

National Federation of State High School Associations



# Annual Report

2016-17

Take Part. Get Set For Life.®

# NFHS Vision and Mission Statements

## Vision

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) is the national leader for education-based high school athletics and activities, which prepare tomorrow's leaders for the next level of life through innovative programs, healthy participation, achievement, and development of positive relationships.

## Mission

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) serves its members by providing leadership for the administration of education-based high school athletics and activities through the writing of playing rules that emphasize health and safety, educational programs that develop leaders, and administrative support to increase participation opportunities and promote sportsmanship.

## Core Beliefs and Values

### We Believe

Student participation in education-based high school athletics and activities:

- Is a privilege.
- Enriches the educational experience.
- Encourages academic achievement.
- Promotes respect, integrity and sportsmanship.
- Prepares for the future in a global community.
- Develops leadership and life skills.
- Fosters the inclusion of diverse populations.
- Promotes healthy lifestyles and safe competition.
- Encourages positive school/community culture.
- Should be fun.

### The NFHS:

- Serves as the national authority that promotes and protects the defining values of education-based high school athletics and activities in collaboration with its member state associations.
- Serves as the national authority on competition rules while promoting fair play and seeking to minimize risk of injury for student participants in education-based high school athletics and activities.
- Promotes lifelong health and safety values through participation.
- Develops and delivers impactful, innovative and engaging educational programs to serve the changing needs of state associations, administrators, coaches, directors, officials, students and parents.
- Provides professional development opportunities for member state association staffs.
- Promotes cooperation, collaboration and communication with and among state associations.
- Collects and provides data analysis in order to allow its membership to make informed decisions.



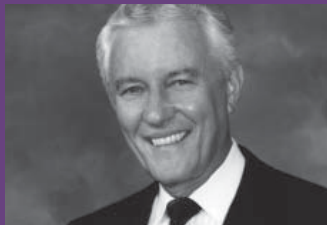
# History



H.V. Porter



Clifford B. Fagan



Brice B. Durbin



Robert F. Kanaby



Robert B. Gardner

The National Federation of State High School Associations had its beginning on May 14, 1920, during a meeting in Chicago with representatives from Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan and Wisconsin. The primary purpose of that first meeting was to discuss problems that had resulted from high school contests organized by colleges and universities or by other clubs or promoters. Little attention was being paid to eligibility rules of the high school associations or to other school group regulations, and chaotic conditions had developed.

Because of this concern, the "Midwest Federation of State High School Athletic Associations" was formed. In 1921, Illinois, Iowa, Michigan and Wisconsin became charter members and, in 1923, the organization's name was changed to the National Federation of State High School Athletic Associations. By 1930, 28 state associations had joined the organization, and, by 1940, seven others had come aboard. When the Texas University Interscholastic League joined in 1969, all 50 state associations plus the District of Columbia were members.

By 1940, a national office with a full-time executive staff became necessary. The office was established in Chicago, Illinois, and H.V. Porter was appointed executive secretary and treasurer. Following Mr. Porter's retirement in 1958, Clifford B. Fagan was selected executive secretary.

In 1970, "athletic" was removed from the name of the organization because of services in fine arts activities. The organization henceforth was known as the National Federation of State High School Associations.

In 1971, the office was moved from Chicago to Elgin, Illinois, a Chicago suburb. Brice B. Durbin was named executive secretary-designate in February 1976 and officially succeeded Mr. Fagan as executive director in September 1977. The headquarters were moved from Elgin, Illinois, to Kansas City, Missouri, on May 1, 1979. After Mr. Durbin's retirement in January 1993, Robert F. Kanaby became the fourth full-time executive director. In 1997, NFHS was adopted as the new acronym. On February 1, 2000, the organization relocated to Indianapolis, Indiana. Mr. Kanaby retired in May 2010, and he was succeeded by Robert B. Gardner, who became the fifth full-time executive director.

# Greetings From the NFHS

## DEAR FRIENDS,

As you will see on the Year in Review section on page 5, we had numerous opportunities in 2016-17 to promote the values and benefits of high school activity programs – perhaps more than at any time in the 98-year history of this organization. It truly was another great year for the NFHS, our 51 member state associations and the 19,200 high schools in our member associations.

Through our #MyReasonWhy and Officials Recruitment Programs, our ever-growing social media presence on Twitter and Facebook, our continued presence in every high school with *High School Today* magazine, as well as our national presence through the NFHS Learning Center (and its database in excess of one million people) and the NFHS Network, our messages about education-based activities reached millions of individuals on a regular basis throughout the year.

As has been the case for the past several years, we continue to address concerns about concussions and the drop in football participation. The decrease of 25,901 participants, however, amounts to fewer than two individuals (1.8) per school, and overall decrease of 2.5 percent. While we are concerned when any sport experiences a decline in participation, the numbers do not substantiate that schools are dropping the sport. The NFHS and its member state associations have worked hard to reduce the risk of injury in high school football, and we are pleased at the continued strength of the sport across the country.

Overall, participation in high school sports increased for the 28th consecutive year, and girls participation had the largest one-year increase in 16 years. This was great news as we celebrated the 45th anniversary of Title IX in 2017.

Now in its 10th year, the NFHS Learning Center continued its amazing story of delivering online education courses to coaches, administrators, parents, students, music directors and adjudicators, and others. Through the 2016-17 school year, we have delivered an unbelievable six million courses online at [www.NFHSLearn.com](http://www.NFHSLearn.com).

One of the challenges facing our schools and state associations is recruiting and retaining men and women to officiate high school sports. With a crisis looming in some areas – and in some sports – we initiated the Officials Recruitment Campaign this year in an effort to attract more people to the officiating avocation. We have been pleased with our early results as more than 2,000 individuals across the country have expressed an interest. While we have a long way to go, we are excited about the early returns.

Sadly, we had to say goodbye this past year to a longtime staff member and state association leader. Becky Oakes retired as the 2016-17 year came to a close after 11 years on our staff and many years as executive director of the Missouri State High School Activities Association. We will miss Becky's great work with our rules-writing program and her years of experience in high school sports administration. We are pleased to welcome Julie Cochran and Lindsey Atkinson to our administrative staff.

We encourage you to review the Year in Review section on page 5, and the Programs and Services section on page 10 for a comprehensive look at our accomplishments this past year. We thank you for your support and look forward to another tremendous year in working with our nation's young people.



