

Section V Survey of
Athletic Directors, Principals, and Superintendents
Executive Summary

Conducted by

Mike Wischnowski, Ph.D. and Dr. Bruce Blaine, Ph.D.

Consultants

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Introduction

A survey was conducted in April 2010 among Section V athletic directors (ADs), high school principals, and district superintendents for the purposes of measuring perceptions of Section V services in three areas: the quality of services provided by Section V, tournament policies, and tournament venue selection for Section V athletic tournaments. Survey questions were developed by the Section V Executive Director and Executive Committee members in consultation with Drs. Michael Wischnowski and Bruce Blaine, Consultants. The survey was administered and analyzed by Drs. Wischnowski and Blaine. The survey was to help advise the Director and Committee in their review of Section V policies and tournament practices. A summary of the survey's findings is presented herein. A full report of the survey results, including all data tables and qualitative responses, is on file in the Section V administrative offices.

Survey Response

Survey links were sent to 340 Section V participants as displayed in Table 1 by position type. The overall response rate (69%) was excellent, and response rates were comparable across position type. Within each position, response rates across district type were comparable and reflective of the base rates of each district type in Section V (see Table 2). In sum, all district and position types were fairly represented in the pattern of survey respondents.

Table 1. Survey panel and completed survey responses by district position

Position	In survey panel	Completed response (%)
Athletic director (AD)	127	98 (77%)
Principal	111	59 (53%)
Superintendent	102	78 (76%)
Total	340	235 (69%)

Table 2. Response rate by district position type and district type

Position	District Type			Total
	Rural	Suburban	Urban	
Athletic Director	60 61%	26 27%	12 12%	98 100%
HS Principal	38 64%	16 27%	5 8%	59 100%
Superintendent	58 74%	17 22%	3 4%	78 100%
Total	156 65%	59 25%	20 8%	239

Area 1: Quality of Services Provided by Section V

This section of the survey asked seven questions addressing the cost-effectiveness of services, staffing, affiliation with BOCES, as well as overall satisfaction with the operational efficiency (combining services and staff) of Section V. Overall, 70% of respondents were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with Section V operations (see Table 3). This high level of satisfaction was comparable across district position type.

Table 3. Overall satisfaction with Section V operational efficiency by district position type.

Question		AD	Principal	Superintendent	Total
10. Overall satisfaction with operational efficiency.	Very Satisfied	25 26%	10 17%	13 17%	48 20%
	Satisfied	54 57%	35 60%	31 41%	120 50%
	Neutral	13 14%	12 21%	21 28%	46 19%
	Dissatisfied	3 3%	1 2%	8 11%	12 5%
	Very Dissatisfied	0 0%	0 0%	2 3%	2 <1%

In addition to the very strong agreement that Section V provides cost-effective services, the majority of respondents in each category supported the idea of district Section V dues. Opinions were split regarding whether Section V staff should become BOCES employees: ADs strongly agreed, principals strongly disagreed, and superintendents were equally split. Regarding whether the Section V Executive Director should be a full-time position, there was uniform opposition across respondent types, with superintendents feeling most strongly against the issue. All respondent types expressed strong opposition to the idea of additional Section V staff. Finally, opinions were mixed regarding Section V having an office in a BOCES: ADs were strongly opposed, principals were somewhat supportive, and superintendents slightly opposed.

Overall satisfaction with Section V’s services was high across district type, with respondents from rural (76%) and urban (80%) districts expressing slightly higher rates of satisfaction than suburban (58%) districts (see Table 4).

Table 4. Overall satisfaction with Section V operational efficiency by district type.

		Rural	Suburban	Urban	Total
10. Overall satisfaction with operational efficiency.	Very Satisfied	37 24%	7 12%	4 20%	48 20%
	Satisfied	81 52%	27 46%	12 60%	120 50%
	Neutral	25 16%	18 31%	3 15%	46 19%
	Dissatisfied	8 5%	3 5%	1 5%	12 5%
	Very Dissatisfied	2 1%	0 0%	0 0%	2 <1%

Area 2: Tournament Policies

This section of the survey asked respondents seven questions addressing the costs and consequences of running open tournaments, the scheduling of tournament games, preference for open versus closed tournaments in various sports, as well as overall satisfaction with Section V's tournament practices and policies. Overall, 59% of respondents were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with Section V tournament practices (see Table 5). However, overall satisfaction was qualified by district position type. Athletic directors (75%) were most satisfied, followed by principals (61%), and superintendents (41%).

Table 5. Overall satisfaction with Section V tournament practices and policies by district position type.

