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AN INVESTIGATION OF SPECIFIC POLICIES OF THE MHSA

by

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A professional paper submitted to the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

in

Administration

Approved:

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Acknowledgement

The investigator wishes to thank the administrators and chairmen of the boards of trustees of Montana's public high school districts who answered the survey questionnaire. Gratitude is also extended to the members of his graduate committee for their cooperation and effort.

The investigator is deeply grateful and indebted to Dr. Robert J. Thibeault, Head, Department of Educational Services, Montana State University, for his assistance in formulating, developing and writing this study.
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this investigation was to conduct a survey of specific policies of the MHSA which were challenged by the 1969 Montana Legislative Assembly. The survey was to determine to what extent the member schools of the Association concurred with the MHSA on selected policy items.

The survey instrument was mailed to 195 administrators and 162 board chairmen of public school districts operating high schools in Montana. The results were tabulated and analyzed, and from this analysis, the conclusions were reached.

The investigation concluded that the member schools rejected charges that the MHSA was (1) not responsive to member schools, (2) it was dictatorial, (3) it should permit free televising, (4) that there should be a Division of Activities in the State Department of Public Instruction.

The member schools also accepted the following charges as valid: (1) the MHSA Reserve Fund should be limited, (2) The MSBA should receive representation on the MHSA Board of Directors, (3) There is a definite need to dramatically improve communications and public relations, All special interest groups within the MHSA should receive committee representation, but not membership on the board of directors.

The investigation recommended that every effort be made to solve the problems of communications and public relations.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Montana High School Association, formed in 1921 to take over the supervision of football from the Montana School of Mineral Science and Technology and track from the University of Montana, was forged and tempered by Montana's 1969 legislature.

From the humble beginning in 1921, the Association burgeoned as the activities of its member schools increased in numbers and scope. Today, the Montana High School Association controls and regulates football, basketball, boys and girls track, wrestling, skiing, swimming, golf, girls drill teams, gymnastics, bowling, high school rodeos, tennis, music activities, forensics, science fairs and has been asked to study and set up regulations for girls basketball. In addition, the organization administers, rates and assigns to tournaments the members of the companion Montana Officials Association.

In December of 1921, Montana high schools organized to supervise football and track. In the 1922-23 school year, 134 schools paid $2.50 each to form this organization. From this meager start, the Montana High School Association has grown in fiscal stature, both in assets and annual budget.
On June 30, 1968, the Association's comparative statement of assets and reserves totaled $144,656.30 and on June 30, 1969, it showed $170,110.37. The approved general budget for 1969-70 was $87,100 and the Association's members, at the annual meeting in Billings, Montana, on January 20, 1970, voted an annual budget of $106,632.

The number of member schools has increased to include 167 districts operating high schools and a number of junior high schools in Montana. Total membership for the 1968-69 school year was 201.

The supervisory and regulatory nature of the Association's business make it highly controversial and subject to criticism. These criticisms of the organization that have appeared over the years have been accumulating and, as of the beginning of the 1969 Montana Legislative Assembly, there were six major areas in which the organization was to be challenged. These six areas, with necessary explanations are as follows:

1. Rulings as applied to member schools were:
   (a) eligibility of students, (b) school classification (c) rules interpretation.

2. That the reserves and the annual budget of the organization were much in excess of what was
actually needed for the operation of the organization.

3. Charges have been rampant for years that the MHSA administration, the executive secretary and the board of directors were dictatorial in the use of their delegated powers and, therefore, were not a democratically responsible organization.

4. The ruling which denied eligibility to any student who attended a summer athletic training camp had become a burning issue in some areas of the state.

5. The legal question of whether the MHSA could spend monies which rightfully were thought to belong to the schools and were, thus, state monies.

6. Further controversy arose over the request of the Montana Broadcasters Association to televise sports events sanctioned by the Montana High School Association on a no charge basis. The MHSA's Board of Directors rejected the request on the grounds that it would cause a decrease in attendance with a resultant monetary loss to the member schools.

Senator W. F. Bennett, Republican of Columbia Falls, and Mills Folsom, Republican of Missoula, on January 21, 1969, brought the entire issue to focus when the introduced
Senate Bill 154 into the hopper in the Montana State Senate. Senate Bill 154 would, in effect, create a division of school activities in the Montana Department of Public Instruction. Citing his opposition to private control, no recourse to appeal, and his contention that many county and district superintendents, as well as Mrs. Delores Colberg, Superintendent of Public Instruction, were in favor of placing the activities under the Department of Public Instruction. Senator Bennett's bill would make Montana the only other state, other than Texas, which did not have a state high school association. The bill sent to the Senate Education Committee was given an unfavorable "Do not pass" by the committee but was eventually passed by the Senate by a 26 to 24 vote on February 20. The Montana House of Representatives rejected Senate Bill 154 by a 49 to 44 vote and, for all intents and purposes, the bill to abolish the Montana High School Association was dead. But a heated exchange in the capitol hallways between Senator John McDonald, Democrat of Belt, and the Association's executive secretary, Rex Dalley told McDonald, a long-time sports official, that he would "never referee another game."1

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The House of Representatives, after reconsideration, passed Senate Bill 154 by a 59 to 33 margin. The bill was later vetoed by Governor Forrest H. Anderson.

Due to the limited nature, as well as the recency of the attack on the Montana High School Association, there is very little background information available for reading or researching the area of history of the Montana High School Association and of the attempt on the part of the legislature to abolish the Association. Research has had to come from the newspaper accounts of the controversy. The Billings Gazette and The Great Falls Tribune were used for this purpose.

