

# Gym Facility Dilemma

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## Standard 3:

A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.

## Scenario:

What follows, is a description of the issues confronting Dr. Dinsmore: The school district's basketball court is on the first floor of the building. Only the coaches, players and band members can use the bottom floor to enter the gym during basketball games. This is due to limited seating at the courtside level. Parents, community members, and other fans enter through one of the double doors on the north side of a hallway located on the second floor. The auditorium accommodates 1,200 spectators.

This hallway is 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ ' wide and 30' long (see picture). It has been the practice of parents to leave their children unattended in the hallway during the games they are watching. Teachers and other supervisors are at the court level and cannot see the second level. The children of the parents and other spectators play games in the hallway without supervision.

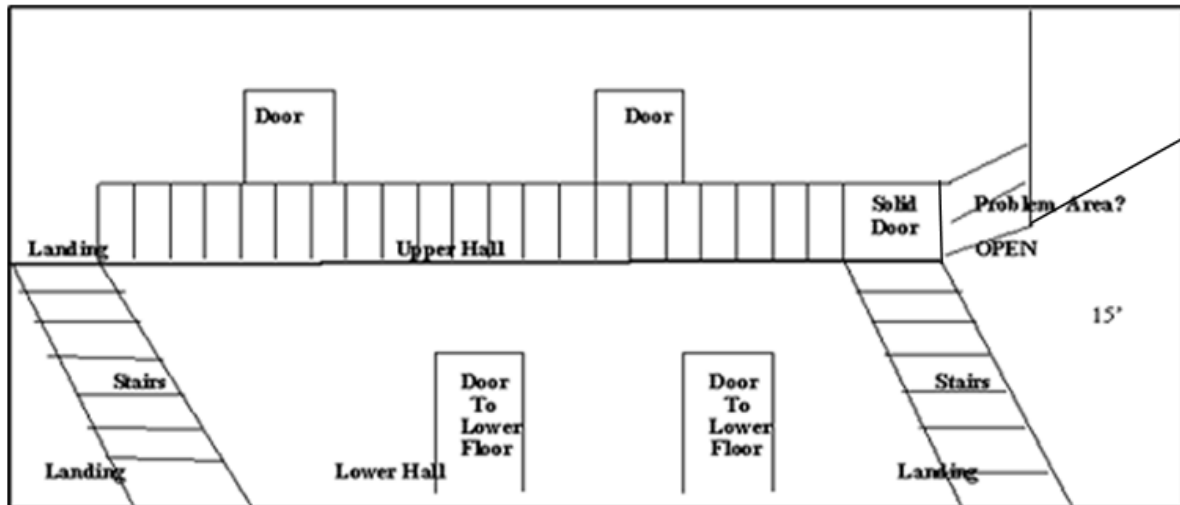


Figure 1

On the East Side of the hallway there is a stairway that is closed to the public during games. To the immediate north of the stairway, there is a 4' steel railing. One bar, two inches in diameter stretches across the railing at a height of 24 inches. Below this railing is a 15' drop to the hard surface of the first floor.

- As a new superintendent, Dr. Dinsmore expressed his concern that one of the unattended children could slip under the railing and fall in a conversation with two school board members. One HVS board member responded to Dr. Dinsmore stating, " It's been going on for years and no one has been hurt." He continued, " don't loose any sleep over it."
- There are other troubles surrounding the HVS basketball program and the facilities that house the program. First, the school district has been cited by the Office of Civil Rights

(OCR) because boys basketball team is given early practice times, 3:00 -- 5:00 p.m., on a daily basis, while the girl's basketball team is forced to practice from 5:30 -- 7:30 p.m. Under the provisions of Title IX, consultants from the OCR have told the school district to devise a more equitable schedule of practices. Prior to Dr. Dinsmore's arrival, the school board had voted to purchase an automatic divider for the gym at a cost of \$34,000. The divider would allow the girls and boys to hold simultaneous practices. Dr. Dinsmore agrees with the OCR, but remains concerned about the area of risk on the East Side of the hallway. He has contacted local contractors and has asked them to submit a bid on a sheet metal cover for the railing. The lowest bid that met the specifications for this project that would run the length of the entire stairwell (see picture #2) was \$15,000.

- The spectator stands lie at a 15 degree angle with three long rows of 8 inch steps. The seating is inaccessible to spectators who are bound to a wheelchair. Citing the American Disabilities Act (ADA), two families have threatened to file suit against HVS, demanding that the gymnasium facility be made to be accessible to wheelchair bound spectators. The most efficient way to do this is to place a chair lift on the stairwell on the East Side. This would enable wheelchair bound spectators to reach the first floor and watch the game. The cost of this installation has been estimated to be \$23,000.
- Although Mr. Dinsmore is new to the school district the issues surrounding the gymnasium and the basketball program have been a prominent concern for several years prior to his arrival. The interested parties in each of the projects mentioned above have demanded a solution by the end of the school year.

## Instructor's Notes and Scoring Guide

For

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#### Instructor's Notes

Following are some questions or statements that can be used to guide student responses (oral or written). After each question are some author comments suggesting some ways or responding to the problem.

1. The total cost of all three projects is \$72,000. However, there is only \$38,000 in the capital expenditure fund that can be used to make the necessary alterations. Prioritize the expenditures.  
**Comments:** If the necessary projects are viewed as isolated expenditures, the cost presents an insurmountable problem. However, when the projects are consolidated, the cost may be less. Is it necessary to purchase a divider to comply with Title IX requirements?
2. Is there a decision to be made? What data should be collected? Is there an outside agency that could aid this decision?  
**Comments:** insurance review, documentation and constructive suggestions from the OCR, dialog with professionals familiar with ADA requirements, fire marshal review, and so on.
3. What processes should Mr. Dinsmore employ to address the concerns about the program and the facilities to the school board? Develop the background for the agenda items that address these concerns.  
**Comments:** Do not personalize the issues. Present factual data gathered from the sources above.
4. In what manner should Dr.Dinsmore manage the flow of communication between his office and the OCR? Write a sample letter to the OCR.  
**Comments:** A paper trail is needed. If possible a face to face meeting with a representative(s) of the OCR may improve communication. Try to gather support and constructive suggestions from the OCR.
5. How should Dr.Dinsmore deal with the parents who are bringing suit against the school district?  
**Comments:** Although Dr. Dinsmore should be cordial to the parents, he/she must be aware that a lawsuit has been filed. Well-intended comments could jeopardize the process of litigation. He/she should leave responses pertinent to the lawsuit to the school district's attorney.
6. What type of collective group, internal to the school, could be of use in this and in other similar situations?  
**Comments:** A standing committee for the evaluation of buildings and grounds could be useful.

## Scoring Guide

On a three point scoring scale where a "0" is the lowest and a "2" is the highest score, the following model response would be rated a "2," connoting mastery.

"On the surface, the three issues may seem to be insurmountable. However, if these matters are viewed in a collaborative manner, the solutions to the problems become more collective than fragmented. For example, boys and girls practices may be alternated, eliminating the immediate need for a divider. A band of sheet metal could cover the East Side railing with professional installation being estimated at \$1200.00. This leaves ample funds to construct the appropriate railing and the concurrent ADA specifications."

**Comments:** The novice administrator must view safety and ADA requirements as joint concerns. As the student addresses this question, the only acceptable response is one that addresses all concerns.