experiencing shortened coach longevity at the time of this study, fewer applicants were available for the speech program than for other MHSA high school programs, according to over 70% of the principals surveyed and over 90% of those who responded to the specific question. In addition, over 40% of the MFEA coaches indicated that they had been the only applicants for their coaching positions.

Training: How Have Current Coaches Been Prepared?

Responses from both principals and coaches support the conclusion that the MHSA speech program had a shortage of trained coaches at the time of this study. Less than a third of the most professionally involved coaches, those present at the annual MFEA meeting, identified having had any training before being hired to coach. Over 52% of the surveyed coaches indicated as their sole answer that they had no experience or preparation at all other than "on the job," and an additional 13% of the surveyed coaches who indicated some preparatory experience also indicated that they had no training. Of the surveyed principals who indicated they had hired coaches for high school forensics, over 57% said there had been no trained applicants for the last open speech coaching position, and another 17% said the applicants had less training than desired.

In identifying what high school administrators and coaches thought qualified as preparation for speech coaching, the two groups had somewhat different responses. Of

those administrators who indicated that the last coach hired had been qualified in some way, 40% said experience and 40% said some aspect of certification had prepared the individual, with over 60% of the second group specifically indicating "English." Out of the coaches who felt that they had received any training before being hired, 50% classified their own experience as a competitor as their sole preparation, and not one indicated English as a qualification.

Training options, both formal and informal, were declining. Fewer colleges in Montana offered speech communications as a teaching endorsement in 2002 than in the past, and only one of the two schools with this endorsement had a competitive forensics program. At the time of this study, the majority of Montana college students could still take speech communications coursework, but at institutions without a focus on high school teaching in speech and without competitive college forensics experience.

Retention: What Are Patterns Associated with Longevity?

The document research findings of this study revealed patterns in one objectively recorded form of organizational feedback, namely the extra-curricular stipend of the speech coach expressed as a ratio of the stipend of the basketball coach, another MHSA coaching position. The variations in these stipend ratios showed a possible relationship between the consistency of program activity since 1975 and the ratio of speech coach pay as compared to basketball coach pay. Determining whether these patterns in pay ratios across the state are a consequence of program inconsistency or the other way around is a question beyond the capabilities of this study. The findings may represent the influence of some other factor, such as the predominance of C-size schools in the least consistent

tier, or the significantly smaller percentage of contracts available to analyze in that tier of school data. Whether pay ratios have a relationship to the larger issues of coach retention cannot be asserted here. Other factors that could influence the stability of any one school's program are so varied and dependent on individual personalities, as well as on elements of a school community's climate, culture, budget and geography, that this finding indicates just a potential area in which further research might uncover information about meaningful, unambiguous feedback for speech coaches.

Retention: Are There Patterns in How Coaches Anticipate an End to Their Coaching?

The process of leaving coaching includes stages in an individual's formulation of the intent to leave, especially for those teacher-coaches who quit coaching before they quit teaching. Over 60% of the coaches surveyed said they would probably coach at least three more years, when the average longevity of the group as a whole was already over six years with a median of four. Administrator perceptions of speech coach longevity averaged four and a half years with a median of three years.

Summary

The findings of this study break down into the three focus areas of the research question. In the area of recruitment, high school administrators surveyed for this study had difficulty finding qualified coaches for the competitive speech program in Montana, and over a third of the surveyed coaches had been the sole applicants for their coaching positions. In the area of training, a majority of the surveyed coaches felt they were not trained other than through on-the-job experience. College opportunities for both formal

and informal training were limited, with speech teacher training available at one private college and one public university, and forensics experience possible at two private colleges and one public university. In the area of retention, evidence of ABC-size school speech programs since 1975 suggested a correlation between program consistency and stipend levels for coaches.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

The current coaching crisis makes staffing extracurricular programs a practical challenge for high school administrators in America today. Keeping any one program adequately staffed and functional at a particular school is only part of a larger problem. Research into the status quo is required to determine what can be improved at more than just one school, but in all the schools throughout the state. With this approach in mind, the current study has attempted to identify reference points in one aspect of Montana's high school forensic program.

Overview

The Montana high school competitive speech program has encountered and is encountering functional challenges. Interviews of experienced administrators and coaches with extensive background in forensics were conducted, and ten areas of difficulty were identified. In five of these areas, suggestions for improvement were made by those interviewed. Out of these five areas, the employment cycle of coach recruitment, training, and retention was selected as the focus for examination in this

study. The research question asked, "What is the current status of recruitment, training, and retention among high school speech coaches in the state of Montana?" Within this research question were three sub-questions: "Can administrators find qualified individuals? How have current coaches been prepared for the positions they fill? And what patterns are associated with speech coach longevity in Montana high schools?" A case study approach was determined to be the most appropriate methodology for this study due to three factors: the lack of previous research, multiple sources of incomplete evidence, and an undefined border between Montana high school forensics and two larger context areas, i.e., extracurricular coaching in general and forensics in general.

Barriers inherent to forensics as well as barriers resulting from the lack of any previous research mandated an emergent design for the research. Surveys, archival data, and documents were examined. Attempting to focus on the individual coach was not successful due to incomplete historical records, so some of the documentary material examined was from individual high schools instead of individual coaches. All Montana data were analyzed by school size and geographic division, two dominant factors in the state's high school interscholastic competition. In addition to the Montana data, findings include information uncovered in the effort to identify numerical trends in national forensic participation. This national information illustrates literature themes and frames a context for the Montana findings.

This chapter first briefly reviews key findings and limitations of the study. Recommendations to the field follow, and the chapter concludes with suggestions for speech coach training in Montana.

Summary of Key Findings

To a large degree, the findings of this study verify the obvious in a situation familiar to those who have worked in Montana high schools over the last decade or two. The status of speech coach recruitment, training, and retention challenges administrators as well as others, who would expect the benefits of a more consistent program. The findings are briefly outlined in the following sections.

Recruitment

In the words of one Montana administrator, speech coach is a “brutal position to fill.” Though speech coaches resign about as frequently as other MHSA program coaches do, speech coaching position openings prompt fewer applicants than other MHSA coach position openings, according to over 70% of the surveyed principals and over 90% of those who answered the survey question.

Training

It is difficult to determine what currently functions as preparation or training for speech coaches in Montana high schools. Administrators noted that qualified candidates are rare, and then gave very broad answers about what qualifies a candidate, namely “experience” and some aspect of certification. Surveyed coaches indicated that training is not achieved through the qualifications administrators identified for speech coach hiring. The majority of surveyed coaches, over 65%, responded that they had not been trained to coach other than through “on the job” experience, a significant response in light of the

number who had competed in forensics as students. Fewer than one in six of the surveyed coaches indicated that they had received any training after having been hired.