The present writer chose the topic relating to the MHSA for the following four reasons: (1) The lack of available and pertinent information and statistics relating to the MHSA and to the charges levied against the Association by the authors of the several bills proposed in the 1969 legislature. Senator Bennett's statement that many local school district superintendents favored placing the activities division in the State Department of Public Instruction was undebatable because of lack of studies or surveys on this issue. The basic charge that the organization was undemocratic and not responsive to the member schools was
unrefutable because of this same lack of studies or surveys. One of the purposes of this paper is to provide the survey or study necessary. (2) The activity field is relatively new to the education field, yet it is an important part of the offering of the school system. The amount of available information, whether it is documented or not is very limited. (3) Was the MHSA doing an adequate job? If the charges, numerous as they were, were right and defendable, then these charges should be thoroughly reviewed and basic inadequacies found should be corrected. The results of the survey instrument were given to T. Carl Johnson, a director of the MHSA, in July of 1969. The results given were for information of the board and no interpretation of the information was given. (4) The question of whether or not the activities of the high schools in Montana would be best served in the Department of Public Instruction or the MHSA will be a question that, undoubtedly, will be asked in the 1971 legislature. It is basically for this reason that this paper is written. The information supplied by school district board chairmen and administrators will serve to provide the legislators with a consensus opinion of those most directly involved with the issue.
STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The 1969 Montana Legislative Assembly seriously questioned the ability of the MHSA to control the activity programs of the Montana high schools.

This paper assumed that the MHSA had contributed a great deal to this activity program in the ensuing years since 1921.

The investigation was instituted to determine to what extent the Association was acceptable by the member schools and in what areas these member schools could ask for improvement.

RECENT STUDIES IN THE FIELD

The recency of this problem in Montana high school activities has created a problem for the writer. No studies on the problem were available. The information in this paper is all from original sources. The sources used were The Billings Gazette and The Great Falls Tribune. All issues from January 1, 1969, to March 31, 1969, and the series by Ben Hansen of The Great Falls Tribune, from January 15 to 18, 1970 were used.
METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The survey instrument used for this study was a two-part survey questionnaire. Part one was directed to all of the administrators of Montana school districts operating high schools. Part two was addressed to the board of trustees chairmen of all school districts operating high schools within the state of Montana.

Questionnaires were mailed to 195 administrators and 162 board chairmen. No survey instruments were mailed to parochial schools. The disparity in the numbers of mailings resulted from mailing to the principal of the high school as well as the superintendent of schools in the districts employing full-time high school principals.

The first mailing of questionnaires was mailed in May of 1969. A subsequent mailing to the board chairmen, because of insufficient returns, was made in July of 1969.

The mailing to the school administrators was sufficient to qualify the questionnaire and the opinions they expressed.

The second mailing of the Board Chairmen's Questionnaire resulted in qualifying that questionnaire. One hundred and twenty-three of the one hundred sixty-two mailings replied. The percentage of returns on the Board Chairmen's questionnaire was seventy-six per cent.
The questionnaires were nearly identical, with minor changing in questions for wording because of the difference in positions of the two groups, i.e., question number two on the administrator's questionnaire reads as follows: Do you present to your school board the questions on policy, constitution and by-law changes that you vote on at the annual meeting? The same question on the board chairmen's questionnaire reads: Does your administrator bring before your board the questions on policy, constitution and by-law changes that they have to vote on?

Each person to whom a questionnaire was mailed was identified and coded. The method used for this was the assignment of a different post office box number on the return envelope.

This facilitated the second mailing for those board members who did not reply to the first questionnaire, but would only be possible in a small town where the addressee was known.

The present writer, in addition to selecting questions which were raised during the legislative assembly hearings and debates, consulted with a number of administrators and others in the education field before developing the questionnaire.
Two questions regarding the Montana School Boards Association were selected as a result of an article written by James Kenny, Executive Secretary of the Montana School Boards Association in the April issue of the association's publication, "The Trustee." Mr. Kenny reviews the legislative action and then makes the following recommendation:

THE MONTANA HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION--Much time was spent on MHSA problems by the 41st session and your executive secretary. Initially, MSBA opposed the intent of SB154 to transfer MHSA athletic contest functions into the State Department of Public Instruction on the basis of past MSBA studies of MHSA and the generally-agreed consensus of opinion that the supervision of athletic functions was not the proper role of the DPI. As the issue developed into a larger statewide question, MSBA was obliged to review its position. In some 20 telephone calls, significant criticisms of MHSA governing structure emerged. Briefly stated, the facts are these; as MHSA is a voluntary association, it does not function like a regular body of public government, i.e., executive, legislative, judicial departments of government. In short, to whom is MHSA accountable, who reviews its actions, and where do you appeal a decision? The crux of the matter is that any district with a complaint must return this question to the same board of directors that made the original executive decision. Reviewing the implications of this constant crisis-producing situation, the best opinion again, short of wholesale transfer of MHSA functions to the DPI, would be for MSBA to take, at the very least, the following 1969 convention action: to request that MHSA enlarge its board of directors by the addition of two MSBA Trustees, who would vote on all MHSA issues on the basis of MSBA policy-instructed votes. The peace-making advantages accruing from MSBA presence on the MHSA Board of Directors are obvious. MSBA policy, after being formulated at the MSBA statewide level of Convention resolution and Executive Committee review and
instead of coming in through the back door by way of the board-instructed administrator-delegate to the MHSA Annual Meeting, would be channeled directly into the executive level of MHSA. School District complaints would receive a legitimate hearing and orderly routing through the above MSBA channels. MHSA crisis-making issues would be considered in policy perspective rather than personality conflict.

Your secretary then gave 3rd testimony in the light of the above findings and with the deterioration of the issue into an emotion-packed personality conflict, surrendered the issue to the Legislators' intent and the Governor's action. The Governor then vetoed the bill on the basis of his experience as a member of the State Board of Education and the impropriety of this function under the DPI.

