

A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER

A TRIBUTE AND THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO ALLOW US TO DO WHAT WE DO



On January 28, my wife and I will celebrate our 27th Wedding Anniversary. At a time like this, it certainly lends itself to reflect on our years together and how many sacrifices she and our daughters have made so I could do the important work that I love to do. I mention this because I know that our coaches, athletic directors, principals and administrators share similar experiences with the loved ones in your lives. In this message, I wish to pay tribute and thank not only my wife and daughters, but pay tribute and thank your wives, husbands, sons/daughters, significant others and family members as well for all they do in support of the great work that you do.

Working in high school education and education-based athletics requires tremendous dedication and an unwavering commitment toward the growth and development of the young people we are so fortunate to serve. It is not like corporate America where the pursuit of monetary compensation can become the primary goal because no one I know went into high school education and education-based athletics believing they were going to achieve great wealth. Our rewards are derived from what we do in helping shape the lives of the young people we work with. Our efforts are focused on leading students through their high school years toward being productive adults in whatever path they choose after they graduate. The times after they have left our schools when our former students and athletes came back to campus to visit us, the wedding invitations, baby announcements and holiday cards they sent, running into former students at the grocery store or at a restaurant where you got a big hug and a thank you from them reminding us of how unique and special the high school environment is. These expressions of appreciation toward professional educators go far beyond any monetary value you would try to place upon them. The experiences like these, that I myself have personally enjoyed, are truly priceless!

With that as a backdrop, the ability of our family members to understand and accept how our choice of career has profoundly affected them is critically important. We are out at night and on weekends, we sometimes miss our son's/daughter's school activities, athletic events and noteworthy milestones in their lives. There are meals without us present, we are not there to help with homework and feelings of frustration and loneliness are certainly common for our loved ones when we are away from home. Through it all, they go forward ensuring that what needs to get done gets done so we can devote the time and energy necessary to fulfill our obligations. It is a partnership in which one aspect of life for us at work simply cannot succeed without the other one away from the job being taken care of by those who love and support us. The tremendous dedication and unwavering commitment I mentioned above that we bring to this effort is assuredly matched, if not exceeded, by those who we depend on at home.

In these moments, when the challenges facing us are extremely difficult, I say thank you to my loved ones, and to your loved ones, for always being there for us and allowing us to do what we love to do. It does not happen without you!

All the best,
Rob Wignel

