

1.7 Wrestling Advisory Committee Meeting  
1.8 Hockey Advisory Committee Meeting  
1.15 ExCEL Awards Selection Committee  
1.16-17 MSBA Leadership Conference

1.17-18 Debate State Tournament  
1.22 Athletic Directors Advisory Committee Meeting  
1.29-30 MASSP Winter Conference

# MSHSLconnect

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## After-school safety a top priority

By Dr. Karissa Niehoff, NFHS Executive Director

**GIVEN THE INCREASE** in school-related shootings since the Columbine massacre 20 years ago, perhaps it is not surprising that these acts of violence are no longer confined to regular school hours.

The tragic shooting—and eventual death of an innocent 10-year-old—at a New Jersey high school football game in November made headlines across the country and was a somber reminder that events occurring after school hours are subject to the same type of senseless violence.

This was not the first shooting at a high school sporting event this year—actually it was the 23rd according to the National Center for Spectator Sport Safety and Security (NCS4)—but the death of Micah Tennant and the eventual conclusion of the game five days later at the Philadelphia Eagles’ stadium drew nationwide coverage.

Camden High School and Pleasantville High School finished the playoff game at a nearly empty Lincoln Financial Field before a few hundred family members and friends as the stadium was closed to the public. Larry White, New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association executive director, said the decision to finish the game was made by both schools “to provide closure and send a powerful message that acts of violence and those who perpetrate them will not win.”

High school sporting events traditionally have been safe gathering places for fans to attend and celebrate the accomplishments of high school student-athletes—particularly the sport of football. And we must do whatever is necessary to make sure these venues remain safe and secure.

Reports have been encouraging about attendance as state football playoffs concluded. In Indiana, about 20,000 people attended the Class 5A championship at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis on the day after Thanksgiving.

We want to ensure that our stadiums remain open for everyone to attend. The fans—students, parents, other family members, friends, community residents—are what make education-based athletics different from non-school sports.

More intense security plans have been in existence at college and professional sports venues for many years; it is essential that leaders in high school sports move after-school safety and security to the top of their priority lists.

In addition to school athletic events that typically start in early evening hours, security plans also should be in place for practices inside and outside the school building.

Many resources are available for high school athletic administrators to implement an after-school safety and security program, including the free online education course on the NFHS Learning Center at [www.NFHSLearn.com](http://www.NFHSLearn.com). “Afterschool Security” provides practical strategies for developing and implementing a school safety team and an after-school activities supervision plan.

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## Make a New Year's Resolution to "Say Yes to Officiating"

By Jason Nickleby, MSHSL Coordinator of Officials

**AS WE LOOK TO 2020**, it is a time to reflect and be thankful. We are thankful for the 6,300 contest officials and judges that continue to, in a nod to NASO, "Say Yes to Officiating." These individuals have made a commitment to service and have chosen to give more than they receive. Students-athletes across Minnesota have the opportunity to represent their community through school-based activities. Activities Directors, coaches and officials make these opportunities happen, and we are thankful for them all.

In addition to being thankful for the outstanding MSHSL officials currently working, a new year provides a breath of fresh air and a gentle push to do more. What can we do, as a League, to inspire others to "Say Yes to Officiating" and how do we retain the ones we have? Foremost, it is critical to demonstrate appreciation and approbation for experienced officials. In any profession or any other kind of role, experience provides an enhanced skill-set that is used to benefit the end user, in this case, the athletes. As we focus on retention efforts, the League will continue to promote the "ThankARef" program as a way to encourage and highlight the outstanding work that is being done at the high school level throughout Minnesota. Keep sending those tweets and posts! [#ThankARef](#)

This new year will be a time to continue focusing on the recruitment and

retention of officials. This effort begins, and ends, at sportsmanship. The member schools understand that sportsmanship for players, coaches and fans is a priority. Improved sportsmanship at MSHSL events provides a better atmosphere to play in, coach in and officiate in. If we maintain an upward trajectory in this regard, experienced officials will stay and new ones will join. While officials don't guarantee perfection, allowing them to officiate without a constant stream of criticism gives all of us a better shot at success.

