## **Creating a Budget for Your Athletic Department**

Jeff Sullivan, CAA Athletic Director Paint Branch High School

One of the many hats that we wear as athletic directors is that of an accountant. Every year, we are responsible for managing athletic department finances and making important financial decisions that will impact our schools on both a short-term and long-term basis. To excel in this role of accountant, it is imperative that we establish a plan of action for all of our financial decisions. A detailed and comprehensive budget will provide a clear vision, not only for us as athletic directors, but to our principals, business managers, booster clubs, and our coaches. Here a few things to think about when creating a budget:

- 1. What is your vision for your athletic department?
  - a. What are your long-term goals?
  - b. What are your short term goals?
- 2. What are your sources of annual income? Some examples might include county allocations, gate receipts, booster club funds, donations, and department fundraising.
- 3. What are your anticipated annual expenses? Some major examples include officials, transportation, equipment and supplies, uniforms, reconditioning, awards, and security.
- 4. Break down all expenses by team and by gender when possible. This is an important component of any athletic budget to ensure compliance with Title IX.
- 5. Establish and incorporate an emergency fund into your budget. There are always unanticipated expenses that arise over the course of the year.
- 6. Create a spreadsheet to organize your data and provide an analysis of your income and expenses. Consult your school's secretary, financial assistant, or another athletic director if you need assistance with this process. Here is an example of a budget spreadsheet for boys' sports expenses:

	Officials	Transport.	Equipment & Supplies	Fees & Rentals	Recond.	Uniforms	Other (Specify)	Total
Baseball								\$0.00
Basketball								\$0.00
Football								\$0.00
Lacrosse								\$0.00
Soccer								\$0.00
Tennis								\$0.00
Volleyball								\$0.00
Wrestling								\$0.00
Totals	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

Boys' Sports Expenses

- 7. Once you have your numbers in place, analyze the following:
  - a. Is your allocation of funds in compliance with Title IX?
  - b. If you have a shortfall of funds, what can you do to make up the difference?
  - c. If you have a surplus of funds, what will they be used for?
- 8. Previous year's financial figures are crucial to financial planning. For example, when anticipating income from football gate receipts, think about your opponents, the date/time of the games, and also plan for some inclement weather. With expenses, be aware of any increases for the upcoming year. For example, in our county, transportation costs for school system transportation increased 25% this year.
- 9. Use your fellow athletic directors as a resource. Each school is different, but you can always learn from your colleague's best practices.
- 10. Include your principal in the budget process and make sure you have his or her approval each year.

Strong financial management is crucial to success as an athletic director. By creating and following a budget for your department, you will go a long way in achieving that success.

For further budget information, including a complete budget spreadsheet, email Jeff Sullivan at Jeffrey\_K\_Sullivan@mcpsmd.org.