		AD	Principal	Superintendent	Total
17. Overall satisfaction with tournaments.	Very Satisfied	23 23%	7 12%	4 5%	34 14%
	Satisfied	51 52%	29 49%	28 36%	108 45%
	Neutral	10 10%	15 25%	27 35%	52 22%
	Dissatisfied	4 4%	0 0%	9 12%	13 5%
	Very Dissatisfied	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%

Opinions were mixed regarding whether the costs of open tournaments were acceptable, with a majority of ADs and principals in agreement, and a majority of superintendents in disagreement. Similarly, there were mixed responses about whether open tournaments result in too much lost instructional time: the majority of ADs and principals disagreed whereas the majority of superintendents agreed. Nevertheless, all respondents regardless of position type ranked avoiding the loss of instructional time as the most important concern in scheduling tournament games. There was uniform agreement across position type that Sunday competitions for tournament play were unacceptable.

Among boys' sports, there was moderate to strong support for having closed tournaments for baseball, football, lacrosse, and soccer. These views were held somewhat more strongly among superintendents than among principals and ADs. All respondents, regardless of position type, supported open tournaments for cross country. Among girls' sports, there was modest to strong support for having closed tournaments for softball and lacrosse. These views were held more strongly among superintendents than among principals and ADs. Finally, all respondents supported open tournaments for cross country.

Overall satisfaction with Section V's tournament practices was high across district type, with respondents from urban (70%) districts expressing slightly higher rates of satisfaction than rural (60%) and suburban (59%) districts (see Table 6).

Table 6. Overall satisfaction with Section V tournament practices by district type.

		Rural	Suburban	Urban	Total
17. Overall satisfaction with tournaments.	Very Satisfied	20 13%	9 15%	5 25%	34 14%
	Satisfied	73 47%	26 44%	9 45%	108 45%
	Neutral	35 22%	15 25%	2 10%	52 22%
	Dissatisfied	11 7%	0 0%	2 10%	13 5%
	Very Dissatisfied	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%

Area 3: Tournament Venue Selection

This section of the survey asked respondents six questions addressing the costs and benefits of using venues like Blue Cross Arena for tournament championship games, using district venues for tournaments, and overall satisfaction with Section V’s venue selection practices. Overall, just 51% of respondents were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with Section V venue selection practices (see Table 7). Satisfaction was high among ADs (67%) but significantly lower among principals (49%) and superintendents (35%).

Table 7. Overall satisfaction with Section V tournament venue selection by district position type.

		AD	Principal	Superintendent	Total
23. Overall satisfaction with venues like Blue Cross Arena.	Very Satisfied	21 21%	6 10%	6 8%	33 14%
	Satisfied	45 46%	23 39%	21 27%	89 37%
	Neutral	14 14%	17 29%	19 24%	50 21%
	Dissatisfied	12 12%	7 12%	19 24%	38 16%
	Very Dissatisfied	2 2%	1 2%	5 6%	8 3%

There was moderate agreement across respondent type that championship games should be played in venues like Blue Cross Arena and that such venues add prestige to those games. Agreement however was higher among ADs and principals than among superintendents. Opinions were mixed regarding whether venues like Blue Cross Arena are too difficult for the school’s fan base to attend or too expensive: superintendents tended to agree, ADs disagreed, and principals’ responses were in the middle. All respondents regardless of position strongly supported seeking school districts as venues for tournament games.

There was only a moderate level of overall satisfaction (51%) with Section V’s venue selection practices across district type. Respondents from rural districts (47%) were the least satisfied, whereas respondents from suburban (56%) and urban (75%) districts expressed considerably higher rates of satisfaction (see Table 8). Of note, 23% of respondents from rural districts were “dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied” with Section V venue selection practices, compared to much smaller rates of dissatisfaction among respondents from suburban (14%) and urban (10%) districts.

Table 8. Overall satisfaction with Section V venue selection practices by district type.

		Rural	Suburban	Urban	Total
23. Overall satisfaction with venues like Blue Cross Arena.	Very Satisfied	14 9%	13 22%	6 30%	33 14%
	Satisfied	60 38%	20 34%	9 45%	89 37%
	Neutral	37 24%	11 19%	2 10%	50 21%
	Dissatisfied	28 18%	8 14%	2 10%	38 16%
	Very Dissatisfied	8 5%	0 0%	0 0%	8 3%

Summary

The high participation rates in the survey across district type and position of respondent speak to the vitality of Section V membership and their interest in Section V policies. The survey also provides excellent empirical basis for evaluating current Section V practices. The survey data show high levels of satisfaction with Section V's efficiency and delivery of services. There is also a high rate of satisfaction with Section V's tournament practices, although the issue of lost instructional time caused by tournament games emerged as an important area of concern, particularly among district superintendents. Section V's venue selection practices emerged as the area most in need of further study. Overall satisfaction with current venue selection practices was low among principals and superintendents, and among respondents from rural districts.