For your resolution to begin the new year, ask yourself how you can "Say Yes to Officiating." As a coach, how does it feel to officiate for me? As a fan, how does it feel to officiate in front of me? As a player, how does it feel to officiate me? Commit yourself to being that change agent in MSHSL activities. Be the reason that officials continue to officiate. Be the reason that new recruits join the team. Officiating MSHSL events is an outstanding opportunity to participate and give back to sports we love. We can all "Say Yes to Officiating" in the new year! [#2020Vision](#) [#mshsl](#)

To learn more about the benefits of becoming and continuing as a sports official, check out [sayyestoofficiating.com](http://sayyestoofficiating.com).

## voices *we asked, you answered*

With the turn of the calendar year, it is often a time of reflection and goal setting. We checked in with two activities administrators to find out:

**What kinds  
of New Year's  
Resolutions does  
an administrator  
make?**



**LISA MYRAN-SCHUTTE** | Pine Island High School

*"My New Year's Resolution is to be deliberate and purposeful. This is the time of the year when my family feels the grind of the AD job with nightly supervision. It is also the time of year when I begin to feel the grind and get somewhat testy. So, I will resolve to be deliberate when I am with my family, put my phone away and be attentive (even with the ongoing stories of my teenage daughter and my tween). I also resolve to be deliberate (on Wednesday and Sunday) and very purposeful of having a real supper (not pizza or mac and cheese or cereal). Hopefully this resolution will last past the first week of January."*



**JED HELWIG** | North St. Paul High School

*"My New Year's Resolution is to be an intentional leader in the North St. Paul school community. Serving and supporting students, coaches and advisors to fulfill their purpose. Mindful of what our students in our programs are getting while providing a richer experience to ALL that fosters fun, learning and growth. Go Polars!"*

## Sack Hunger food drive a great success

**THE SECOND ANNUAL** MSHSL Sack Hunger food drive, a partnership effort with Second Harvest Heartland, was a great success with the top three schools gathering a combined total of more than 7,000 pounds of food for the hungry.



All schools with teams participating in the football state tournament were invited to be part of the food drive. Donations of non-perishable food items were collected at the schools and in their communities, distributed to those in need by Second Harvest Heartland, partner organizations and local food shelves around the state. Most participating schools had student groups lead the food-donation efforts.

The top three schools involved were: Owatonna with 3,108 pounds; Blooming Prairie with 2,171 pounds; and Dassel-Cokato with 2,169 pounds.

A celebration of Owatonna High School's achievement will be held February 10 as part of the school's Snow Week pepfest.

Second Harvest Heartland helps the one in 10 people in Minnesota who face hunger every day. In 2017, Second Harvest Heartland helped provide a record 81 million meals to more than a half million people.

## Neugebauer selected for NFHS recognition



### LONGTIME WORTHINGTON HIGH SCHOOL

Fine Arts teacher Linda Neugebauer was the Minnesota State High School League's nominee for the NFHS Outstanding Speech/Debate/Theatre Educator Award. She will receive a certificate and plaque from the NFHS in honor of her achievements.

Neugebauer has been associated with the Worthington speech team for the past 22 years, guiding many student-participants to section and state competitions. In addition to being a judge for the past 20 years, she has also served terms on numerous advisory committees.

She also directed plays for 12 years at Worthington High School.

## Briefly...



About two weeks after quarterbacking Caledonia to its fifth consecutive Class AA football crown and 68th victory in a row, senior guard Noah King scored 15 points to surpass the 2,000-point milestone in basketball.

## do you know?

- 1 Can you name, in order, the top three boys basketball teams that have the most appearances in the state tournament?
- 2 Where were the first classes held in the Fergus Falls School District in 1871?
- 3 Where are the "ABC Schools" located?
- 4 When did Visual Arts become a sanctioned MSHSL fine arts activity?
- 5 What player scored a state-record 90 points, including making 20 of 29 three-point attempts?

Answers on page 4

## NFHS news

### LONGTIME RHODE ISLAND INTERSCHOLASTIC

League Executive Director Tom Mezzanotte announced that he will retire from his position, effective July 31, 2020. Mezzanotte, who has been an educator and administrator for 47 years, became just the second full-time executive director of the RIIL in 2004. Previously, he had served for more than three decades as a teacher, football coach, assistant principal and principal in Rhode Island.



He served a term on the NFHS Board of Directors from 2011-15, including the role of president during the 2014-15 school year.