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Gary Musselman, Kansas  
2016-17 President



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Jerome Singleton, South Carolina  
2017-18 President



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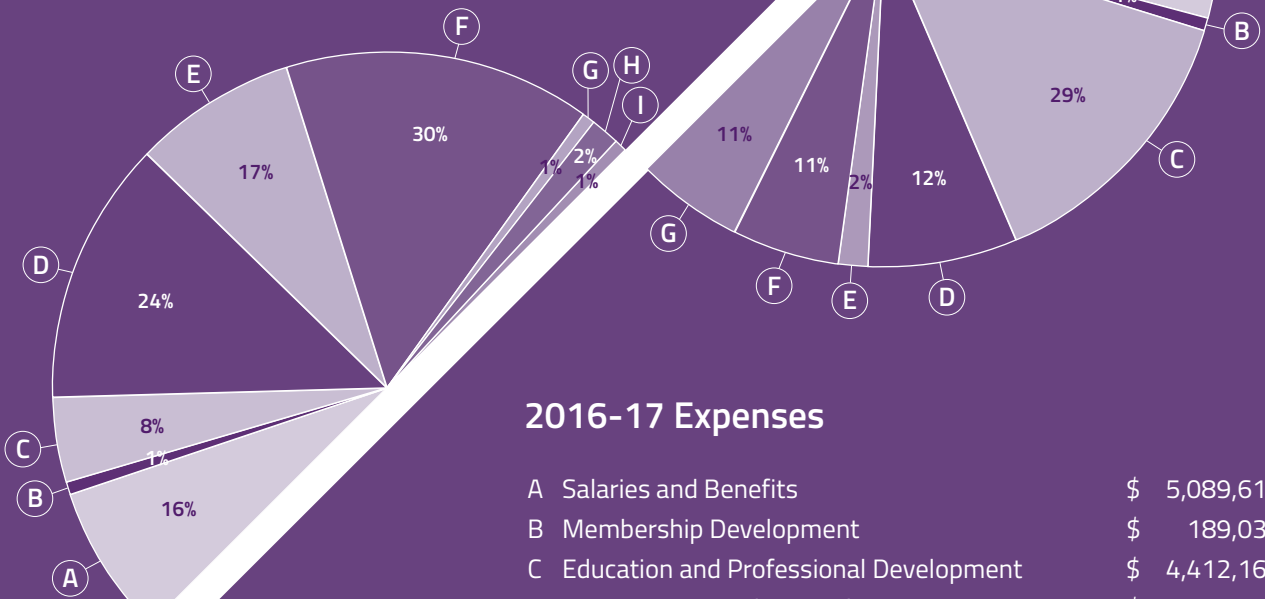
Robert B. Gardner  
Executive Director, NFHS

# NFHS Financial Report

## 2016-17 Revenue

A	Membership Dues – Professional Organizations	\$ 2,568,253
B	Membership Dues – State Associations	\$ 146,350
C	Meetings and Conferences	\$ 1,332,705
D	Educational Programs	\$ 3,734,776
E	Contributions, Royalties and Sponsors	\$ 2,736,881
F	Sales	\$ 4,675,362
G	Advertising	\$ 182,745
H	Investment Return	\$ 307,522
I	Other Income	\$ 158,846

**Total Revenue \$ 15,843,440**



## 2016-17 Expenses

A	Salaries and Benefits	\$ 5,089,617
B	Membership Development	\$ 189,039
C	Education and Professional Development	\$ 4,412,162
D	Management and General	\$ 1,743,175
E	Grants and Distributions	\$ 296,700
F	Professional Organizations	\$ 1,688,711
G	Rules-making Products and Publications	\$ 1,740,068

**Total Expenses \$ 15,159,472**

# Year in Review

## National Presence

### Sport Specialization Study

In an effort to find answers to questions related to sport specialization, the NFHS Foundation funded a study conducted by the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health. From an injury standpoint, the study indicated that high school athletes who specialize in a single sport sustain lower-extremity injuries at significantly higher rates than athletes who do not specialize. Athletes who specialized in one sport were twice as likely to report previously sustaining a lower-extremity injury while participating in sports (46%) than athletes who did not specialize (24%). In addition, specialized athletes sustained 60 percent more new lower-extremity injuries during the study than athletes who did not specialize.

Thirty-four percent of the student-athletes involved in the Wisconsin study specialized in one sport, with females (41%) more likely to specialize than males (28%). Soccer had the highest level of specialization for both males (45%) and females (49%). After soccer, the rate of specialization for females was highest for softball (45%), volleyball (43%) and basketball (37%). The top specialization sports for males after soccer were basketball (37%), tennis (33%) and wrestling (29%).

### Friday Night Football Resolution

In an effort to re-emphasize that Friday nights in the fall should be reserved for high school football, the NFHS adopted a resolution that urged schools and teams at the college and professional levels to honor the longstanding tradition and schedule games on other days. The NFHS membership adopted the following resolution prior to the 2017 high school football season:

“Be it **RESOLVED** that every Friday night during the fall in America is ‘High School Football Night.’

“Be it **FURTHER RESOLVED** that college and professional football teams should refrain from scheduling contests on Friday nights. Such restraint would be an investment in their own future success. It would also demonstrate that high school football has value well beyond the field of play. Schools, communities and scholastic teams for girls and boys all benefit when football is strong.

“**THEREFORE**, the National Federation of State High School Associations urges all parties to observe the central premise of this resolution.”

### Risk Minimization

The NFHS continued to be a leader nationally in efforts to reduce the risk of injury for the more than 7.9 million participants in high school sports. Since 2009, all NFHS rules publications have contained guidelines for management of a student exhibiting signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion. Since 2010, the “Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion” statement has been published in all NFHS rules books. By January 2014, all state governments had enacted concussion laws which established mandatory protocols.

In response to the Korey Stringer Institute’s ranking of state high school associations in the area of managing injury risk to high school student-athletes, the NFHS received favorable response around the country to its statement. The NFHS noted that the 51 state high school associations post guidelines, speak at seminars, give warnings and alerts, and regularly promote the health and well-being of young people. Following is a statement from this national release:

*“The overall safety of student-athletes competing in high school sports is a key objective of the NFHS and all 51 state associations. Information on precautions related to heat and head issues is regularly shared with schools across the country. While the 19,000 high schools range in size from 50 students to 5,000, there has never been a time that coaches, athletic directors and school administrators were more focused on risk minimization.”*

## Social Media

The NFHS' activity on social media has been an ever-increasing way to raise the organization's national presence, and 2016-17 was a successful year in that regard.

The NFHS is mainly active on four social media platforms: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. During the 2016-17 school year, the NFHS' Twitter handle (NFHS\_org) had a 31-percent increase in followers to more than 18,000, and had its posts regularly reach nearly one million Twitter feeds each month.



Using periodic campaigns to reward users with free courses on [www.NFHSLearn.com](http://www.NFHSLearn.com) and other prizes, the NFHS' Facebook page audience grew to nearly 12,000 likes. Facebook was also instrumental in the success of the NFHS #MyReasonWhy and Officials Recruitment public-relations campaigns.

In addition, the NFHS claims more than 10,000 followers of its LinkedIn page and more than 1,000 followers of its Instagram account.