**THEREFORE THE ISSUE IS NOW RETURNED TO MSBA AND MSBA HEREBY INVITES MSBA MEMBERSHIP RESOLUTIONS re MHSA FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE 1969 MSBA ANNUAL CONVENTION.**

The two questions raised by Mr. Kenny regarding the Montana School Boards Association representatives on the Board of Directors of the MHSA were then added to the questionnaire.

**LIMITATIONS**

The survey instrument was limited to the administrators and the board chairmen of Montana public school districts operating high schools. Through an oversight on the writer's part, the state parochial school officials were not included in the mailing list.

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The members of the 1969 Montana Legislative Assembly who raised the cry to do away with the MHSA did not receive the survey instrument because of its nature.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Board Chairmen: Unless otherwise indicated, this term will designate the chairmen of the Board of Trustees of Montana High School Districts.

Administrators: Unless otherwise indicated, this term will designate the superintendents and principals of Montana High Schools.

Classification Status: This term designates the classification applied by the Montana High School Association for inter-school activities.


DPI: Department of Public Instruction.
CHAPTER II

AN ANALYSIS OF MHSA POLICIES

Due to the length of the questionnaire and, in order to provide continuity, the questions will be covered in the order they appear relevant to this paper. The reasons for the question being included in the questionnaire will be cited, as will the results of the survey together with comments and interpretation.

DEMOCRATIC RESPONSIBLE ORGANIZATION

The most serious charge levied against the Montana High School Association in the 1969 legislature was the charge that it was dictatorial in practice and not responsive to the schools, the parents of students or students. This indictment was basic to all of the charges made in the legislature and by others interested in the activity field of Montana high schools' activities.

Senator W. F. Bennett, Republican, of Columbia Falls, charged, in his introduction of Senate Bill 154 in the 1969 Senate, that there was no recourse or appeal to the rules of the organization when one objected to them. In January of 1970, a year later, Senator Bennett made further charges as quoted in the Great Falls Tribune:
"I thought this was a dictatorship, not a bit democratic and it was not right. The say superintendents of schools have a say in the decisions, but Mr. Dailey dictates the whole thing and they are afraid to oppose him because he will take it out on their schools.

It is an absolute monarchy, deciding where games will be played, and as parents and citizens we don't have a thing to say about it. No other segment of society works this way.1

The consensus opinion of many of the legislators opposed to the Association as summed up in the Great Falls Tribune is as follows:

Being allegedly unrepresentative and unresponsive to the needs and wishes of the member school.

The alleged practice of Rex Dailey, the Association's executive secretary, of making "arbitrary" and "capricious" decisions governing player eligibility, the right of bands to leave the state for special events, the selection of game referees and officials and designation of tournament sites.2

The question in reference to these charges asked on the questionnaire were identical for both Administrators and Board Chairmen: Do you feel that the MHSA is a democratically responsible organization?

To this question 142 administrators answered Yes; 19 answered No, while 7 did not respond to the question. Eighty-five per cent of those answering the questionnaire felt that it was a democratic institution. The percentage

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of board chairmen who responded to the questionnaire was 66, not nearly as emphatic as the administrators, but by a good majority. Eighty-two answered Yes with 41 answering No.

The results of the survey question would clearly indicate that the vast majority of those people who were dealing with the activities program in Montana high schools were in accord with past and present constitution and by-laws and felt that the organization was responsive to their wishes and needs.

These results would tend to negate the position of those legislators in the 1969 legislative assembly who were not deeply involved in this activity program. Indeed, Senator Bennett became interested in the Association when he found a MHSA rule prevented his son from attending out-of-state athletic clinics.¹

To the charge that the executive secretary or the board of directors were dictatorial, the by-laws and rules of the organization are quite specific and it is these rules rather than decisions of individuals that apply to the rulings on elegibility and rules interpretation.

RULINGS REQUESTED BY MEMBER SCHOOLS

The charge that the MHSA was dictatorial was a result of rulings handled by the executive secretary and the board of directors. These ruling results were termed "arbitrary" and "capricious" in a quotation used earlier in this paper.

The rulings are divided into three classifications: (1) eligibility of players, (2) rules interpretation, (3) a request for change in classification. The first two categories are covered by the by-laws of the organization and are quite specific. It is these rules that are applied to the rulings on eligibility and rules interpretation, not the decisions of the executive secretary.

Questions 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 of the Administrator's Questionnaire and questions 6, 7, 8 and 9 of the Board Chairman's Questionnaire were questions designed to test the number of major rulings requested, the type, whether the ruling was properly handled and ruled on and if the party requesting the ruling was satisfied with that ruling.

The questions asked in the questionnaires are as follows: Administrator's Questionnaire (6) Have you ever asked for a ruling on eligibility, rules interpretation or presented a petition for change of classification to the MHSA? ___Yes___No. (7) If your answer to number 6 is Yes
what was your request? ___ Eligibility ruling. ___ Rules interpretation. ___ A petition for change in classification.

(8) Briefly describe your request: ________________________________

(9) Do you feel that your ruling or petition was properly handled and ruled on? ___ Yes ___ No.

The administrative respondents answered question six affirmatively 137 times with 30 of them indicating they had never requested a ruling.

The administrators indicated their requests were divided as follows: (1) 106 requests for eligibility, (2) 6 rules interpretation, (3) 25 change of classification.

Fifty-six board chairmen indicated they had been involved in the same types of requests divided as follows: (1) 32 eligibility requests, (2) 6 rules interpretation, (3) 18 changes of classification.

