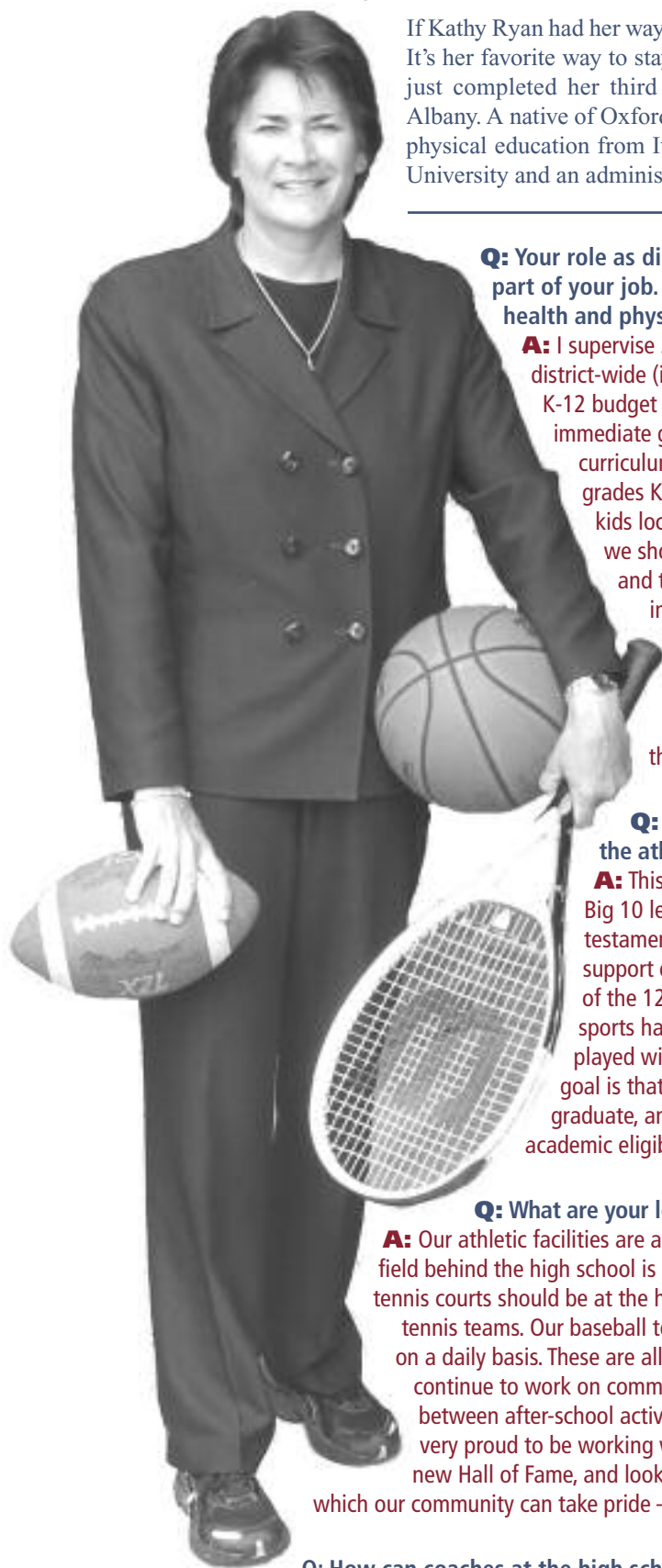


Leading the way

Meet Kathy Ryan

Director of Health, Physical Education and Athletics

If Kathy Ryan had her way, she would play sports all day, every day. It's her favorite way to stay healthy – and happy! At work, she has just completed her third year with the City School District of Albany. A native of Oxford, N.Y., she earned a bachelor's degree in physical education from Ithaca College, a master's from Syracuse University and an administrative degree at SUNY Cortland.



Q: Your role as director of athletics is the most visible part of your job. What are your duties as director of health and physical education?

A: I supervise 38 PE teachers and nine health teachers district-wide (in addition to 101 coaches), as well as the K-12 budget for physical education. My most immediate goal is to improve our physical education curriculum by having it become more sequential grades K-12. From K-5, we should be teaching kids locomotor and fine motor skills. From 6-8 we should be introducing team sports concepts, and then from 9-12 we should be doing individualized activities and introducing lifetime fitness activities. This summer I will be working with a team of six PE teachers to rewrite the K-12 physical education curriculum to help us achieve these goals.

Q: What are some of the highlights of the athletic programs during your tenure?

A: This spring four of our five varsity teams won Big 10 league championships. I think that's a testament to good kids, good coaching and the support of the community. I'm also proud that 127 of the 129 students who played spring varsity sports had passing GPAs, and that 124 of 126 who played winter varsity sports had passing GPAs. Our goal is that 100 percent of our student-athletes graduate, and I think these results show that our academic eligibility program is working.

Q: What are your long-term goals for athletic programs?

A: Our athletic facilities are aging and need to be upgraded. The bowl field behind the high school is not an area that is attractive to kids. The tennis courts should be at the high school for PE classes as well as our tennis teams. Our baseball team needs a baseball field to practice on on a daily basis. These are all things that we are addressing. I want to continue to work on communicating to the public the connection between after-school activities and successful students. I'm also very proud to be working with a great group of volunteers on our new Hall of Fame, and looking forward to that being something in which our community can take pride – Falcon Pride!

Q: How can coaches at the high school and in youth leagues work together to provide more opportunities for students to participate and succeed in athletics?

A: We need our coaches to reach out to the youth coaches and offer our help as needed, and make our facilities available to them.