## Briefly...

- The NFHS announced that John McKissick and Pat Sullivan, national hall of fame inductees and football legends, recently passed away. McKissick, who died on Thanksgiving Day, coached Summerville (SC) High School for 63 seasons and compiled a 621-156-13 record. He has 10 state championships and was national coach of the year three times. Sullivan, who passed away on Dec. 1, was a high school standout at John Carroll Catholic High School in Birmingham, Ala. Voted as the greatest

player in the history of Alabama high school football, he was also a basketball standout. He won the Heisman Trophy while playing at Auburn before playing seven seasons in the National Football League.

- The NFHS will announce the 2020-21 National Policy Debate Topic on Jan. 10.

## in the mail

The following is from basketball official Kyle Lamppa, who was part of a crew that worked the varsity boys basketball game between Lake of the Woods and Littlefork-Big Falls on December 6.

*When officiating basketball at Littlefork-Big Falls, they provide "referee helpers" during the game. They are kids ranging from 3rd-5th grade. They are dressed in referee-striped shirts with a screen print on the back that says "respect the refs." During timeouts, they run onto the floor, bring us water to drink, chat with us, and then head back to the sideline. They are prompt, safe, and really add to the enjoyment of officiating events at the school. The students, their parents, and the administration at the school should be commended for thinking of this gesture and really making our night with their efforts. On long winter nights, officiating multiple games a week, it truly is the "little" gestures that make it worthwhile. Kudos to Littlefork-Big Falls.*

## recognition

### SUBMIT YOUR NOMINATIONS!

The Most Valuable Teammate Award recognition program is underway.

The Minnesota State High School League encourages school administrators, coaches and fine arts leaders to nominate students from their community that exemplify the qualities of a great teammate, one that is respectful, reliable, and supportive of the others while putting the team before self.

Nomination forms are posted on the League's website on the Recognition tab. Questions about the Most Valuable Award program can be directed to Lisa Lissimore at [llissimore@mshsl.org](mailto:llissimore@mshsl.org) or 763-560-2262.

The Sportsmanship Challenge is also seeking nominations for outstanding acts of sportsmanship by member schools in athletics, music, drama, speech, debate, robotics and visual arts. The monthly social media campaign is presented by the League and corporate sponsor Wells Fargo.

Participating schools are encouraged to submit sportsmanship entries to John Millea at [jmillea@mshsl.org](mailto:jmillea@mshsl.org) throughout the school year. All entries will be reviewed and those selected will be shared via the League's social media platforms on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. A winning program will be determined each month from December through June. These school programs will be part of a scoreboard feature that will be displayed at various state tournaments during the 2019-2020 school year.

## technology

**THE MSHSL BOARD OF DIRECTORS** approved an agreement with Gravity Works to build new technology systems and structures at its December meeting.

Gravity Works is experienced in building websites and tools for state-level organizations, colleges, and universities, and non-profits and will provide the MSHSL with a team responsible for the project.

Gravity Works will provide work in these areas:

- Building a public-facing web site
- Building management tools for member schools and League staff
- Providing maintenance as needed on parts of the current web site until new tools are built

As this process moves forward, input and feedback from stakeholders will be critical. Please look for ways that you can be involved in this process.

## After-school safety

*Continued from page 1*

As was the case with increased security at airports after September 11, 2001, the results of heightened safety plans for after-school activities may be an inconvenience for some individuals. However, plans must be in place to ensure that high school stadiums and arenas remain open for the almost eight million participants in high school sports, as well as the estimated 350 million fans annually.

### MVT WINNERS

- WEEK 9** **Danny Striggow**  
Orono High School
- WEEK 10** **Jack Newcomb & Jacob Wesley**  
Moorhead High School
- WEEK 11** **Tessa Cordes**  
Orono High School

The complete list of winners can be found on our [Recognition Page](#).

### SPORTSMANSHIP CHALLENGE

#### DECEMBER

##### Minnesota River Conference:

Belle Plaine, Jordan, LeSueur-Henderson, Mayer Lutheran, Norwood-Young America Central, Sibley East, Southwest Christian, Tri-City United

## quiz answers

*Questions on page 3*

1. Austin, 32; Bemidji, 30; Red Wing, 25.
2. In a horse barn on the bank of the Otter Tail River.
3. In the Anoka-Hennepin School District. They are the high schools of Anoka, Andover, Blaine, Champlin Park and Coon Rapids.
4. 2001
5. Cash Eggleston, Minnesota Transitions, 2005.