The question regarding the proper handling of the ruling requested and the ruling issued was overwhelmingly in favor of the MHSA. One hundred twenty-one administrators indicated they accepted the ruling in light of the MHSA by-laws or board of directors decision and 16 administrators indicated they were dissatisfied and that the decisions had not been properly ruled on.
The Board Chairmen's Questionnaire on this question indicated that 40 of the 56 who answered were satisfied with the results while 16 were not convinced that the ruling was adequate. It is interesting to note that the same number of board chairmen and administrators, 16, indicated that they were dissatisfied with the ruling. Fourteen of these requests were for classification status.

The question regarding the constitutionality of all board of directors' decisions was even more overwhelming in favor of the board of directors. The administrators indicated 153 to 8 with 7 not balloting that they knew of no case where the ruling had been unconstitutional. The board chairmen voted 115 to 8.

The figures on these questions would indicate that there are elements, member schools or individuals, who are not completely satisfied with the results of the operation of the MHSA. It is not possible to tell from raw figures whether it is this element that has created the furor that arose in the 1969 legislature, but the figures would indicate that the criticism raised in 1969 is far out of proportion to what the member schools feel about the operation of their organization. The results would indicate that a small dissident, vocal opposition group has created a situation not
unlike other dissident groups in our democracy today.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Senate Bill 154 would have created an Activities Division in the Montana State Department of Public Instruction and, thus, under direct control of the Montana Board of Regents.

There were many pros and cons raised to this issue. Senator Bennett, who introduced the bill stated, "It should not be under a private corporation, any more than you teach math under a private contract. That's where it belongs (under Mrs. Colberg), and that's where it should be."¹

Mrs. Colberg, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, cited a number of reasons for not wanting an Activities Division in the Department of Public Instruction:

First, the most important task of the State Superintendent is to lead and serve in instructional matters, not extra-curricular activities. This office has enough to do in providing the support and staff for good instructional programs. Secondly, I found it a paradox that my office might be saddled with responsibility for extra-curricular activities when it had not been given the funds to hire the social studies supervisor, the counseling supervisor shall appoint.

If that (Senate Bill 154) had ever been signed by the Governor, I'd never be able to travel the State and talk education again. Someone would always want to hash out some ruling over a player's eligibility. I

¹Hansen, Ben, "The Debate Continues Over the Montana High School Association," The Great Falls Tribune, Tribune Capitol Bureau, January 15, 1970
wish people would get half as excited about academic matters as they did about this.¹

Representative D. L. Knudson, Democrat of Glasgow, and a high school teacher, who opposed the Senate Bill 154 in the House of Representatives, sided with Mrs. Colberg's viewpoints:

One thing we should try to do is keep education out of politics. If this (MHSA) was placed in Mrs. Colberg's arms, you can see the implication there. It would all be politics, and being State Superintendent would be a hazardous profession. Athletics would be all controlled by down-town quarterbacks and the Superintendent would never be able to travel the state and talk about education because someone would always be mad about some decision she made about sports.

School boards didn't want anything to do with the bill because if a player was declared ineligible, the heat would be on them rather than a far-off organization.²

Governor Forrest Anderson who vetoed Senate Bill 154 stated that "Although the attack against the Association might have some merit, placing responsibility under the Board of Education would be expensive as well as too much work for the board in view of its already established responsibilities."³

³Ibid.
Questions number 29 and 30 of the Board Chairmen's Questionnaire and questions number 31 and 32 of the Administrator's Questionnaire were used to sample the feelings of these two groups on this question.

The questions on the Board Chairmen's Questionnaire and the Administrator's Questionnaire were identical:

(31) Would you like to see control of interschool activities invested in the State Department of Public Instruction? ___ Yes ___ No. (32) Would you like to see control of interschool activities invested in the Board of Regents? ___ Yes ___ No.

The respondents to these two questions were equally emphatic in answering the questions as they had been on previous questions. To question 29, on placing the activities in the Department of Public Instruction, 22 board chairmen were in favor while 101 were opposed. The administrators were much more opposed. Eleven administrators were in favor of placing the activities in the Department of Public Instruction while 156 opposed the move. To the question of placing the control of inter-school activities under control of the Board of Regents, both board chairmen and administrators were equally opposed in their opposition. Ten board chairmen favored placing the activities under the Board of Regents with 113 answering No. The administrators opposed
this move by an equally large majority as the previous ques-
tion with only 10 favoring such a move while 157 opposed.

It would appear, again, that a very small minority of both groups favored placing the activities in an Activity Division of the Department of Public Instruction or the MHSA under control of the Board of Regents. Ten per cent of the board chairmen and only seven per cent of the administrators favored these plans.

The authors of Senate Bill 154 and their supporters in the legislature numbered more than the administrators and board chairmen who supported them.

Again, it would appear that the vast majority of those who administer and work daily with the problems of the school would choose the present method, the MHSA, of handling the interschool activities. of Montana education.

TELEVISION RIGHTS

The requests by the Montana Broadcasters Association to televise athletic events sanctioned or controlled by the MHSA would not appear pertinent to this survey on casual examination. However, the time of this request, the fall of 1968, its rejection by the Board of Directors of the MHSA and, subsequently, the alienation of this news media did play an important part in the attack on the MHSA.
The Montana Broadcasters Association requested permission, in 1968, for free television rights to televise specific athletic events was rejected by the Board of Directors of the MHSA. The rejection was based on a monetary loss for member schools and television would have been permitted had the MBA agreed to payment to compensate for this loss.

Senator Stan Stephens, Republican of Havre, was one of the more vocal proponents of Senate Bill 154. He is station manager and vice president of Radio Station KOJM in Havre. A logical presumption could be made that his opposition to the MHSA was a direct result of the rejection of free televising of athletic events.