## MyReasonWhy Campaign

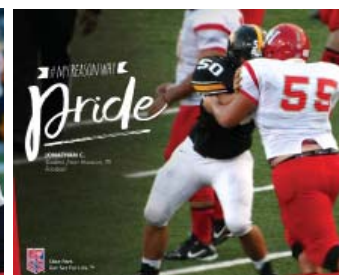
The NFHS promoted the value of high school activity programs across the country during the 2016-17 school year through a national campaign entitled **#MyReasonWhy**. With the help of a national public-relations firm, the NFHS and its member state associations utilized social media, state association websites, posters and ads in publications to push messages about the value of sports and activities.

In addition, almost 500 real-life stories about why students, coaches and others are involved in high school activity programs were collected on the NFHS website during the campaign, and messages about the values of high school activities regularly appeared throughout NFHS and state association publications.

## National Officials Recruitment Campaign

In an effort to address the growing shortage of contest officials in high school sports, the NFHS embarked on a **National Officials Recruitment Campaign** during the 2016-17 school year. In the April 2017 issue of *High School Today*, athletic directors received a poster titled "The Final Whistle? – Not So Fast." The poster encourages student-athletes to consider becoming officials to give back to their sport of choice, support the teenagers in their community and earn extra income.

In addition, a website – [www.HighSchoolOfficials.com](http://www.HighSchoolOfficials.com) – was created for individuals to sign up to become officials in their state. Also, a year-long social media campaign kicked off in spring 2017 and will continue throughout the 2017-18 school year. Regular posts are provided through Twitter and Facebook to high school and college athletic directors in the hope of involving more men and women in the officiating avocation.



## NFHS Learning Center

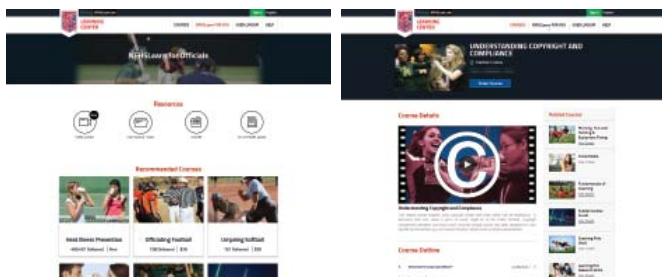
The NFHS Learning Center celebrated its 10th year of providing outstanding online education courses during the 2016-17 school year and passed six million courses delivered through its website at [www.NFHSLearn.com](http://www.NFHSLearn.com).

Among the new courses this past year were five new sport-specific officiating courses – *Officiating Basketball*, *Officiating Football*, *Officiating Soccer: Fouls and Misconduct*, *Officiating Swimming and Diving*, and *Umpiring Softball*. Additional online officiating courses are expected during the 2017-18 year.

In addition to the revision of the flagship “*Fundamentals of Coaching*” course, the NFHS launched three other courses that have received tremendous response. The “*Mental Training for Performance*” course was developed in partnership with the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) and is designed to sharpen athletes’ mental games to impact performance and gain a competitive edge. The “*Appearance and Performing Enhancing Drugs and Substances*” course was created in partnership with the Taylor Hooton Foundation.

The highly anticipated “*Understanding Copyright and Compliance*” course was launched as the 2016-17 came to a close. The free course geared toward music teachers, spirit coaches and school administrators, explores copyright laws and how those laws impact the interscholastic community. It was produced with the assistance of the National Association for Music Education (NAFME) and USA Cheer.

After starting with two courses – *Fundamentals of Coaching* and *First Aid for Coaches* – in 2007 through the NFHS Coach Education Program, the NFHS Learning Center now offers more than 55 online courses, including more than 25 that are available free of charge. The most popular free course has been “*Concussion in Sports*” with more than 3.5 million courses delivered since 2010.



## NFHS Network

More than 25,000 events involving 27 sports and activities were covered last year on the NFHS Network at [www.NFHSNetwork.com](http://www.NFHSNetwork.com). The 2016-17 school year was the fourth year for the NFHS Network – the first-of-its-kind, all-digital high school network which is a joint venture between the NFHS, its member state associations and PlayOn! Sports.

The NFHS Network showcases the unique accomplishments of students – both the student-athletes participating in the state series events sanctioned by states, along with the student broadcasters from around the county who produce events through the School Broadcast Program (SBP) for their schools.

Forty-two of the 51 NFHS-member associations are members of the NFHS Network. Along with nine sections in the California Interscholastic Federation and five other associations within NFHS state associations, the total number of members is currently 56.



As an aid for schools that have no one to run the program, or simply too many events to cover, the NFHS Network has introduced Pixellot, a system designed for automated event production. The Pixellot unit requires no camera operator and the auto-tracking features enable cameras to follow the action.

As the fifth year of the NFHS Network commenced, Mark Koski, director of sports, events and development at the NFHS the past 10 years, was named chief executive officer. Koski will split time between the NFHS Network and his duties as director of marketing with the NFHS.

## National Student Leadership Summit

More than 160 student ambassadors from 30 states and Canada gathered in Indianapolis in July 2017 for the National Student Leadership Summit (NSLS) sponsored by the NFHS. This was the third consecutive NSLS hosted by the NFHS after sponsoring seven previous National Student Leadership Conferences (2001–2003, 2007–2010).

The student ambassadors, most of whom are athletes in their local high schools, participated in workshop sessions led by experts from around the country. The students also traveled to nearby Plainfield High School to interact and play with athletes from Special Olympics Indiana.

This year's speakers included **Omari Pearson**, founder of Passion to Purpose, LLC; **Dr. Kevin Ringhofer**, a national trainer and consultant from Minnesota; **Dr. Gregory Dale**, professor and director of sport psychology and leadership programs at Duke University; **C. L. "Shep" Shepard**, founder of Keep The Change, Inc.; **Monica Pool Knox**, head of global talent management at Microsoft; **Deb Hult**, co-founder of Core Trainings and a renowned presenter on relational leadership; and **Elliot Hopkins**, NFHS director of sports and student services and director of the NSLS.



## High School Today

The NFHS celebrated its 10th year of distributing its flagship publication – *High School Today* – to four key individuals at every high school in the United States. The slick, four-color magazine is mailed eight times a year to the superintendent, principal, athletic director and school board president at approximately 19,000 high schools for a total distribution of 75,000 per issue.

In addition, the online presence of *High School Today* continues to expand through the display of articles on the NFHS website at [www.NFHS.org](http://www.NFHS.org) and through the electronic distribution of each issue to the NFHS Learning Center database of more than one million individuals.