# Board of Directors Meeting

## Minutes Summary



October 3, 2019

Reflection, Pledge of Allegiance

### Board Actions

1. Approved the Agenda.
  2. Approved the Minutes of the August 6, 2019 Board of Directors meeting with the following amendment: Member Carpentier asked to record a dissent vote to Action Item #9B 2019-20 Board of Directors Committee Assignments.
  3. Aaron Berndt, President, Minnesota High School Track and Field Coaches Association, spoke in favor of adding a third class to Track and Field.
  4. Craig Anderson, Executive Director, Minnesota High School Baseball Coaches Association, spoke in favor of the Baseball proposal to increase the 20 contests to 24 contests in 20 dates.
  5. Board of Directors Reports and Comments were received and included complimenting staff on their leadership at Area Meetings and the quality of the parent video shared with member schools.
  6. Legislative Report was received and included student physicals for extra-curricular activities and an interest to add additional screening; a Minnesota Supreme Court ruling that a coach is not a public figure and may sue parents; and the 2020 Regular Legislative Session will convene on Tuesday, February 11.
  7. Legal Counsel's Report was received and included one case that has been dismissed and an update on two pending cases.
  8. The Executive Director's Report was received and included:
    - The Executive Director attended the Section 5 Meeting in Topeka, Kansas, and the MSHSL will host the 2020 meeting;
    - Information regarding the process of placing winter cooperative sponsorships into competitive sections;
    - Shared feedback from Area Meetings;
    - The MSHSL Foundation has a new website and is now accepting online applications for FORM A; more than 100 applications have been submitted;
    - Praised individuals at Kimball High School for their response to a medical emergency during a football game and stated the importance of having an Emergency Action Plan in place;
    - Thanked League staff for their work assisting member schools and the Board of Directors for their support; and
    - Lisa Lissimore stated the MSHSL Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony will be held on Sunday, October 20, 2019 in St. Paul.
  9. The Executive Committee Report was received and included:
    - Laura Mackenthun, Assistant Director, gave a technology update. A Board Workshop will be held on Monday, October 14, 2019 and will include a presentation followed by discussion;
    - The Cooperative Sponsorship Ad Hoc Committee will be reassembled to review Bylaw 403;
    - Denied a request from Cretin-Derham Hall and Amerigo Twin Cities that would allow international students varsity eligibility;
    - Approved a request from Harbor City International School in Duluth for member schools to play one additional boys basketball and one additional girls basketball game if their current schedule has the maximum number of contests allowed and that the additional game is against Harbor City International School.
  - Approved a request from Ubah Medical Academy in Hopkins for member schools to play one additional boys basketball and one additional girls basketball game if their current schedule has the maximum number of contests allowed and that the additional game is against Ubah Medical Academy.
  - Approved the next Administrative Region Placement to be in conjunction with the Competitive Section Placement in spring of 2021; and
  - The Committee is discussing a Presenting Partner Policy.
- Approved the Executive Committee Report as presented.
10. Denied adding Program Oral Interpretation as a 14th Category for Speech.
  11. Approved adding a third class to Track and Field with classification to be determined according to policy and with implementation in 2022.
  12. Denied an increase of up to four contests in a season in Baseball but keeping the same amount of dates at 20.
  13. Approved aligning District Football with Competitive Section Placement for the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years.
  14. Approved the October 3, 2019 Eligibility Committee Minutes as presented.
  15. Approved the July and August 2019 Financial Statements as presented.
  16. Approved the InSideOut Initiative Partnership with Minnesota Vikings and fully funded by the NFL Foundation.

### Discussion Items

17.
  - Proposed changes to Debate Rules and Policies.
  - Proposed changes to the Track and Field Wheelchair Division Guidelines.
  - Representative Assembly Amendment proposals to current Bylaws are due to the MSHSL office by October 15, 2019.
  - Admission to state tournaments was reviewed and staff discussed the feasibility of charging admission to tournaments that are currently non-ticketed.

*The complete official Minutes may be obtained from the League office by the designated school representative of member schools.*