Retention

Two findings related to speech coach retention emerged from the data in this study. First, average coach longevity was significantly longer for those coaches who reported that they had been one of many applicants compared to those who were the only candidates for their coaching positions. Coaches who had been one of several applicants had been coaching over 45% longer than those who indicated that they had been sole applicants, or almost half again as long. The second retention-related finding implied a possible relationship between program continuity and coach pay, based on a comparison between district contract data and program stability at individual schools.

Context

Finally, the researcher's efforts to provide background context for the study's focus on Montana forensics led to a search for participation trends at the national level, where both high school and college forensics were found to be as fragmented as the literature had described. Analysis of a survey of college forensic directors indicated that coaching longevity at the college level was strongly related to tenure status, one factor with paradoxically opposite dynamics at the high school level.

Recommendations to the Field

This study's findings indicate areas that should be addressed by those concerned about the future of high school forensics in Montana. The outline of these implications follows the stages of the individual coaching cycle, and collectively, suggest the necessity of improved coach training.

Recruitment Numbers

The literature of forensics specifies two important aspects in an individual's preparation for becoming a speech coach: one formal, through coursework, and the other informal, through personal experience as a competitor. Few places in Montana offer college-level competition experience in forensics, and even fewer offer future teacher-coaches formal coursework to prepare for teaching secondary speech. These diminishing college-level preparation opportunities forecast a bleak but unsurprising future: a poor hiring situation will likely not be getting any better.

Recruitment: Hiring Qualifications

An important insight for hiring lies in the contrast between coach and administrator responses about English coursework as preparation for coaching. When asked about qualifications for hiring, over one-fourth of the administrators who answered specified "English" as a coach's qualification, the single largest response other than "experience." Yet not one coach identified "English" as having been preparation for coaching, despite the fact that over 60% of the teacher-coaches taught English or

language arts, and almost 75% of the coaches were teachers. If preparation to teach English actually did prepare an individual to coach speech, administrators might be dealing with adequate numbers of qualified candidates for speech coaching, perhaps more than for other coaching positions.

Recruitment: Preparation for Hiring Does Not Equal Training

Qualifications that justify hiring an individual for a coaching position do not necessarily train that individual to function as a coach after being hired. Responses from surveyed coaches suggest that neither formal coursework nor informal preparation through competition actually train an individual to coach speech. Coaches who felt they had received no training for coaching included those who had competed and taken coursework in speech communications. This suggests that even in best-case situations, when newly hired speech coaches have had what the literature identifies as preparation, becoming a coach involves more than experience and coursework alone. While these may qualify as preparation, they do not train an individual for the functional management demands of coaching.

Athletic coaching literature notes that part of becoming a coach involves the anticipatory and socializing process through which the individual gains an ability to visualize himself or herself in the role of coach. Preparatory experiences as a competitor or as a student of the associated discipline may improve a coach's overall understanding of the activity, may enhance a coach's ability to empathize with student competitors, and may help the coach squeeze more educational benefits from the student's participation.

Yet this preparation for the larger picture of an extra-curricular activity, while better than no preparation, does not substitute for specific training in the functional duties needed to run competitive programs. Athletic coaching management is bridging this gap between generalized preparation and particularized training by implementing coach certification requirements in Montana and the rest of the country.

Training: Coach Perceptions

The results of this study reveal a low level of training among speech coaches, with a majority indicating that they felt they had received no training. This self-identification as untrained was not related to whether coaches had experiences that would have been perceived by others as qualifications to coach. Many indicated that they had no training at all other than "on the job" despite being known by the researcher to have had personal competition experience or speech communications coursework. Any one coach who has had no competition experience or coursework prior to coaching may perceive that a second coach has had training by virtue of having had those previous experiences. Yet to the second coach, that experience may not be perceived as functional training. Just as a large number of coaches ranked their preparation for their first year of coaching as average, regardless of whether or not they identified having had any training at all, many coaches did not perceive their previous personal experience as training, however much better prepared they may have been than other individuals with no experience.

Retention: Importance of Feedback and Training

In view of the need for increased retention, administrative concern must extend beyond recruitment. Hiring an individual to coach speech is only one of the administrative hurdles associated with this program, since maintaining coach continuity is all that separates the administrator from the next speech coach-hiring dilemma. Determining what kinds of administrative feedback are most helpful in supporting coach longevity is important to improved program function at both the school and state levels. Feedback helps individuals understand how their work is regarded by supervisors and colleagues, and reinforces a common set of expectations about performance.

Specific expectations reduce task ambiguity and increase job satisfaction. Training establishes specific expectations. Gill's (1989, 1990) study of factors affecting coaching satisfaction indicated that "the lack of adequate training will result in a shorter time spent coaching" (1990, p. 186). A subsequent reviewer of the study (Hassencahl, 1990) noted that the predictive strength of time involvement on coaching satisfaction links the lack of adequate training to coaches quitting forensics. With this in mind, note the comment by an MFEA coach surveyed in this study that, "The position was filled, the administration was happy," despite the individual's feeling of being "in no way qualified or prepared" for coaching. The emotion expressed in that comment was acted upon when that coach resigned after a second year of coaching. The implication here suggests that in situations where very few individuals are prepared or qualified for initial hiring, administrative concern should extend beyond simply filling positions and should also ensure that hired individuals have adequate training.

Training Caution

Caution should be taken with future training efforts. Coaches have been functioning in this state with no training, with fewer than one out of six surveyed coaches indicating that they had received any training after having been hired. Yet no matter when or whether they felt they had been trained, one-third of the surveyed coaches rated their preparation for the first year of coaching as about average. A shared perception of average may falsely hint at a common approach to coaching, however. Research suggests that the coaching styles of trained and untrained coaches may differ, with untrained coaches acting as helpers who concentrate on skills, and trained coaches working as experts who focus on content. Untrained coaches, in other words, are not the same as trained coaches who simply have not had training before starting to coach. Untrained coaches may have different paradigms within which they understand what coaching is.

Currently functioning coaches who have already defined their roles on their own may be less receptive to the standardized expectations of a training program than those who are new to coaching. Thus the implementation of any training program should take into account that those who have already been coaching under a self-perception that they are not trained may need to be approached differently than individuals who have just been hired and have not yet coached at all. Different perspectives on the nature of coaching, such as those suggested by previous research, may be at the root of some of the other functional difficulties identified in the interview study preceding this research, namely coach-to-coach friction.

Recommendations for Future Research

More research on coaching is needed. All high school coaching is undergoing a crisis that will be negotiated most successfully by informed management decision-making. Although research into individual coaching dynamics is more advanced in athletics than in forensics, many voids in understanding are common to both programs. If these extra-curricular programs are meaningful endeavors, then examining the patterns that support success and stability is valuable research.