National issues in high school athletic and performing arts activities covered in 2016–17 included: legal issues related to booster club embezzlement, copyright laws and school music programs, concussion management in student-athletes, legal issues related to sports event management and security, perspectives of first-year athletic directors, shortage of sports officials reaching crisis stage, how revisions in the Fair Labor Standards Act affects athletic programs, developing an education-based culture in high school activities, study on sport specialization indicates higher injury rates, recruiting students for speech/debate programs, transgender students in school sports programs, improving sportsmanship in education-based activity programs, balanced approach to activities/academics, suggestions for handling problematic parents, competitive balance of schools, following guidelines to reduce dangers of heat illness and schools encouraging multiple-sport participation.



## Strategic Plan

The first year of the 2016-2021 NFHS Strategic Plan was carried out this past year with many of the initiatives fully underway or completed. The five-year roadmap for the NFHS is organized into five Strategic Priorities: Health and Safety, Public Relations/Communications, Education, Technology and Constituent Relationships.

Among the goals initiated or completed in the first year were placing Automated External Defibrillators in schools without AED units, utilizing a national public-relations firm to promote the value of sports participation, developing a task force to assess interest in national events/championships, increasing use of social media to communicate messages, increasing use of video to assist in communication with the membership, continued expansion of the NFHS Learning Center, updating of the NFHS website, updating of the NFHS membership system, and evaluating ways to increase membership in NFHS professional organizations.

## Development

The NFHS continued its tremendous success in reaching agreements with companies across the country to support high school activity programs by becoming NFHS Corporate Partners. Four new companies joined with the NFHS in 2016-17, bringing the overall number to 21 Corporate Partners.

New partners for the 2016-17 year are **MaxPreps**; **MetLife**; **Socketyes**, the exclusive NFHS partner for soccer; and **USA Weightlifting**, sponsor of the NFHS Coach Education Program.

The other NFHS Corporate Partners are **Bag Tags** (ice hockey), **Danmar Warrior** (wrestling), **Gill Athletics** (track and field), **Ohio University** (coach education), **Selective Service System** (football), **Smitty Officials Apparel** (officials apparel), **Sports Imports** (volleyball), **Team IP** (softball, baseball), **Varsity Spirit** (spirit) and several general sponsors – **ArbiterSports**, **Dissinger Reed**, **K12 Licensing**, **Liberty Mutual**, **Olive Garden**, **SMi Awards**, **TeamSnap** and **Under Armour**.

## NFHS Foundation

A record amount of \$35,025 was raised for the NFHS Foundation at the 2017 NFHS Summer Meeting in Providence, Rhode Island. A total of 202 people registered for the Fun Run/Walk, and the event raised \$6,060. The golf tournament raised \$18,865, and the Silent Auction brought in \$4,556. Other fundraising events at the Summer Meeting were the 98-for-98 campaign (\$4,644) and golf hole sponsorship (\$1,120).



The NFHS Foundation serves the interest of young people who participate in interscholastic sports and activities by awarding grants for research and program development in the areas of character education and sports risk minimization. Since the NFHS Foundation was started in 1996, more than \$667,000 in grants has been awarded to member state associations.

A portion of the amount expended by the NFHS Foundation in 2016-17 was earmarked for two projects – research in the areas of wrestling hydration and weight management through the assistance of the National Wrestling Coaches Association, and the Supervising Afterschool Activities online education course in partnership with the NIAAA and Safe Sport Zone. We hope the results will assist our member state associations and their schools.

## Programs and Services

### Sports Participation

Led by the largest one-year increase in girls participation in 16 years, the overall number of participants in high school sports increased for the 28th consecutive year in 2016-17, according to the annual High School Athletics Participation Survey conducted by the NFHS.

Based on figures from the 51 NFHS member state high school associations, which includes the District of Columbia, the number of participants in high school sports reached an all-time high of 7,963,535. The increase of 94,635 participants from 2015-16 is the largest one-year jump in overall participation since the 2008-09 school year.

Thanks to increases in all of the top 10 participatory sports, the number of girls participants reached an all-time high of 3,400,297. The increase of 75,971 from the previous year is the largest one-year jump since the 2000-01 sports participation report.

Competitive spirit registered the largest increase among girls sports with an additional 18,712 participants, followed by outdoor track and field (8,508), volleyball (8,470), soccer (6,810) and lacrosse (5,423).

Seven of the top 10 boys sports registered increases from the previous year, led by soccer (9,912), outdoor track and field (9,003) and cross country (8,580). Overall participation for boys in 2016-17 was 4,563,238, an increase of 18,664 from the previous year.

Participation in 11-player football was down 25,901 from the previous year, although the numbers in 6- and 8-player football were up from the 2015-16 season. The overall number of participants in football (6, 8, 9 and 11 player) in 2016-17 was 1,086,748, down 25,503 from the 1,112,251 in the 2015-16 season.

While the number of participants in high school football declined, the

number of schools offering the sport increased by 52 schools in 11-player – from 14,047 to 14,099 – and by nine schools in 6-, 8- and 9-player – from 1,349 to 1,358.

With 14,099 high schools offering 11-player football, the decrease of 25,901 participants amounts to fewer than two individuals (1.8) per school, and an overall decrease of 2.5 percent.

Football remains the No. 1 participatory sport for boys at the high school level by a large margin. Track and field is second with 600,136 participants, followed by basketball (550,305), baseball (491,790) and soccer (450,234).

Amazingly, this year's survey indicated that more than 60 different sports were offered by high schools nationwide, from judo and kayaking, to fencing and rugby, to snowboarding and rodeo. Some of the more popular non-traditional high school sports were badminton (17,184), archery (9,767), crew (5,179) and fencing (4,100).

The top 10 states by participants remained the same; however, Florida moved ahead of Michigan to seventh position this year. Texas and California topped the list again with 834,558 and 800,364 participants, respectively, followed by New York (367,849), Illinois (341,387), Ohio (340,146), Pennsylvania (319,153), Florida (310,567), Michigan (295,647), New Jersey (283,655) and Minnesota (239,289).

### Athletic Participation Survey Totals

Year	Boys Participants	Girls Participants	Total
1971-72	3,666,917	294,015	3,960,932
1975-76	4,109,021	1,645,039	5,754,060
1980-81	3,503,124	1,853,789	5,356,913
1985-86	3,344,275	1,807,121	5,151,396
1990-91	3,406,355	1,892,316	5,298,671
1995-96	3,634,052	2,367,936	6,001,988
2000-01	3,921,069	2,784,154	6,705,223
2005-06	4,206,549	2,953,355	7,159,904
2010-11	4,494,406	3,173,549	7,667,955
2015-16	4,544,574	3,324,326	7,868,900
2016-17	4,563,238	3,400,297	7,963,535

## National High School Sports Record Book

Each year, the National High School Sports Record Book welcomes new names and performances into its long lists of achievements – and the 2016-17 school year had its fair share of notable accomplishments. However, it was the sustained success of several programs that highlighted the year.