Question 30 of the Administrator's Questionnaire and question 28 of the Board Chairmen's Questionnaire were included to sample response of these people to the MHSA Board of Director's rejection. The question was, "the MHSA has refused a request by the Montana Telecasters for free telecasting rights of tournaments. Do you agree with the MHSA stand that they should receive reimbursement to compensate for anticipated revenue losses at these tournaments?_____Yes _____No." One hundred sixty-one administrators answered Yes with only six answering No in favor of the MBA. In 91 cases, the board chairmen balloted with the MHSA, while 32 voted for free television rights. The percentage of administrators
supporting the MHSA was 96 per cent, the board chairmen were 66 per cent in support.

This question was included to get an indication of the part special interest groups played in the attack on the MHSA and to determine how well their special interest groups were supported by the respondents. It would appear that there was very little support for the MBA position on free television and overwhelming support for the MHSA Board of Directors.

SUMMER ATHLETIC CAMPS

The MHSA, not their Board of Directors, has had, for many years, a by-law against athletes attending summer athletic camps, either in Montana or out of state. It is a much debated question at the annual meetings of the Montana High School Association.

This question was one raised by Senator W. F. Bennett, Republican of Columbia Falls. His interest, at the time was a special one because of his son's desire to attend one. "My son was talking to me about it at the time, so it did concern me a little bit in that respect. I don't see why boys shouldn't be allowed to perfect themselves when they have the funds and desire to do so."\(^1\)

\(^1\)Hansen, Ben, "The Debate Continues over MHSA," The Great Falls Tribune, January 15, 1970.
The MHSA's position on the question of summer camps is, (1) only those persons whose parents can afford camps will be able to go to these camps. Thus giving these students a distinct advantage over the students less privileged, (2) some member schools, again, those who could afford to, would establish year around summer athletic camps.

The questions 14 on the Board Chairmen's Questionnaire and number 16 on the Administrator's Questionnaire were, "Music and speech summer camp attendance is permitted by the MHSA. Do you feel that attendance at athletic camps should be permitted?___Yes___No." Fifty-six board chairmen respondents to the questionnaire felt that summer camps should be permitted while 67 felt that they should not be permitted. Administrators were divided on the subject with 71 favoring summer camps and 96 opposing them.

No other issue facing the MHSA causes such a close split in ranks as does this issue. Administrators are split 58 per cent to 42 per cent; and board chairmen are split 55 per cent to 45 per cent. It would appear that this question will likely be a continuing issue at coming MHSA annual meetings.
RESERVE FUND

"The MHSA shall hold as a matter of policy that any funds held or received by the said Association above the operating budget for any budget year shall be invested in a reserve fund; this fund shall be administered by the MHSA Board of Directors." 1

This Reserve Fund Policy, taken from the 1969-70 Handbook of the MHSA and the method of administering this fund was its biggest drawback during the 1969 legislative assembly. Many senators would have opposed Senate Bill 154 had the usual means of administering funds and the limitations usually placed on school funds been adhered to. The MHSA Board of Directors invested the monies in stock of private corporations rather than in quarantined investments such as certificates of deposit. The Reserve Fund does not have a limitation applied to it as do school districts reserve funds which are limited to 35 per cent of their operating budget. This was drastically changed at the annual meeting of the Montana High School Association in Billings on January 20, 1970.

The widespread dissatisfaction with this fund is best authenticated with quotations from various legislators as

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well as administrators. Senator P. J. Gilfeather, Democrat from Great Falls stated, "They (reserve fund) are not state funds, but they are, to a certain degree, trust funds. Article 537 of the state constitution says, 'No act shall authorize the investment of trust funds......in bonds or stocks of any private corporation." Senator Ben Stephens, Republican from Havre, "they are handling tax money because they're handling teams."1

Senator Jean Turnage, Republican of Polson, who voted for Senate Bill 154, gave this explanation:

The Association gathers money solely by use of school board personnel and the use of public school facilities. In my view, if these are not public funds, I cannot rationalize the use of public school personnel, students and facilities to collect the monies, then hand them over to a private corporation.

And if they are public school monies, statutes tell you how they should be handled, and it is not in the manner the MHSA handles them. They (public funds) are to be deposited with county treasurers and dispersed on proper claims presented and approved on warrants drawn, which is good statutory procedure. I would vote again to correct the situation."2

A number of Montana school district superintendents also commented on this aspect of the Association. Paul O'Hare, Superintendent of Schools in Billings, "I would


2Ibid.
think the Association should be limited in the number of years of operating capital it can have ahead. I thought it was defensible to have one or two year's capital ahead."¹

Kalispel Superintendent, D. P. Langbell also stated, "I feel we should have sufficient amount of money to run, plus a sufficient reserve so we are on a fiscally sound basis. Beyond that, funds should go back to the communities or schools which supplied them. Returns from tournaments should be reduced. When you've got a lot of money, you get a lot of criticism."²

The questionnaire did not seek to determine the legality of the funds or their uses, but did seek to determine whether board chairmen and administrators felt a limit should be placed on the fund and if that limit should be one year's operating expense. Questions number 25 and 26 of the Administrator's Questionnaire and number 24 and 25 of the Board Chairmen's Questionnaire were identical. They were, "Should there be a limit placed on the reserve fund of the MHSA?__Yes__No." and "Would you limit the reserve to one year's operating expense of the MHSA?__Yes__No."


²Ibid.
Administrators voted 152 to 15 to limit the reserve to one year's operating expense. Board chairmen were equally strong in voicing these limitations, balloting 119 to 4 to limit those monies to one year.

It would be superfluous for this paper to comment on this issue now. At its 1970 annual meeting, the MHSA voted to limit encumbered monies or cash on hand as of July 1 each year to 75 per cent of the ensuing fiscal year's budget. It further provided that the invested reserve will be limited to approximately 50 per cent of the yearly budget and that such reserve will be invested in such investments that are approved for school districts.