What are the most important factors contributing to coach longevity in general, whether athletic or forensic? While occupational literature has much to say about job satisfaction, coaching has a unique employment context, especially high school coaching, which is attached to a "primary" job of teaching, or is a second job for someone employed outside of education. Many of the studies on voluntary quitting by coaches focus on the decline in women coaches since Title IX legislation in the 1970's spurred equal opportunities for women athletes at both high school and college levels. In looking for objective factors related to coach longevity, this researcher was able to identify two items correlating to greater longevity: first, whether the coach had been the sole applicant or one of several; and second, the ratio between different coaching stipends for basketball and speech coaching positions. Yet monetary compensation is only one limited factor out of a full range of occupational influences that need to be analyzed in a separate study of coaching longevity.

The current coaching crisis signals important areas for future research. While athletic coaching literature describes the importance of prior sports experience in helping an individual visualize what a coach does, many of these studies involved respondents who wanted to coach, and even went into teaching primarily because it was a natural combination with coaching. The demands of coach hiring today make it essential to assess the process of becoming a coach and dealing with coach role conflicts when there has been no anticipatory socialization in preparation. Research replicating those earlier studies would identify patterns of adaptation for individual athletic coaches today. Research should also analyze changes brought by certification requirements to athletic coaching.

In forensics there is a great need for coordination and documentation at every level in order for research to take place. Record keeping and the sharing of information are essential in order to identify questions for research, let alone answers. Consistency in documentation requires a level of self-examination that seems distant from forensics today. Researchers noted the shortage of evaluative activity in college level forensics.

One of the most specific questions uncovered for future research is to find the overlap between forensics and curriculum by determining the status of those individuals who are endorsed in secondary speech in this state. The certification unit of the Montana Office of Public Instruction identified 163 certified Montana teachers who are endorsed in secondary speech communications. How many of these teachers have ever taught speech, coached a speech team, or, even more pertinent, how many of these individuals currently teach or coach in this curriculum area? Is it possible that the individuals in the

state who are most qualified, according to the literature, have “been there, done that,” and are no longer doing so? Or are they functioning today in the MHSA program?

By identifying avenues of greater efficiency, research would assist in reducing the time burdens of coaching in general and speech coaching in particular. Enormous time commitment in speech coaching was a primary role conflict for speech coaches addressed in forensic literature, with the heavy time obligation of forensics noted as the chief barrier to many coaches continuing. In athletic coaching literature, time was also noted as contributing to the general decline in teachers willing to coach and the diminishing numbers of career-long coaches in athletic coaching literature. Since the physical time demands of coaching are an unavoidable reality, reducing them will be part of resolving the larger coaching crisis, either through technology, staff scheduling on an institutional basis, or community priorities and participation.

Suggestions for Implementation

Most suggestions for further research in coaching and in forensics lie beyond the scope of high school administrators. Given current educational funding realities in Montana, making many significant changes to extra-curricular programs will be difficult if not impossible. For example, increasing the number of high school coaching applicants who have been qualified for recruitment through traditional preparation would involve changes to curriculum and activity at the college level.

One way to begin alleviating the coaching crisis in high school forensics is to build competence and confidence in those who are already coaching now and those who

are hired in the future. Administrators, the MFEA coaching association, and MHSA program coordinators should determine a strategy for improving the consistency, quality, and timing of high school speech coach training in Montana. Currently, those hired to coach speech depend on their own personal resources and the individual initiative of other coaches for assistance. Learning how to recognize the demands of coaching, let alone learning how to manage successfully, is currently the result of chance in a new coach's location, timing, and personal fortitude, but these now-random odds could be improved through standardized coach training.

Training should focus on the needs of the individual coach as well as on the needs of the program, and should have extending coach longevity as an explicit objective. Structuring this training will require an awareness of the socialization needed for an individual to become coach after having already been hired for the position; understanding role conflicts and overload for the individual functioning as coach; and appreciation for the power to extend coach longevity by preventing burnout. This process would require educating administrators and coaches alike about realistic standards and meaningful feedback.

This training should be delivered to those who are functioning as coaches at an efficient time in the yearly calendar, unlike the three current venues for potential training which are each limited in effectiveness. The first of these three is the set of new coach workshops hosted by MFEA during the October MEA-MFT conference for the last few years. These valuable sessions reach only a handful of the coaches who need them and are held at an awkward time in the speech season, after the current year's coaching is well

under way. The second of these three opportunities for training occurs at divisional fall meetings where rule changes are reviewed. Whether coach training is even attempted depends on divisional leadership, as does the time devoted and quality achieved. The third opportunity for training is the MFEA annual spring meeting, where rule changes are proposed. Two major problems are timing and attendance. This meeting takes place after the current year's season is over. Many coaches do not attend, and some who will not be coaching next year are present while those who have not yet been hired are not present, making an inefficient audience for training.

Given the current realities of Montana's post-secondary education, the number of speech coaching candidates who have had preparatory experience can be expected to decrease further in the years ahead, making a difficult hiring situation even more bleak. Effective training of currently hired coaches should be organized in an efficient, regular yearly routine in order to extend coach longevity. Other states have various models for coach training, each with different strengths and weaknesses. The database of contacts and formats started in the process of this study's research could germinate into a range of specific choices for the Montana high school program.

Conclusion

Forensics is an open system in which successful organizational management at the high school level depends on the surrounding environment. To a large degree, the program's success at the state level reflects the cumulative coaching cycle experiences of many individual coaches. At the beginning of this cycle is recruitment, bringing

individuals into coaching. The quality of recruitment is largely a function of processes outside of high schools. Retention, on the other hand, is primarily determined by the coaches themselves, for each coach decides as an individual when to quit coaching.

These two points, entry into and exit out of coaching, are inextricably and inversely related, for when retention declines, the need for recruitment increases. Yet between these two end points lies the portion of the coaching cycle under potentially significant influence of high school administrators, even if not under their complete control. The quality of administrative management exerted to help coaches deal with coaching role conflicts may extend the length of time individuals are willing and able to continue coaching. The success of the Montana high school program as a whole is achieved in part by the cumulative successes of many individuals as they adapt to the demands and satisfactions of coaching.

Too often, speech coaches progress directly from recruitment to burnout, without ever having been on fire in between. Intervention in the coaching cycle is needed to improve the retention of speech coaches. Resolving this staffing issue will require a perspective larger than the paradigm of the high school system alone.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

ATHLETIC AND FORENSIC COACHING: A FRAMEWORK

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This appendix details the justifications for using a comparison between coaching in athletics and forensics instead of music and forensics in this study of the Montana high school forensics coaching cycle of recruitment, retention, and training. Both music and forensics are co-curricular competitive activities sanctioned by the Montana High School Association, but speech coaching is more productively compared to extra-curricular athletic coaching for this study based on four areas: the proportion of student time allotted to competition relative to practice; whether school-day curriculum is mandated for student participants; shared historic precedent and diminishing teacher-coach certification in the allied curriculum; and a parallel ratio between how much student motivation is supplied by competition.