In boys swimming and diving, the three schools with the most state championships all continued their winning ways, with leader **Louisville St. Xavier, Kentucky**, winning its 53rd state title. In girls swimming and diving, **Honolulu Punahou, Hawaii**, became the first girls program in the country to reach 50 state championships.

The **Perry High School, Oklahoma**, wrestling program extended its national record by winning its 41st Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association state championship, while **Bennington Mount Anthony, Vermont**, took home its 29th straight state title, the most all time.

In boys cross country, several top programs won state titles, including **Wilmington Salesianum, Delaware**, which won its 41st Delaware Interscholastic Athletic Association

championship, and **Kearns Canyon Hopi, Arizona**, which won its 27th straight Arizona Interscholastic Association title, both national records.

The two winningest programs in girls volleyball continued their duel atop the state championship rankings.

**Charleston (South Carolina) Bishop England** and **Bayside (Alabama) Academy** won their 27th and 25th state championships, respectively.

Individual highlights from the year include **Cameron Dollar** (Denver East Lincoln, North Carolina), who hauled in seven touchdown receptions during one half in 11-player football, and **Bailey Cartwright** (Greensburg Catholic, Pennsylvania), who tallied 159 career assists in girls soccer, both national records.

In baseball, two obscure records fell during the 2017 season. **Tommy Hansen** (Indianapolis Roncalli, Indiana) became the first player to hit a grand slam in three consecutive at-bats on April 7, and **Jordan Spurlock** (Inola, Oklahoma) was hit by a pitch 31 times last season, setting a record.



Bailey Cartwright



Tommy Hansen

## Playing Rules/Rules Committees

Writing playing rules for high school sports competition has been one of the key roles of the National Federation of State High School Associations since its beginning in 1920. The rules-writing program, which stresses “grassroots” input, was initiated in order for high schools, coaches, athletic administrators and interscholastic officials to have direct influence in developing rules.

NFHS rules are written for varsity competition among student-athletes of high school age, and are intended to maintain the sound traditions of the sport, encourage sportsmanship and minimize the inherent risk of injury.

The NFHS publishes playing rules in 17 sports, and offers approximately 30 different rules-related publications. NFHS rules cover the sports of baseball, basketball, cross country, field hockey, football, girls gymnastics, ice hockey, boys lacrosse, girls lacrosse, soccer, softball, spirit, swimming and diving, track and field, volleyball, water polo and wrestling.

NFHS rules committees are composed of representatives from member state associations, as well as one representative on each committee from the NFHS Coaches Association and NFHS Officials Association. Annual proposed rules changes by the rules committees are formally approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

### A number of important revisions were made by NFHS rules committees in 2016-17 including:

**Baseball** – Effective January 1, 2019, all balls used in high school baseball competition shall meet the NOCSAE standard at the time of manufacture. Also, effective January 1, 2020, the catcher will be required to wear a chest protector that meets the NOCSAE standard at the time of manufacture.

**Basketball** – Play will be stopped and an official warning will be given to the head coach – and recorded in the scorebook – for misconduct by the coach or other bench personnel unless the offense is judged to be major, in which case a technical foul shall be assessed. Another change included enlarging the coaching box from 14 feet to 28 feet.

**Field Hockey** – All players, including the goalkeeper, will now enter the game through the 10-yard substitution area. In risk-minimization changes, rough and dangerous play and unnecessary delay of game are now considered fouls rather than misconduct and are included in the list of fouls in Rule 8-1.

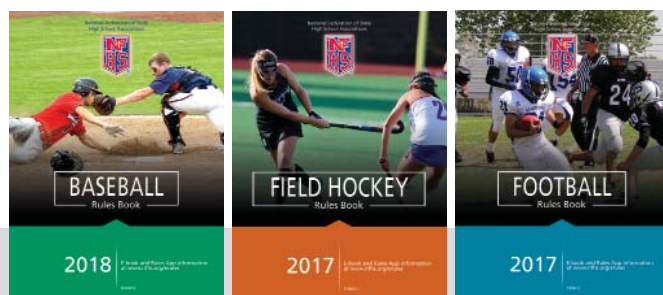
**Football** – A new definition of a blindside block and a new rule prohibiting a blindside block were the latest attempts to minimize risk of injury in the sport. Another significant risk-minimization change was the elimination of a pop-up kick, which was implemented due to the increase use of these kicks on onside kickoffs. In addition, the rule regarding a defenseless player was expanded by adding specific examples of a defenseless player.

**Ice Hockey** – Changes aimed at improving how officials call and manage the game were approved to minimize risk in the sport. In addition, when rules indicate a “captain’s choice of players” for serving a penalty, the captain must select a player who was on the ice when play was stopped, excluding the goalkeeper.

**Boys Lacrosse** – Clarifications to stick alignment and the use of visibly contrasting gloves and shafts were among the changes in boys lacrosse rules. During faceoffs, the reverse surfaces of the crosses must match evenly so that the top of one head lines up with the throat of the other and they are perpendicular to the ground.

**Girls Lacrosse** – Starting January 1, 2020, all eyewear on the playing field must be SEI certified and bear the SEI mark for certification and will be listed on the SEI website.

**Soccer** – A new kickoff procedure which allows the ball to be kicked in any direction to begin play highlighted changes in the sport of soccer. Previously, the ball had to be kicked forward from the center of the field to begin play. Other changes included allowance of a stutter-step or a hesitation move when taking a penalty kick as long as there is continuous movement, and permitting a soft-padded headgear that meets the ASTM standard.



**Softball** – In fast-pitch softball, a request for an intentional walk can now be made prior to or during the at-bat by the defense team’s coach or catcher. In addition, equipment no longer has to be inspected by the umpire or placed outside the dugout/bench prior to the start of the game. The responsibility for ensuring that players are legally and properly equipped rests with the head coach.

**Spirit** – Several rules focused on minimizing risk of injury were adopted, including adjustments to release transitions and inversions. Extensive revisions in several rules were made to reduce risk of injury for the top person in both cheer and dance. Two rules were added to prohibit a swing roll-down stunt because the top person in the swing is being moved facedown toward the performing surface.

**Swimming and Diving** – State associations are required to identify culminating meets, which require use of the championship format. In a risk-minimization change, a new rule specifies where a second, third and fourth swimmer’s feet must be when a relay exchange occurs. One foot must be in contact with the surface of the starting platform in front of the starting block wedge during takeoff.

**Track and Field/Cross Country** – All uniforms worn in high school track and field/cross country must be either issued or approved by the school. The penalty of disqualification from the event was added to prohibitions regarding competitors’ actions in Rule 6-2-14. Also, a range in the length of the crossbar in the pole vault was established.

**Volleyball** – The responsibilities and mechanics of the second referee during a time-out have been altered. The second referee will whistle a warning at 45 seconds and instruct the timer to sound the horn at 60 seconds as the defining end of a time-out. In addition, a replay is considered to be part of a single-play action.