MONTANA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATION

The presentation of Mr. Kenny, Executive Secretary of the Montana School Boards Association, in the discussion on the survey instrument, prompted questions 11 and 12 on the Administrator's Questionnaire and question number 10 on the Board Chairmen's Questionnaire. Through a typographical error on the questionnaire, the two questions became one on the Board Chairmen's Questionnaire. The questions are as follows: Administrators, (11) Do you feel that the Montana High School Boards Association should have a director or directors on the MHSA Board of Directors? ___Yes___ No.
If the MSBA received representation on the Board of Directors of the MHSA, should that representative be a school board member or the MSBA Executive Director? School board member ___ Executive Secretary. Board Chairmen's question (10) Do you feel that the Montana School Boards should have a representative on the Board of Directors of the MHSA, i.e., the Executive Secretary or an appointed member? ____ Yes ____ No.

The majority of Montana school administrators indicated that they felt it would be advantageous to have a representative of the Montana School Boards Association. They responded 133 to 64 in favor of that representative on their Board of Directors. They also indicated that they favored a school board member 96 to 63, with 7 volunteering both board member and Executive Secretary and one undecided.

The board chairmen were even more emphatic in their endorsement of the idea with 113 in favor of representation and 10 opposing the recommendation.

In their 1970 annual meeting, the MHSA voted to give representation on its Board of Directors. The member at large on the board of directors will now be MSBA member elected by that body.
PUBLIC RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

There were no threats or attacks by the legislature on the public relations or communications concept of the MHSA. However, in developing the questionnaire, the writer talked with numerous administrators who felt that the Association was delinquent in not developing this area and of not keeping our school boards adequately informed.

Joe Lutz, Superintendent of Schools at Havre, cited this area:

Rex had much personal blame laid to him for merely carrying out directives of the Board of Directors. I am aware of many instances where not only superintendents, but coaches, know of a rule and referred it to the Association, preferring to let the Association take the guff from disgruntled parents and town sports boosters.\(^1\)

Superintendent Cliff Hansen of Box Elder held much the same opinion and discussed colleagues keeping their school boards informed:

A lot of this criticism stems from the fact a lot of school administrators have used Mr. Dalley as a sort of whipping boy. In other words, we go down to the annual meetings, make a bunch of hard and fast rules and then we come back and say to our people, 'that's against MHSA rules' and say the same to teachers. Principals and administrators have to take the blame for that. In early December of each year, we get from the Association a very complete bulletin on

\(^1\)Hansen, Ben, "Dalley Critical of Criticism", The Great Falls Tribune, January 17, 1970.
all proposed changes of the constitution, by-laws and rules. We're asked to take these up with the school boards for advice on how we should vote, and I think sometimes that hasn't been done. 1

To secure an estimate on just how much the administrators and school boards understand and use the workings of the MHSA, the following questions were selected: Administrator's Questionnaire, (2) Do you present to your school board the questions on policy, constitution and by-laws changes that you vote on at the annual meeting? __Yes__ No. (3) Does your board instruct you how to vote on these issues? __Yes__ No. (4) Do you review the results with your board, the decisions voted on and the changes made? __Yes__ No. (5) Have you read and periodically reviewed the Association's Handbook? __Yes__ No. (28) Do you consult your board on yearly constitution and by-law changes? __Yes__ No. (29) Do you know how to proceed to obtain changes of the constitution and by-laws of the MHSA? __Yes__ No. (33) Is the management of interschool activities a responsibility of the school board or the administrator? __School Board__ Administrator.

Board Chairmen's Questionnaire, (2) Does your administrator bring before your board the questions on policy,
constitution and by-law changes that they have to vote on? Yes No. (3) Do you read and review these decisions you receive? Yes No. (4) Do you discuss and vote on, in your board meetings, these changes and instruct your administrator on how to vote? Yes No. (5) Have you read the handbook of the MHSA? Yes No. (27) Do you know how to proceed to obtain changes of the constitution or by-laws of the MHSA? Yes No. (31) Is the management of interschool activities a responsibility of the school board or the administrator? School Board Administrator.

Question number 2 on the questionnaire was designed to measure the extent to which the administrator took the changes on constitution, by-laws and policies or rules to his school board. Of the administrators, 150 indicated that they presented to their boards these changes while 17 answered that they did not. However, the board chairmen indicated that 88 of their superintendents presented these changes to their boards.

The chairmen answer would indicate a serious void in communications. Nearly 30 per cent of the school boards in Montana are not informed and, subsequently, do not vote on the changes which annually take place.

Questions number three in the Administrator's Questionnaire and four in the Board Chairmen's Questionnaire
with the handbook while 58 indicated that they were not. Administrators, on the other hand, indicated overwhelming familiarity with the handbook, answering 158 to 9.

The questionnaire was at fault on question 31 of the Board Chairmen's Questionnaire and number 33 of the Administrator's Questionnaire. The error was that the questionnaire did not allow for a response of "both" in determining responsibility for administering a school's activity program. The Administrator's Questionnaire answered the question: school boards, 24; administrators, 120; and volunteered both 23. The school board chairmen answered: school board, 12; administrator, 88; and volunteered both 23.

The results of these questions would indicate a serious lack of understanding of the role the school board plays in the MHSA's decision and also a major breakdown in communications caused, in part, by the administrator for not presenting to his school board the materials to be voted on at the annual meeting and, partly, for those school boards who do not instruct their administrator on how he should vote. If the MHSA is to become a truly effective organization for the management of high school activities, it will have to overcome this breakdown in communications.
would indicate a further lapse in this line of communication. The question of whether the board instructs the administrator on how to vote; over 33 per cent of the administrators answered that their board did not instruct them on how to vote. This, in effect, disinfranchised one-third of the school boards in the state of a say in the MHSA's business.