First, proportions of competition relative to practice supports comparing athletic and forensic coaches instead of music and forensic directors. Although the week-to-week experience of students in Montana high school music classes is focused through periodic opportunity for ranking, there is no continuous, multiple-month "season" of ongoing competitions under the supervision of a statewide MHSA-coordinated program. By contrast, both athletics and forensics have distinct, intense competitive seasons.

Second, there is a link between the academic curriculum and co-curricular competition in music, but not in athletics or forensics. Enrollment in music instruction

during the school day is an eligibility requirement for music competitors, and all eligible students in a high school's music classes are expected to compete. According to the MHSA Music Procedure Booklet, administrators are to assure that all major performing groups in a school's music program have participated in district music festival (Montana High School Association, 2000, p. 7). There is no such mandated link in either athletics or forensics.

Third, historic precedent has linked Montana high school athletics with forensics from its inception in 1904. For the first 60 years, state competitions in both track and speech were held jointly during Interscholastic Week at the University of Montana campus in May of each year. In 1987, the first MFEA Hall of Fame inductee Mary Seelinger quoted a 1950 bulletin in which Superintendent of Public Instruction Mary Condon advocated sponsorship of both sports and speech competition:

Every school in Montana which can afford to support a program of athletics should also support a program of speech. Whereas athletics provide physical development, character building and entertainment, speech activities stimulate citizen growth, personal development and interest in the problems of democracy (Seelinger, 1987).

Both forensics and athletics originated in the late 19th century as popular college student clubs. After first operating outside of college supervision, competition then adopted into the organizational structure of post-secondary institutions. During the early 20th century, the adoption of forensic and athletic extracurricular competition was accompanied by the development of their associated academic disciplines, speech communications and physical education (Chu, 1984; Reid, 2000).

These parallel originations are echoed today by common coaching trends in the two activities. Decreasing numbers of high school coaches are certified in the educational curriculum associated with the activity they coach, whether that activity is athletic or forensic (Derryberry, 1993; Frost, 1995; Martens, 2000; Odenkirk, 1986; Sage, 1989). This diminishing curriculum connection for teacher-coaches of both athletics and forensics contrasts with the certification expected of music teachers who provide both in-class instruction and co-curricular preparation for music competition. For example, the 2000-2001 MHSA Music Procedure Booklet stated that any student competing as a soloist at an MHSA music festival must be in good standing in a music program "that is being taught by a teacher certified by the Office of Public Instruction," other than in "exceptional cases" to be approved by a school administrator, such as if "a member school does not have a high school music program," in which case the student must be studying with a private teacher (Montana High School Association, 2000, p. 182).

Lastly, the fourth justification for this study's use of a common coaching framework between athletics and forensics is the degree to which competition motivates the student participants. While some of the 17 MHSA-sanctioned events have performance value apart from competition, others would have little meaning without it, such as debate, which "assumes that students desire to win, not just learn" (Fine, 2001, p. 103). Most events in the speech team format are either inherently competitive, such as debate, or historically so, such as oratory or the event now known as memorized public address, formerly known as declamation. For much of a team, "competition provides the juice, even if lasting impacts are elsewhere. Winning provides the reward that makes

competition seem reasonable” (Fine, 2001, p. 104). In the practical realities of a Montana high school speech team, competition drives student participation for much of the forensic experience just as it does for athletics.

APPENDIX B
THE SEARCH FOR NATIONAL BACKGROUND
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Part of the literature review planned for this study intended to sketch an overview of trends in the two larger systems of which high school forensics is a part: high school extracurricular competition in general and forensics in general. Finding information about the trends in participation numbers for high school athletics was quite easy. Not only did the National Federation of High Schools (NFHS) website (www.nfhs.org) keep updated annual numbers posted, but journal articles in the literature gave references to rising numbers in extracurricular athletic activity (Frost, 1995; Stewart & Sweet, 1992). On the other hand, getting any quantitative information about trends in national forensic participation numbers became a search that in itself was a finding of the research, and ultimately, an illustration of key themes in forensic literature.

High School Forensic Participation. The first resource for finding out about high school activities of any kind was the National Federation of High Schools (NFHS). All 50 states belonged to the NFHS, or National Federation of High Schools, but a little over half did not include forensics as part of their high school associations (T. Dayton, personal communications, phone interview, July 9, 2001). In addition to the incomplete picture available from state high school associations, high school forensic associations were not necessarily concurrent with state boundaries and more than one organization overlapped in some states. Florida had three separate speech associations with virtually

no communication among the organizations, California had five independent federations, and the 1200-member Texas state UIL forensic league excludes private schools, though they could belong to other forensic organizations such as the 453-member Texas Forensic Association or NFL (T. Dayton, personal communications, July 9, 2001; July 10, 2001).

While athletic participation figures available from the NFHS were all-inclusive for the nation, speech, debate and drama reports were fractured by event, even from those states in which forensic activities were supervised by the state high school associations (T. Dayton, personal communication, July 9, 2001). Different numbers of states reported student participation in different combinations of individual activities, in part due to variations from state to state in which events were included in forensic programs. For example, the NFHS summary for participation in fine arts in 2000 showed 30 states reporting policy debate participation to the NFHS, while 24 reported numbers in Lincoln Douglas debate and 27 reported participation in individual speech events (NFHS, 2001b). Due to the range of allegiances, organizations and program structures, no database of student activity exists, according to the NFHS forensic specialist, who also assured the researcher that not only were the best reports of high school forensic participation incomplete, they had "no true reliability" (T. Dayton, personal communication, July 9, 2001).

Just as those few available studies of high school forensic coaches had done previously, the search for national trends turned to the National Forensic League, or NFL, as the only broad-based organization in the country that might have some longitudinal data on secondary-level student participation. Although the level of NFL involvement

varies greatly from one state to another, NFL participation numbers would apparently be the only evidence of national trends in high school forensics. The researcher's request to the national NFL office in search of the number of students competing at nationals over the last few decades was refused on the basis of a staff size too small to help with the research (J. Copeland, personal communication, July 6, 2001). The researcher's subsequent trip to Ripon, Wisconsin, did bring some longitudinal data within reach, though not for student participation. According to the national office secretary, the number of NFL districts has risen over the last 25 years (Zantos, personal communication, July 13, 2001). At the end of 1975, the NFL was comprised of 52 districts, and there were 104 in the summer of 2001. However, the number of schools enrolled as individual chapters in an NFL district can vary from 10 to 30, and 104 small districts could actually represent fewer schools than 52 large districts. A more clear relationship can be seen in the other figure shared with the researcher, the number of chapters, or schools. At the end of 1976, 1230 schools had chapter status with NFL, whereas 25 years later, 1630 schools were enrolled as chapters. In addition, 1066 schools had affiliate status in 2001, a participation category unavailable in 1976. Affiliate status was a level of non-voting NFL membership allowing one or more students to compete at the district tournament which required less paperwork from the coach than membership.