**Water Polo** – The current ball size recommendations were outdated and were removed from the rules book. Language was added to clearly define interval time.

**Wrestling** – An alternate two-piece uniform consisting of compression shorts or shorts designed for wrestling and a form-fitted compression shirt was approved as an option to the traditional one-piece singlet. Several risk-minimization rules were approved, including prohibiting any activities that promote weight loss or gain when an athlete misses weight on the first attempt, as well as elimination of the straight-back salto, regardless of which body part hits the mat first.

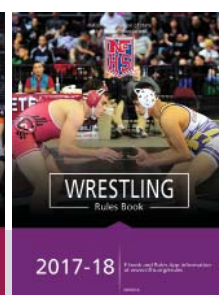
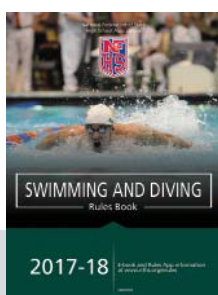
## RULES MATERIALS

**Exams** – The NFHS provides online examinations as teaching tools designed to assist officials, coaches and players in understanding the finer points of the rules. Two exams are produced in some sports, with the Part 1 Exam used as a review or open-book test and the Part 2 Exam used as a closed-book exam for the purpose of advancing officials.

**Posters** – Full-color posters with key rules changes and points of emphasis are produced in most sports annually. The posters are designed to be placed in high-traffic areas in schools to keep coaches, players and others apprised of the latest rules changes.

**Interpretations** – Following the annual rules interpreters meeting in each sport, rules interpretations on new rules for the coming season are posted online and distributed to state associations.

**Questionnaires** – The NFHS distributes rules questionnaires through the state high school associations to coaches, officials and administrators. Results of the questionnaires are provided to the respective rules committees each year as new rules changes are considered.



## 2016-17 NFHS Citation Winners

### STATE ASSOCIATIONS



Karen DeHart



Bob Goldring



Richard Neal



Tom Robinson



Stacy Schroeder



Tom Shafranski



Harold Slemmer



Tom Welter

### OFFICIAL



Sharon Hughes

### COACH



Dick Katte

### MUSIC



Neil Hendricksen

### SPEECH/DEBATE



J. Scott Baker

### ATHLETIC DIRECTORS



Ron Dolphin



Ed Gilliland



Karl Heimbach



David Lutes



Todd Olson



Mike Snyder



Gary Stevens



Carter Wilson

## Awards Program

The NFHS has a comprehensive awards program that honors high school athletic directors, coaches and officials; speech, debate, music and theatre teachers and directors; and state high school association staff members. In addition, the National High School Spirit of Sport Award and the National High School Heart of the Arts Award are presented annually.

NFHS Citations are presented annually to eight athletic directors, eight individuals involved with state associations, one contributor to the coaching profession, one contributor to officiating and two in the performing arts – one for music and one for speech/debate/theatre.

Other awards include the Award of Merit; American Tradition Award; State Awards for Outstanding Service; NFHS Speech, Debate and Theatre Association Outstanding Educator Awards; NFHS Music Association Outstanding Educator Awards; NFHS Coaches Association Awards; NFHS Officials Association Awards; NFHS Board of Directors Membership Awards; and NFHS Retiring President's Award.

The National High School Spirit of Sport Award was created 11 years ago to recognize those individuals who exemplify the ideals of the spirit of sport that represents the core mission of education-based athletics. One national winner and eight section winners are selected annually. The recipient of the 2017 national award was **Danny Lilya**, a student-athlete at Moose Lake (Minnesota) High School.

Similarly, the National High School Heart of the Arts Award recognizes individuals or groups who exemplify the "heart" of positive participation with activities that represent the core mission of education-based performing arts programs. The fourth annual national recipient was **Josie Ross**, a student at St. Louis Park (Minnesota) Benilde-St. Margaret's High School.



Danny Lilya



Josie Ross

## National High School Hall of Fame

The National High School Hall of Fame was started in 1982 by the NFHS to honor high school athletes, coaches, officials, administrators and others for their outstanding contributions to and achievements in high school sports. After 20 years as a sports-only hall of fame, individuals in the fine arts area became eligible in 2003. Through the first 35 classes, there are now 458 members of this prestigious hall of fame.

Four outstanding former high school athletes were inducted at the 2017 ceremony in Providence, Rhode Island. Athletes in the 2017 class included **Joe Dial** (1), who set a national record in the pole vault in 1981 as a senior at Marlow (Oklahoma) High School; **Lisa Fernandez** (2), one of the top pitchers in high school

softball history in the late 1980s at St. Joseph's High School in Lakewood, California, before helping Team USA to three gold medals; **Bobby Richardson** (3), a baseball and basketball standout at Edmunds High School in Sumter, South Carolina before winning three World Series titles with the New York Yankees in the late 1950s and early 1960s; and **Missy West** (4), a three-sport star at Franklin Academy in Malone, New York, in the mid-1990s who set numerous records in basketball and softball and led the soccer team in scoring before playing basketball at Duke University.

Five coaches joined the Hall of Fame in 2017, including **Russ Cozart** (5), who has lost only six dual meets in 37 years as wrestling coach at Brandon (Florida) High School and claimed 27 state championships; **Joe Lombard** (6), girls basketball coach at Canyon (Texas) High School who ranks second

nationally in career coaching victories and led his teams to 19 state titles; **Steve Shondell** (7), who won almost 1,200 matches and 21 state titles in 34 years as volleyball coach at Muncie (Indiana) Burriss High School; **Bernie Walter** (8), who won 10 state titles in 36 years as baseball coach at Arundel High School in Gambrills, Maryland; and **Jerry Winterton** (9), who had a 621-16 record and 19 overall state titles as wrestling coach at Cary (North Carolina) High School.

The remainder of the 2017 class included **Bill Laude** (10), a football, basketball and baseball official from Frankfort, Illinois, who officiated state finals in all three sports during a 50-year officiating career; and **Rick Wulkow** (11), who had significant contributions to high school sports during his 35 years with the Iowa High School Athletic Association.