The same percentage of board chairmen indicated that they did not instruct their administrator how to vote.

Question number four of the administrator's survey indicated that a large majority, 155 to 12, did report on the decisions of the changes to their boards.

All except five respondents to the Administrator's Questionnaire answered that they had read and reviewed periodically the MHSA handbook. The board chairmen indicated that only a third had read the handbook, 89 indicated they had not, while 34 indicated that they had read the handbook.

Question number 28 of the Administrator's Questionnaire was dropped as a duplication.

Question number 27 of the Board Chairmen's Questionnaire and number 29 of the Administrator's Questionnaire sought to determine how familiar they were with the MHSA Handbook. The board chairmen answered that 65 were familiar
SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

The scope of the activities administered by the Montana High School Association automatically produce many special interest groups within the Association's jurisdiction. Many of these have clamored for representation on the board of directors. Among these special interest groups are athletic coaches and speech and music instructors. These groups have been most vocal for representation on the board.

Questions number 13 and 14 on the Administrator's Questionnaire and 11 and 12 of the Board Chairmen's survey covered this area. The questions were identical and are taken from the Administrator's Questionnaire. (13) Do you feel that the Montana Coaches Association should have a representative on the MHSA Board of Directors?____Yes____No. (14) Do you feel that Music and Speech Directors should have a representative on the MHSA Board of Directors?____Yes____No.

The administrator respondents voted 35 to 132 against question 13, to permit coaches representation on the board of directors. Their vote on question 14, permitting speech and music instructors on the board was 44 for and 123 against such action. The board chairmen voted for this on both issues. On question 11 their ballots were 74 Yes with 49 No and on question number 12 voted 64 Yes and 59 No.
This would indicate that the administrators did not choose to enlarge the board with special interest groups; whose sole purpose on the board would be to pressure for their interests rather than include the scope of the entire activities field. Board members indicated they were in favor of such moves on their ballot.

This wide divergence of opinion would indicate that this question had not been discussed in local school district board meetings.

The athletic coaches' issue of some form of representation was again asked in question 15 on the Administrator's Questionnaire and number 13 on the Board Chairmen's Questionnaire. The question was (15) There are standing committees for music and speech in the MHSA. Do you feel there should be one for athletics as well? ___Yes___No.

The board chairmen balloted 94 in favor of an athletic committee and 29 against establishment of such a committee. Administrators split nearly even in vetoing the idea with 82 in favor of such a committee and 85 opposed to the creation of such a committee.

The results of the survey would indicate that the creation of such a committee would be advantageous to the MHSA, from both an administrative and a public relations viewpoint.
The 1970 annual meeting of the MHSA did establish a coaches committee to advise the Association's board of directors in manners relating to athletics.
CHAPTER III

SUMMARY

This study was a survey of administrators and board chairmen of Montana public school districts operating high schools to determine their reactions to the charges brought against the MHSA in the 1969 legislative assembly. It was not a random sampling, it was mailed to 162 board chairmen and 195 administrators. The per cent of returns of the questionnaires were 76 for board chairmen and 85 per cent for the administrators. It was necessary to use a second mailing to school board chairmen to qualify the survey instrument.

The respondent's answers were used to analyze and conclude whether the following pertinent charges and complaints lodged against the MHSA were authentic and valid.

(1) The MHSA was not a democratic, responsible organization.
(2) The administration, the executive secretary and the board of directors of the MHSA were "arbitrary" and "capricious" in their rulings on member school's requests.
(3) There should be an Activities Division within the DPI.
(4) The ruling of the MHSA Board of Directors was wrong in denying free television rights to the MBA.
(5) Funds used in the Reserve Fund were not invested properly.
(6) The MSBA should be represented on the board.
(7) The
organization's public relations and communications should be improved. (8) Special interest groups within the MHSA were not adequately represented.

CONCLUSION

The respondents indicated that some of the charges or indictments against the MHSA were, indeed, authentic; while they concurred with the MHSA on a number of issues.

The member schools indicated that (1) they were overwhelmingly satisfied with the organization's responsiveness to school problems, (2) they were in nearly complete accord that the rulings handled by the MHSA were not dictatorial, (3) the member schools did not want a division of activities within the State Department of Public Instruction, (4) the MHSA Board of Directors was correct in its stand against free television rights to the MBA.

The member schools also indicated that some of the charges were valid and that something concrete should be done about these issues. (1) The Reserve Fund of the MHSA should be limited. (2) The MSBA should have representation on the board of directors of the MHSA. (3) There is a definite need to dramatically improve the public relations image and communications aspect of the MHSA. (4) All special interest groups within the association should have committee
recognition but not representation on the board of directors.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The MHSA, at its 1970 annual meeting in Billings, Montana, corrected three of its four basic failures. The Association voted to (1) limit their reserve fund, (2) give representation to the MSBA on their board of directors, (3) established an Athletic Coaches Committee to advise the board of directors.

It is the fourth issue that will haunt the organization in the future. The issue of public relations and communications must be corrected. To correct this failure, the writer recommends that the MHSA begin an active two-pronged attack on this problem. This offensive would be divided into two parts: (1) public relations and (2) communications.

Public Relations: With the aid of the sports writers of the states newspapers, carry on an aggressive plan to acquaint the people of the state with the rules of the organization and the logic behind the rules. These articles could be carried further by requesting member schools to reprint them in the school newspapers.

Communications: The MHSA and the MSBA should combine their energies in a campaign to insist that all administrators consult and confer with their board of trustees on all
matters pertaining to constitution, by-laws and rules of the MHSA.