An increase in the numbers of districts and school chapters was the only solid data that could be gleaned from the NFL organization, and combined with the number of affiliates, this rise in numbers might appear to show an increase in high school forensic activity. However, considering that there were approximately 20,000 high schools in the

United States at the end of the 20th century (NFHS, 2001a), the difference between 1230 and 1630 school chapters may signify a numerical increase in the number of schools associated with NFL, particularly when the 1066 affiliates are added, yet may represent no increase in the number or percentage of high school students involved in competitive forensic activity nationally. Regional variations were part of the larger NFL trends. Some regions had greatly increased their NFL involvement. For example, Texas NFL districts had more than doubled in number since the 1970's, from four to nine (T. Dayton, personal communication, July 9, 2001; C. Zantos, personal communication, July 13, 2001). In other areas, such as Oregon, general high school forensic activity was declining. In 1986, 132 schools were registered for speech activities with the Oregon State Activities Association, and by 2000-2001, that number had dwindled to about 80, according to the state's high school activities association assistant executive director (M. Wallmark, personal communication, June 8, 2001). Inevitably, NFL activity would be impacted. Thus, while some information was shared by the NFL national office, those numbers were of minimal value toward showing longitudinal national trends in high school student participation in forensics.

College Speech Teacher Coursework and Forensic Participation Numbers.

Picturing trends in high school forensic participation was sufficiently difficult that a separate study would be needed to contact the many separate sources of information and construct a national baseline. Attempts to find an indication of trends in college forensics and speech teacher training found a similarly fractured national picture. The search focused on finding trends in two areas, secondary speech teacher endorsement programs

and competitive forensics. The researcher's inquiries about the number of speech communication programs for secondary teachers were referred to the National Communications Association (NCA), and ultimately to the page on NCA's website (www.natcom.org/ComProg/GPDHTM/default.htm) with links to 1,312 college communication departments (S. Morreale, personal communication, June 9, 2001).

Searching for the number of competitive forensic programs at the college level prompted one recurrent suggestion: to contact the separate college forensics organizations in order to compile one list (M. Dreher, personal communication, Nov. 19, 2000; B. Eadie, personal communication, Oct. 26, 2000; G. Wheeler, personal communication, Sept. 17, 2001). The effort to identify those organizations found no shortage of contacts, with more than 19 national college forensics organizations listed in one source (Louden, 2001), a number that did not include any of the regional associations.

Another suggestion for identifying trends in college forensics was to find a publication called *Intercollegiate Speech Tournament Results*, published at California State University-Long Beach by Jack Howe in the 1960's and 1970's (M. Bartanen, personal communication, May 30, 2001). This record of tournament results and data about college teams competing during those decades could form a baseline of college forensic data to be compared with current information. Copies of Howe's annuals were located in the communications department library at the University of North Texas, but repeated inquiries by the researcher and by the interlibrary loan office were not answered.

Survey of College Directors. At several points during the literature review, research for this study encountered an ongoing project to index forensic journals, most of

which were not accessible other than by leafing through issues one by one or by finding bibliographic references and then making individual inquiries for copies. Those associated with the journal indexing project were not able to help with several of the requests for this study, including the searches to find numbers of students participating in competitive forensics or how many programs train high school speech teacher-coaches, but did refer the researcher (M. Dreher, personal communication, Nov. 19, 2000; T. Borchers, personal communication, April 3, 2001, July 3, 2001) to Dr. Jim Hanson's web page, (www.whitman.edu/offices_departments/rhetoric/72colleges.htm), where his list was said to have "quite a few" college forensics programs (M. Dreher, personal communication, Nov. 19, 2000). The executive secretary of the Council of Forensic Organizations, COFO, made the same referral (G. Wheeler, personal communication, Sept. 17, 2001). Hanson's list had links to over 1,000 colleges and universities with competitive forensics, but he did not know how many of those schools might also have secondary speech teacher training programs, or where one could find that information (J. Hanson, personal communication, March 31, 2001). He suggested that the researcher email questions to several different college listservs, and as another alternative, he offered to survey those on the list (J. Hanson, personal communication, March 31, 2001). The prospect of having no empirical data for the national context surrounding Montana state coaching issues made the opportunity to question a broad population of college forensic directors a welcome possibility. This opportunity would be preferable to posting questions on a listserv forum where only the most avid devotees would be reached. Hanson felt it would be best for the researcher to email the questions to those on the list

rather than having the emails come from his office (J. Hanson, personal communication, June 4, 2001).

Although Dr. Hanson's "good email" list was constructed earlier for purposes of his own, independent of this study, it was the most accessible source available for contacting a national population of individuals linked to college speech teams. Dr. Hanson and his students generated the list using a four-step process he described as "not particularly 'scientific'" (J. Hanson, personal communication, August 2, 2002). First, a list of schools likely to sponsor forensics was compiled from the directories of four speech and forensics organizations: the National Communication Association, Pi Kappa Delta, the Northwest Forensic Conference and the Northern California Forensics Association. Next, Hanson and his students located the homepage for every college and university identified on the resulting list by using the College and University Home Pages site at this address: www.mit.edu:8001/people/cdemello/univ.html. Thirdly, each school's website was searched for links to a speech team, a forensic director, or the head of a communications department. If there was none of these, then the student activities organization, admissions office, or someone who might know about the status of a speech and debate team at that school was located. Finally, a series of three emails were sent to the people on the compiled list, as well as to three listservs, namely e-debate, the NPDA listserv (National Parliamentary Debate Association), and the ie listserv (for individual events). These emails requested information about the school's team, including address, types of events, and the director's name and contact information (J. Hanson, personal communication, August 2, 2002).

Two questions were developed by the researcher with Dr. Hanson's help, asking whether the school had a speech degree for instructors, or if not, speech coursework, along with questions about the school's geographic location and student body size, and whether the school was a four or two year, public or private institution. Four other questions, asking about relationship between director's college team and high school programs, the director's length of service, and status with the school, were originally intended as a follow-up for those who responded to the initial questions, but were ultimately included in the single list of questions.