## Professional Organizations

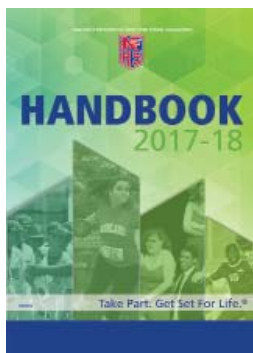
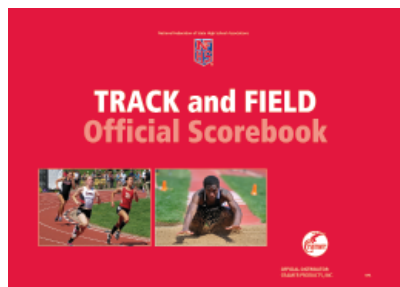
The NFHS offers membership in four organizations for professionals associated with high school activity programs. The **NFHS Officials Association** is open to high school contest officials and has approximately 130,000 members. The **NFHS Coaches Association**, which is available for high school coaches across the country, has about 30,000 members. The **NFHS Music Association** aims to identify and meet the common needs of music educators who participate in, or sponsor, high school activities, which are an educational extension of the school music curriculum. The **NFHS Speech, Debate & Theatre Association** is open to those individuals involved in teaching or directing these programs within our nation's schools. In addition to specific benefits for each member association, the most significant benefits of all four professional organizations are national awards programs and \$1 million liability insurance while serving in these capacities.

## Publications

As it has done for many years, the NFHS continued to be this country's most prolific supplier of sports rules publications. Almost 30 rules publications are produced annually in 17 different sports for boys and girls, and more than 1.3 million copies of these publications are printed annually.

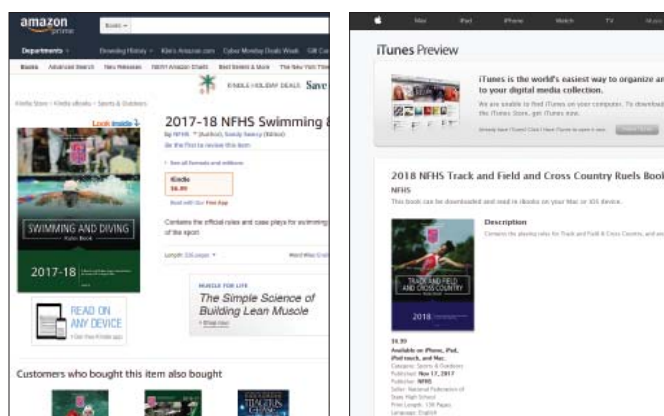
**High School Today** remains the flagship publication of the NFHS as more than 75,000 copies are distributed eight times a year to the key leaders in our nation's high schools.

Although some publications have been moved online to more effectively meet the needs of the membership and general public, the NFHS continues to offer several important publications including the **Court and Field Diagram Guide**, **NFHS Handbook**, **Statisticians' Manual** and **Scorebooks** in 11 sports.



## Rules App/E-Books

The NFHS released a Rules App as a new way to access high school playing rules. The NFHS Rules App, available via iTunes and Google Play, provides access to NFHS rules books and case books in each sport and contains quizzes for all NFHS sports. The app is free to download and users then subscribe to their choice of books at a cost of \$6.99 a book. Paid members of the NFHS Coaches Association and NFHS Officials Association receive access to all publications as a member benefit.



NFHS rules books and case books are also available for purchase as e-books through iTunes and Amazon. Information on both the Rules App and e-books is available at [www.nfhs.org/erules](http://www.nfhs.org/erules).

## Sanctioning

Sanctioning of athletic contests by the NFHS provides that approved programs adhere to sound and detailed criteria that meet the specific requirements of a school or a group of schools based upon experience and tradition. The NFHS sanctioning program has as its primary purpose to protect the welfare of high school students. Also, it seeks to protect the existing programs sponsored by member schools.

Any interstate competition involving two or more schools that is co-sponsored by an organization outside the high school community, in addition to being sponsored by a member school, an approved school or a state association, shall require sanction of the NFHS office.

## National Debate Topic

Every year, the NFHS coordinates the selection of the National High School Policy Debate Topic. In December, the five topic areas were narrowed to two as part of a two-part balloting process by member state associations. Use of the second ballot ensures that a majority of coaches across the nation favor the chosen topic area and resolution. The debate topic for the 2016-17 year was China.

## National Meetings

Annual summer and winter meetings of the NFHS membership are held for state association executive officers and staff, board members and others. These meetings are rotated to different parts of the country each year. The **2017 NFHS Summer Meeting** was held in Providence, Rhode Island, and the **2017 Winter Meeting** was held in Bonita Springs, Florida. The NFHS also sponsors an **Annual Legal Meeting** and a **Professional Development Summit** on emerging issues, which were started in 1998 and are held in conjunction with the spring meeting of the NFHS Board of Directors in Indianapolis.

The largest meeting conducted by the NFHS each year is the **National Athletic Directors Conference**, which is conducted in partnership with the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA) and annually attracts about 2,000 athletic directors and spouses, and approximately 300 exhibitors. The 2016 conference was held in Nashville, Tennessee.

## Authenticating Mark Program

When administrators, coaches and officials see the Authenticating Mark on equipment, they know that the games are being played with sophisticated equipment that meets high standards.

Through the 2016-17 school year, about 60 sports equipment manufacturers are participating in the NFHS Authenticating Mark Program. All balls and pucks used in interscholastic competition in sports played by NFHS rules must carry the NFHS Authenticating Mark. Equipment displaying the Authenticating Mark includes baseballs, softballs, footballs, basketballs, ice hockey pucks, volleyballs, lacrosse balls, soccer balls, water polo balls and field hockey balls.

## Sports Medicine

In its 20th year of existence, the NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) continued to address timely issues related to rules-writing and other programs and services of the NFHS. Some of the major issues in 2016-17 were concussions, sudden cardiac arrest, heat acclimatization and heat illness, overuse injuries and communicable skin diseases.

