



## MEET THE ATHLETIC COUNCIL

**JOHN GRZYMALA**

Royalton-Hartland CSD

Male Representative - Niagara-Orleans League

Chemical Awareness Chair



Signatures are like snowflakes. No two match exactly. Many are extraordinary and several are significant. For John Grzymala, each piece of sport memorabilia is important and tells a unique story. Every autograph he has been able to collect over the years rekindles a love for sports and takes him back to a moment.

John grew up in Cheektowaga, eventually moving to West Seneca where he attended West Seneca East High School and wore the green and gold. The 2002 graduate was a two-sport athlete for the Trojans, competing in both basketball and baseball. Grzymala continued on at Canisius College, majoring in Physical Education/Health where he also earned his Master's in 2010 in Sports Administration.

Grzymala credits WSE physical education teacher and basketball coach, Sam Sebastian for having a large impact on his life and making it apparent what direction John should consider for his profession. One of his special, unique professional moments came when while coaching softball for Roy-Hart, John coached against Sebastian.

The father of two-daughter Madelynn, 3 years old, and son Luca, 10 months, has now been at Royalton-Hartland for 11 years. He began his career with the Rams as a high school physical educator, added athletic director duties five years ago and melds both in his new role as Dean

of Students. As R-H Athletic Director, John is most proud of the annual increase in participation numbers. He loves watching the Ram athletes compete in the Niagara Orleans League and through post-season play. He and wife, Danielle, Madelynn and Luca, live in the Town of Lockport within the Starpoint CSD boundaries.

Grzymala loves the game of baseball. He has coached at the Modified, JV, Varsity and JUCO levels for over 15 years. He enjoyed working with the elite, coaching at the Empire State Games when NYS still held its Olympic-style competition. During his time coaching the WNY Team, he coached over 50 players that went on to play Division I baseball. Ten of those players were drafted out of high school into professional baseball and John remains in contact with several as those players continue to play or coach.

Not surprisingly, his throat still catches when he watches his favorite movie, Field of Dreams. His love of baseball is reflected in the legends he targets for autographs. Each opportunity to meet his heroes elicits a return to that boyhood fascination. As he looks at his collection, he recalls how they came to be. John has had in person experiences with the rarities of Cal Ripken Jr., Reggie Jackson, Mark McGwire, Bob Gibson, Curt Schilling, Frank Thomas and Wade Boggs. Even beyond baseball, he recalls the moments he experienced with Jerry Rice and Dominik Hasek. Each elongated signature, each long stroke kindles a specific time, a place. Each extraordinary moment captured, different stories all. Moments that still tie him to his first love.