Analysis of College Director Survey. On June 13, 2001, the survey (Appendix D) was sent to the 736 "good email" addresses provided by Hanson. Of these 736 mailings, 109 were returned as undeliverable due to technical or address problems. Over the next nine months, 281 responses that communicated information were returned. Ten of these were non-responses that did not answer the questions, indicated the individual was not the one to contact, requested "take me off your list," or responded in some way that was too unclear to be used at all. This left a total of 271 usable responses for analysis. Out of the 271 responses, 100, or 36.9%, indicated that there was no current forensics program at their schools, though 27 of those 100 indicated that there had been programs previously. The 171 schools with forensic programs had the institutional funding characteristics shown in Table 10.

Table 10

Characteristics of Responding Post-Secondary Institutions with Forensic Programs

	<u>Total</u>	<u>4-Year</u>	<u>2-Year</u>
Public	107	71	36
Private	64	64	0
Total	171	135	36

Whether all the two-year colleges on Dr. Hanson's list were public or not, all the respondents with forensics programs were associated with public two-year colleges. The four-year respondents were not quite evenly divided between public and private, with 71 public and 64 private schools.

The respondents' schools were located in 42 states in the continental United States, as shown in Table 11. All pre-existing forensic geographic divisions the researcher could find left some regions with few enough schools that confidentiality could not have been maintained, so the United States map was simply quartered in order to visualize the geographic distribution of respondents. The southeastern region included Virginia west through Kansas and south to Texas; the northeastern region stretched northward and west to include Wisconsin and Illinois. The northwestern region extended from the Mississippi River to the Pacific, north of the approximate latitude of the southern border of Oregon. The rest of the country, including California and Colorado, was considered to be the southwestern region. Half of the responding two-year schools were in the southwestern region, and one-third of the responding four-year schools, or 33%, were in the southeastern region.

Table 11

Regional Distribution of Responding Post-Secondary Institutions with Forensic Programs

	<u>Total</u>	<u>SE Region</u>	<u>NE Region</u>	<u>NW Region</u>	<u>SW Region</u>
4-Year	135	45	41	23	39
2-Year	36	8	6	8	18
Total	171	53	47	31	57

Degree Availability and Competitors Planning to Teach. Although the researcher's original attempts to get a picture of longitudinal trends in college speech programs and the numbers of competitive forensics had to be abandoned, the question of how many college forensic programs were functioning at schools which offered training for future speech teachers was answered by 168 of the 171 respondents. Out of those 168 directors, 33 or 19.6%, indicated that their schools did have a degree for speech and debate instructors, and 135, or 80.4%, indicated that their schools did not have such programs.

Out of the 33 directors at schools with speech instructor degrees, 25, or over three-quarters, indicated that they had any members of their team planning to teach. These directors evaluated "how many?" as being anywhere from "one," "some," and "steady stream" to 20% of the team.

Out of the directors who indicated that their schools did not have degree programs for speech instructors, 125 answered the question about future teaching plans among their competitors. Seventy-four, or 59.6%, indicated that they were aware of any team members planning to teach. The responses to "how many?" ranged from "few" and "minimal" up to as many as "lots."

Table 12

Directors Identifying Forensic Team Members with Plans to Teach

	<u>Total Responding To Question</u>	<u>Identified Students Planning to Teach</u>
Schools with Speech Instructor Degree Programs	33	25 (75.8%)
Schools without Speech Instructor Degree Programs	135 (3 with no answer)	74 (54.8%)
Total	171	99 (57.9%)

Table 12 shows that a higher percentage of directors at schools with degree programs identified students on their teams who had plans to teach.

College Size Related to Program Availability. Literature reviewed for this study emphasized the importance of both formal coursework and competition experience for the individual's own process of becoming a coach, whether that coaching position was in athletics or forensics, but empirical data on national opportunities for these kinds of formal and informal preparation in speech coaching were virtually unavailable. Whether these opportunities were more or less available in schools of various student body sizes and in public or private institutions was analyzed by distributing the respondents' information by size and private or public status for the four-year schools, and by analyzing the size of the two-year schools.

The responses of program directors at four-year schools revealed the pattern of speech teacher preparation related to school size shown in Table 13. For private four-year schools responding to the questions, the smaller the institution, the more likely it was to

have a speech degree program available. The larger the school represented by the respondent, however, the less likely it was to have a speech instructor degree available, and the more likely it was to be a public institution.

Table 13

Speech Degree Program Availability by Size of Four-Year Colleges

<u>Student Body Size</u>	<u>Number of Schools</u>	<u>Number/Percent Public</u>	<u>Number/Percent w/Speech Instructor Degree</u>	<u>Percent Public</u>
Under 2,000	24	1 – 4.2%	10 – 41.7%	0.0%
2,000 – 3,999	28	6 – 21.4%	4 – 14.3%	50.0%
4,000 – 7,999	27	14 – 51.9%	7 – 25.9%	85.7%
8,000 – 19,000	28	23 – 82.1%	5 – 17.9%	100.0%
20,000 – 50,000	24	23 – 95.8%	4 – 16.7%	100.0%

The responses associated with the 36 two-year colleges also showed a less distinct pattern associated with student body size. All of the two-year school respondents were public schools, but the larger the two-year school, the less likely the director was to identify that any of the team members were planning to teach, as shown in Table 14.

Table 14

Competitors Planning to Teach by Size of Two-Year Colleges

<u>Student Body Size</u>	<u>Number of Schools</u>	<u>Number/Percent Identifying Competitors Planning to Teach</u>
1,200 – 6,000	8	5 – 62.5%
7,000 – 10,000	8	5 – 62.5%
11,000 – 17,000	7	6 – 85.7%
20,000 – 26,000	6	3 – 50.0%
30,000 – 70,000	6	3 – 42.9%

Involvement with High School Programs. Forensics literature, especially that referring to high school coaching, emphasized the importance of a continuing link

between college and high school programs. Interaction between high school and college forensics systems gives support to the high school coach's ability to continue being a coach (Bartanen, 1994; Fritch, Leeper, & Rowland, 1993; Reppert, 1991). The responding college directors' enumerations of specific interactions with high school programs were analyzed in light of their subjective assessments of whether the level of their programs' relationships with high schools were increasing, decreasing, remaining the same, or were simply something about which they were unsure. As shown in Table 15, nine of the 171 responses did not give an assessment of the change in level of interaction between their own program and high school programs, and 11 noted "unsure." These 20 equal 11.7% of the responses. Of the other 151 who did assess the relationship, 62, or 36.3%, noted that the relationship was the same, while 16, or 9.4%, noted a decrease in the relationship, and the remaining 73, or 42.7%, indicated an increase in the interaction between their programs and high school programs. Table 15 shows the breakdown within each category of how many specific activities directors noted between their programs and high school forensics.