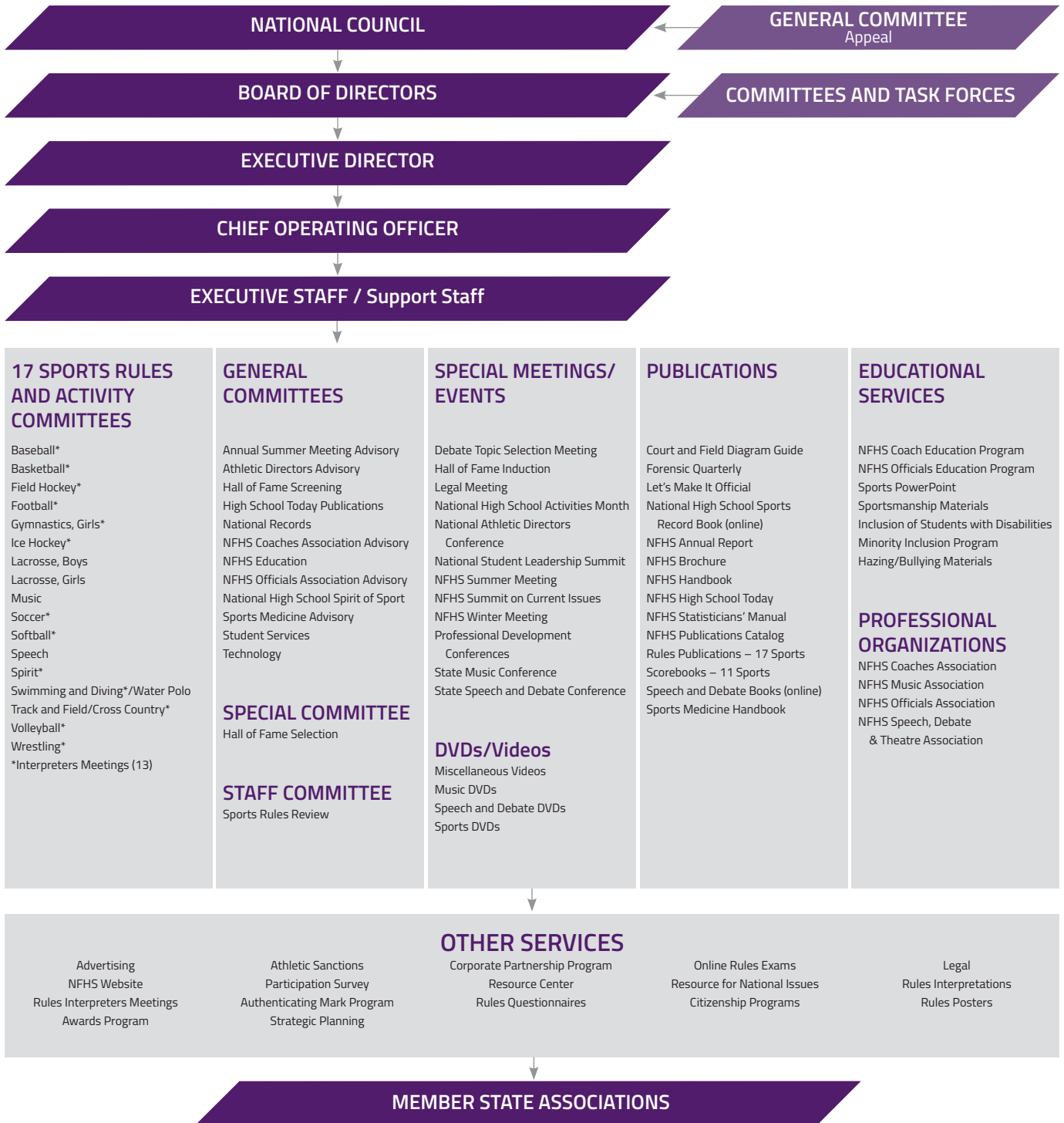
The NFHS SMAC devoted considerable time to the Sports Medicine section of the NFHS website in 2016-17. The committee updated all of the sports medicine resources and included new information on the National High School Sports Injury Surveillance System and the National Center for Catastrophic Sports Injury Research. The committee also revised some NFHS SMAC Position Statements, Guidelines and Recommendations.

**The 2016 NFHS Summit on Enhancing Participation, Reducing Injury Risk and Optimizing Performance** was held in July in Indianapolis, with a balanced, diverse representation from high school coaches, athletic department administrators, state executive directors, sport and sports medicine governing bodies, clinical and scientific experts, and NFHS staff and leadership. The charge for the two-day summit was to develop a practical and definitive plan and accompanying consensus document for all member state associations emphasizing evidence-informed best practices to:

1. Measurably expand opportunities for widespread sport participation (initiation and continuation) for all students;
2. Minimize injury risk;
3. Maximize performance – at all levels of athletic development and achievement.

Accordingly, the Essentials and Key Action Measures outlined in the Consensus document are built upon currently accepted best practices for setting and working toward realistic and achievable goals of healthy, sustainable, meaningful and enjoyable sport participation, while, at the core, maintaining the emphasis on optimizing the student's scholastic athletic experience. This document will also serve as the guiding reference for a more wide-reaching and ongoing promotion and implementation of the **NFHS Essentials Initiative**.

# Organizational Chart



# NFHS Board of Directors



1. Jerome Singleton, Section 3 (President)  
South Carolina High School League

2. Karissa Niehoff, Section 1 (President-Elect)  
Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference, Inc.

3. Billy Haun, Section 2  
Virginia High School League

4. Jack Roberts, Section 4  
Michigan High School Athletic Association

5. Kerwin Urhahn, Section 5  
Missouri State High School Activities Association

6. David Jackson, Section 6  
Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association

7. Bart Thompson, Section 7  
Nevada Interscholastic Activities Association

8. Mark Beckman, Section 8  
Montana High School Association

9. Pam Foegen, Sections 1 & 4, At Large  
Regis Catholic Schools  
Eau Claire, Wisconsin

10. Kevin Fitzgerald, Sections 2 & 6, At Large  
Caesar Rodney School District  
Wyoming, Delaware

11. Anna Battle, Sections 3 & 7, At Large  
Tempe Union High School District  
Tempe, Arizona

12. Owen St. Clair, Sections 5 & 8, At Large  
Wyoming Indian Schools  
Ethete, Wyoming

## Member State Associations

Alabama High School Athletic Association (1924)	Michigan High School Athletic Association (1920)	Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association (1925)
Alaska School Activities Association (1956)	Minnesota State High School League (1923)	Texas University Interscholastic League (1969)
Arizona Interscholastic Association (1925)	Mississippi High School Activities Association (1924)	Utah High School Activities Association (1927)
Arkansas Activities Association (1924)	Missouri State High School Activities Association (1926)	Vermont Principals' Association (1945)
California Interscholastic Federation (1940)	Montana High School Association (1934)	Virginia High School League (1948)
Colorado High School Activities Association (1924)	Nebraska School Activities Association (1924)	Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (1936)
Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (1926)	Nevada Interscholastic Activities Association (1939)	West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission (1925)
Delaware Interscholastic Athletic Association (1945)	New Hampshire Interscholastic Athletic Association (1945)	Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (1920)
District of Columbia State Athletic Association (1958)	New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (1942)	Wyoming High School Activities Association (1936)
Florida High School Athletic Association (1926)	New Mexico Activities Association (1932)	
Georgia High School Association (1929)	New York State Public High School Athletic Association (1926)	
Hawaii High School Athletic Association (1957)	North Carolina High School Athletic Association (1949)	
Idaho High School Activities Association (1926)	North Dakota High School Activities Association (1923)	
Illinois High School Association (1920)	Ohio High School Athletic Association (1924)	
Indiana High School Athletic Association (1924)	Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association (1924)	
Iowa High School Athletic Association (1920)	Oregon School Activities Association (1931)	
Kansas State High School Activities Association (1923)	Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (1924)	
Kentucky High School Athletic Association (1941)	Rhode Island Interscholastic League (1952)	
Louisiana High School Athletic Association (1925)	South Carolina High School League (1947)	
Maine Principals' Association (1939)	South Dakota High School Activities Association (1923)	
Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (1946)		
Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (1944)		

*Date in parentheses indicates the year the organization joined the NFHS.*



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