If these two problems are solved, the hypothesis of this paper, "The Montana High School Association is the only effective and politically expedient means of administering interschool activities," will be proven.
APPENDIX
APPENDIX A

Administrators' Questionnaire

1. Do you feel that the Montana High School Association is a democratically responsible organization? _____ Yes _____ No.

2. Do you present to your school board the questions on policy, constitution and by-law changes that you vote on at the annual meeting? _____ Yes _____ No.

3. Does your board instruct you how to vote on these issues? _____ Yes _____ No.

4. Do you review the results with your board, the decisions voted on and the changes made? _____ Yes _____ No.

5. Have you read and periodically reviewed the Association's Handbook? _____ Yes _____ No.

6. Have you ever asked for a ruling on eligibility, rules interpretation or presented a petition for change of classification to the MHSA? _____ Yes _____ No.

7. If your answer to #6 is yes, what was your request?

8. Briefly describe your request: ____________________________________________________________

9. Do you feel that your ruling or petition was properly handled and ruled on? _____ Yes _____ No.
10. Do you know of a case where the Board of Directors' ruling was constitutionally wrong? ______Yes______No.

11. Do you feel that the Montana High School Boards Association should have a director or directors on the MHSA Board of Directors? ______Yes______No.

12. If the MSBA received representation on the Board of Directors of the MHSA, should that representative be a school board member or the MSBA Executive Director? ______School Board Member______Executive Secretary.

13. Do you feel that the Montana Coaches Association should have a representative on the MHSA Board of Directors? ______Yes______No.

14. Do you feel that music and speech directors should be represented on the MHSA Board of Directors? ______Yes______No.

15. There are standing committees for music and speech in the MHSA. Do you feel there should be one for athletics as well? ______Yes______No.

16. Music and speech summer camp attendance is permitted by the MHSA. Do you feel that attendance at athletic camps should be permitted? ______Yes______No.

17. Do you feel that basketball should be supporting all administrative cost of extra- and co-curricular programs on district, divisional and state levels? ______Yes______No.
18. Should the MHSA have taken over control of the Montana Officials Association? _____Yes_____No.

19. If your answer to #16 is no, what would you recommend?


20. Do you feel that the present method of assignment of tournament officials should be changed? _____Yes_____No.

21. Would a method of allowing districts and divisions to pick their own officials and to then have those districts and divisions approval for advancement to division or state tournaments be better? _____Yes_____No.

22. For the monetary issues, the state tournaments have settled into a pattern of "A", Butte and Bozeman; "B" Northern Division; "C", Helena. Do you feel that the tournaments should revert to division rotation, i.e., N-E-S-W? _____Yes_____No.

23. Do you feel that the costs of tournaments should be borne by the community holding them rather than from tourney receipts? _____Yes_____No.

24. Do you feel that the University System School should charge for the use of facilities for tournaments? _____Yes_____No.

25. Should there be a limit placed on the reserve fund of the MHSA? _____Yes_____No.
26. Would you limit the reserve to one year's operating expense of the MHSA? Yes No.

27. The closing of Havre Central High School in 1968 and the resulting transfer of those students to Havre High School caused the loss of eligibility by those students for two weeks. Should the MHSA Board of Directors have authority to waive the rules in special situations such as this? Yes No.

28. Do you consult your board on yearly constitution and by-law changes? Yes No.

29. Do you know how to proceed to obtain changes of the constitution and by-laws of the MHSA? Yes No.

30. The MHSA has refused a request by the Montana Telecasters for free telecasting rights of tournaments. Do you agree with the MHSA stand that they should receive reimbursement to compensate for anticipated revenue losses at these tournaments? Yes No.

31. Would you like to see control of interschool activities invested in the Board of Regents? Yes No.

32. Would you like to see control of interschool activities invested in the Board of Regents? Yes No.

33. Is the management of interschool activities a responsibility of the school board or the administrator? School Board Administrator.
8. Do you feel that your ruling or petition was properly ruled on? _____ Yes _____ No.

9. Do you know of a case where the Board of Directors' ruling was constitutionally wrong? _____ Yes _____ No.

10. Do you feel that the Montana School Boards should have a representative on the Board of Directors of the MHSA, i.e., The Executive Secretary or an appointed member? _____ Yes _____ No.

11. Do you feel that the Montana high school coaches should have a representative on the Board of Directors? _____ Yes _____ No.

12. Do you feel that the music and speech directors should be represented on the MHSA Board of Directors? _____ Yes _____ No.

13. There are standing committees for music and speech in the MHSA. Do you feel there should be one for athletics as well? _____ Yes _____ No.

14. Music and speech summer camp attendance is permitted by the MHSA. Do you feel that attendance at athletic camps should be permitted? _____ Yes _____ No.

15. Do you feel that basketball should be supporting all administrative costs of extra and co-curricular programs on district, divisional and state levels? _____ Yes _____ No.
16. Do you feel that the MHSA decision to manage the Montana Officials Association was a correct one?    Yes       No.

17. If your answer to #16 is no, what would you recommend?

18. Do you feel that the present method of assignment of tournament officials should be changed?    Yes       No.

19. Would you like a method of allowing districts and divisions to pick their own officials, and to then have those districts and divisions approval for advancement to division or state tournaments?    Yes       No.

20. Do you understand tournament bids?    Yes       No.

21. For the monetary issues, the state tournaments have settled into a pattern of, "A", Butte and Bozeman; "B", Northern Division; "C", Helena: Do you feel that the tournaments should revert to division rotation, i.e., N-E-S-W?    Yes       No.

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30. Would you like to see control of inter-school activities invested in the Board of Regents? Yes No.

31. Is the management of interschool activities a responsibility of the school board or the administrator? School Board Administrator.