Table 15

Distribution of College Director Assessments of Change
by Specific Program Interactions with High School Programs

		Level of Interaction with High School Programs				
		<i>Most to Least (0 = None)</i>				
	<u>Total % (#)</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Increase	42.7% (73)	9	14	34	13	3
Decrease	9.4% (16)	0	1	2	10	2
Same	36.3% (62)	4	3	17	22	16
Unsure	6.4% (11)	0	1	2	4	4
No Answer	5.3% (9)	1	1	1	2	4
Total	100% (171)	14	20	57	51	29

As shown in Table 15, most of the responding directors indicated that relations between their schools and high school programs were either increasing or remaining the same, and the majority of those programs had moderate involvement with high school forensics, at a level of one or two interactions.

The distribution of these two questions is reversed in Table 16, in which each interaction level, as categorized by the number of activities involving high school forensics, shows the distribution of directors who perceived their school's relationship with high schools to be increasing, decreasing, or staying the same.

Table 16

College Assessments of Relationship Change
Distributed by Level of Program Interaction

Level of Interaction		Director Assessment of Relationship Change				
<u>Total</u>		<u>Increasing</u>	<u>Decreasing</u>	<u>Same</u>	<u>Unsure</u>	<u>No Answer</u>
8.2%(14)	4 (<i>Most</i>)	64.3% (9)	0.0% (0)	28.6% (4)	0.0% (0)	7.1% (1)
11.7%(20)	3	70.0% (14)	5.0% (1)	15.0% (3)	5.0% (1)	5.0% (1)
33.3% (57)	2	59.6% (34)	5.3% (3)	29.8% (17)	3.5% (2)	1.8%(1)
29.8% (51)	1 (<i>Least</i>)	25.5% (13)	19.6% (10)	43.1 % (22)	7.8% (4)	3.9% (2)
17.0% (29)	0 (<i>None</i>)	10.3% (3)	6.9% (2)	55.2% (16)	13.8% (4)	13.8% (4)
Total (171)		42.7% (73)	9.4% (16)	36.3% (62)	6.4% (11)	5.3% (9)

Table 16 shows that the more interaction a college program had with high school programs, the more likely that director was to identify an increasing relationship.

Employment Status and Director Longevity. The other questions asked concerned the employment status and longevity of college directors. Forensic literature suggested

that not only are the longevity and employment stability of college director positions critical to preserving the curriculum relationship between forensics and communication studies, but that trends in post-secondary educational institutions are progressively uncoupling the academic, tenured teaching position from the coaching, or directing, of a forensic team (Chandler, 1993; Frank, 1997; Zarefsky, 1994; Ziegelmueller, 1997). Using the employment tenure categories identified by Littlefield (1991), i.e., full-time, tenure track; full-time, non-tenure; part-time faculty; graduate assistant; and other, as well as the addition of full-time, coaching tenure track at the suggestion of Dr. Hanson, the respondents were asked to categorize their status. Out of the 171 responding college forensic directors, 101, or 59.1%, indicated that they held full-time, tenure track positions. Only four were in full-time coaching tenure track positions, while 35, or 20.5%, were full-time non-tenured. Seven identified "part-time faculty" and four identified "graduate student" as the appropriate categories for their status. The 11 directors who noted "other" as their employment category ranged from three who indicated their teams either "no longer have a director" or were student-run, to two who noted that directing the team was "part of assignment, with no pay and no reduction" and "attachment to other full-time job," two who noted that they were volunteers, including one professor, one part-time staff, one full-time employee, one part faculty and part coach, and one with a program run by two graduate assistants.

The longevity of the responding directors was averaged by employment category, as shown in Table 17. The variations between category populations suggested that the full-time tenure track and full-time non-tenure groups might have been the averages of

greatest value to the study. The average longevity of the full-time tenure track category was significantly longer than the full-time non-tenure category average, by 9.3 years to 5.7 years, but the number of respondents was also almost three times as large.

Table 17

Mean Longevity of Responding College Directors by Employment Status Categories

<u>Employment Status</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Mean Longevity</u>
Full-time, tenure track	101	9.3
Full-time coaching tenure track	4	11.0
Full-time, non-tenure	35	5.7
Part-time faculty	7	6.2
Graduate Assistant	4	2.0
Other	11	8.9*

*Note: The two highest longevity directors in this group, with time in their positions of 25 and 23 years, included these notations about the position: on one, "no longer have one" and on the other, "part of assignment, no pay, no reduction."

The average longevity of all the directors who responded was 8.3 years. Taken as whole groups, the public institution directors averaged 7.8 years (n=103), and all private forensic directors averaged 9.2 years (n=63). At four-year schools, forensic directors of public institutions averaged a mean longevity of 8.2 years (n=69), while private four-year school program directors averaged the same 9.2 years (n=63) due to the fact that all the private colleges responding were four-year schools. As shown in Table 18, the greatest contrasts were visible by breaking the school categories into employment status groups, especially at private four-year institutions.

Table 18

Average Longevity of Forensics Directors
by Employment Status at Four-year Colleges and Universities

	<u>Full-time tenured</u>	<u>Full-time non-tenured</u>
Private	11.5 years (n=33)	4.7 years (n=14)
Public	9.6 years (n=36)	5.7 years (n=18)

The average longevity for a responding forensic director at a private four-year school with a full-time, tenure track position was 11.5 years (n=33); with a full-time, non-tenured position, 4.7 years (n=14), and with a part-time faculty position, 3.4 years (n=4). A less dramatic range was found between directors at public programs: a public four-year institution's program director with a full-time tenured position averaged a 9.6 year longevity (n=36), while a full-time, non-tenured position had a mean longevity of 5.7 years (n=18). Over 86% of the directors at the 36 two-year schools held full-time tenure track positions, compared to 51.1% of the directors at four-year colleges, or 69 of the 135.

Comments by College Forensic Directors. Confidential comments made by forensic directors who responded to the open-ended request for observations about trends in forensics highlighted a background context to the speech coach training and retention situation in Montana.

I consider coach training, recruitment and retention (or the lack thereof) the major challenge facing debate at all levels. As far as I can tell, student interest in forensic activities is stronger than ever, but program after program struggles with the difficulty in finding high quality directors committed to the educational enterprise.

The lack of full-time interested and committed coaches is the single biggest problem faced by the activity.

I don't think we are doing very well in training professional forensics educators; mostly we turn out graduates who emulate what they feel is successful on their circuit and focus only on competitive success.

High school coach training is generally poor. . . . Recruiting for high school forensics coaches is tough because working conditions suck and pay is poor. Most of the best and brightest forensics folks go into law, business, college teaching, etc.

My students do a lot of teaching in the high school via the Urban Debate League, but I think the general mood . . . is that coaching is something they will do during their collegiate career then leave behind them afterwards.

I feel there needs to be more training for forensic coaches. [Attempts to start such training have been] not able to get much support from the various national forensic organizations. Most leaders of those organizations felt that schools would want to start their own programs rather than have a centralized training program.

A few observations: (1) Coaches are produced at programs where there are lots of debaters, who are at various levels of proficiency (2) Coaches come out of programs where debaters have positive experiences (3) State universities tend to produce more coaches than the professional school orientations of Ivy type schools (4) Fewer smaller state schools participating in forensics is a negative trickledown effect of coach availability in HSs (5) Individual State Education requirements for speech proficiency are fundamental to building large participation in each state.

These comments reiterated themes from forensics literature: the linkage between college and high school forensics needed for the health of both systems, a shortage of coaches at both levels, frustrations over inadequate training, the inertia of entrenched fragmentation, and the sense of a core "educational enterprise" related to curriculum.

Summary of Findings from Literature Review Survey of College Directors. The analysis of e-mail survey data presented above is the closest quantitative information this researcher could find showing a national context for the Montana forensics coaching situation. While this survey had distinct problems, not least of which was a lack of

control over the sample, it did provide data in an area relevant to the study that otherwise would have been empty. The fact that over one-third of the respondents had no forensics team, when those respondents represented a 43% response out of a listing constructed with the specific intention of identifying college forensics teams, indicates something of the elusive nature of locating forensics directors. Truly, the best way to identify these individuals would be to contact the different forensics organizations, as was suggested by many, but that project will be someone else's thesis or dissertation. Significantly, almost 30% of those respondents from schools without forensics teams used to have a program, but no longer did at the time they were questioned. A minority of the responding schools, fewer than one out of five, had a degree for speech instructors, and as would be expected, a higher percentage of those programs had competitors who had expressed some interest in teaching. Probably one of the most significant findings had to do with the difference in average longevity between two types of employment status for college directors, a difference reflected in both private and public four-year colleges and universities. Full-time, tenured forensics positions at private institutions had an average longevity 2.4 times as long as full-time directors without tenure, while directors at public institutions with tenure had a longevity 1.7 times as long as their peers without tenure.

Summary of National Search Findings. Organizational fragmentation in forensics had a significant impact on the current study, both as a thematic construct for understanding the environmental context of Montana high school speech coach training, and as a major finding of the research as well. The search to clarify national trends in high school forensics revealed a complexity of independent domains. The college level of

competitive forensics might as well have been composed of separate countries, each of which needed to be contacted individually for information in order to accumulate an overall picture. If records were being compiled on participation levels in either college or high school forensics at the time of this study, the information was essentially inaccessible to a determined, however unofficial, researcher. On the other hand, if the fractured situation encountered in this research accurately represented the level of self-awareness the forensics community had about itself, fragmentation presented barriers to understanding at every level, and not only to those within the field but to those outside it as well.

Ultimately, the elusive nature of quantitative data about forensics in Montana, which was the focal point of this study, was second only to the enigmas encountered during attempts to find numbers at the national level of both high school and college forensics. The search for national figures revealed that no single organization or group of organizations collects what it would take to get a general background for national trends in forensics. The contrast with readily available documentation of trends in the demand for high school athletic coaches could not be more complete.

APPENDIX C

ADMINISTRATOR SURVEY FOR MASSP, 2001

APPENDIX C
ADMINISTRATOR SURVEY FOR MASSP, 2001

School Name _____ Your position _____

School Size (Circle) AA A B C How long in position? _____ years

How long in district? _____ years

COMPARATIVE FREQUENCY OF FILLING SPEECH COACH POSITIONS:

1. How long ago was any speech position filled in your high school? _____
2. How long did the immediately preceding head speech coach hold that position in your district?
3. Compared to coaches in other MHSA competitive programs, is it your perception that speech coaches resign:
 - _____ more often,
 - _____ less often, or
 - _____ about the same.

COMPARATIVE DIFFICULTY OF FINDING APPLICANTS FOR SPEECH COACH POSITIONS:

4. Was there a choice of applicants to fill the last open speech coaching position? _____
5. Were there applicants who were trained for a speech coach position? _____
If so, how were they qualified? _____
6. Compared to the number of applicants for coaching positions in other MHSA competitive programs, is it your perception that speech coaching openings attract
 - _____ more,
 - _____ fewer, or
 - _____ about the same number of applicants?

If there is another individual in your district who would be more knowledgeable about speech coach hiring, please indicate who that is:

Optional _____

Your name: _____

Would you be willing to be contacted for further questions? .

Your general observations about any aspect of the MHSA speech program would be welcome:

APPENDIX D

SPEECH COACH SURVEY FOR MFEA, 2001

APPENDIX E

FOLLOW-UP SPEECH COACH SURVEY FOR MFEA, 2002

APPENDIX E
FOLLOW-UP SPEECH COACH SURVEY FOR MFEA, 2002

Were you a competitor on a high school or college speech, debate or drama team?

_____ Yes Please circle: High School or College

_____ No

If you were a competitor, has that experience been helpful in your coaching?

_____ Yes

Please explain:

_____ No

APPENDIX F

COLLEGE FORENSIC DIRECTOR SURVEY SENT IN 2001

APPENDIX F
COLLEGE FORENSIC DIRECTOR SURVEY SENT IN 2001

«firstname» «lastname»,

Your help is needed with seven questions about your program at «school1»! For my master's thesis, I am studying forensics coach training, recruitment and retention at the high school level, and I need a picture of the college forensics programs where potential coaches compete.

Please take a few minutes and respond to these questions. Your help will be greatly appreciated, and the results will be shared with you via Dr. Jim Hanson of Whitman College.

1. a. Do you provide a degree specifically for speech and debate instructors?
b. If not, do you offer courses in speech and debate? (Approximately how many?)
2. a. Does your school have a teacher preparation program?
b. Do any of your competitors plan to teach? (If so, how many?)
3. a. How many years have you directed your school's program?
b. Was there a program already in place when you started?
4. What relationship does your program have with high school programs?
Host tournament
Host summer institute
Your students coach at high schools
Other (please explain)
5. Has the level of your program's relationship with high schools
Increased
Decreased
Stayed the same?
Unsure
6. What is the status of your director of forensics position?
Full-time, tenure track
Full-time, coaching tenure track
Full-time, non-tenure
Part-time faculty
Graduate assistant
Other (please explain)
7. Indicate the correct information for your school:
State in which you are located:
Approximate number in student body:
4-year or 2-year school?
Public or private?
(If private: religious or sectarian?)

Please feel free to send any comments you may have about coach training, recruitment, or retention, as well as your observations on trends in forensic programs at either high school or college level.

Thank you very much for your assistance!

Laura Nesbitt Lowe
Montana State University

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY - BOZEMAN



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