

- * **HOW TO BE A BETTER ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATOR**
- * **IDAHO INTERSCHOLASTIC STAR HOF SPEECH - Bailey Kirkendall**
- * **GEM STATE OF MIND - Give Everyone their Moment**
- * **DIARY WEST - New Logo**
- * **NFHS LEARN - The Parent Credential**
- * **COACHES CORNER - 5 Ways to Handle a Difficult Loss**
- * **MEET NEW STAFF & BOARD MEMBERS**
- * **IHSAA RULE CHANGES - Beginning in 2026-2027**
- * **NFHS NATIONAL STUDENT CREDENTIALS**
- * **STAFF LEADERSHIP BOOK OF THE MONTH - Dream Like a Champion**
- * **EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN - Are You Ready?**

**September
2026 ISSUE**



IHSAA EXPRESS

Supporting Education Through Activities



**Idaho Star
Bailey Kirkendall
Skyview HS**

IHSAA Hall of Fame Banquet Speech

No one walks through a garden and compliments the dirt. But without it, nothing grows. Throughout my speech tonight, I'll be using the analogy of a garden.

Before high school, I like to think that we all possess little seeds. These seeds can be interests, personality traits, habits or just things we are good at. It looks a little different for everyone. For example, when I was a kid I was extremely competitive. Whether it was a race to the kitchen or family game night, I had to win at all costs. (Which, has definitely not changed as I've gotten older) I also loved music and dancing. I wanted to run instead of walk, talk my head off, and oh boy did I love to argue. (Which my parents can confirm has also not changed)

And these things are great within themselves. They're part of what makes me, me. But what are seeds if not planted? And that's where my extracurriculars, or for the sake of my analogy, the dirt comes in.

Because when my seeds had a place to be planted, only then could they grow.

Upon my involvement in extracurricular activities, my competitive spirit quickly turned into a strong work ethic. I learned that if I really wanted to win, I had to earn it. Even if that meant countless hours practicing, refining, and starting over until I got it right. Though I never outgrew my need to move, my energy found two very different homes in high school. In the cheer mat I learned that successes come from lifting others. In that case, both literally and figuratively. And on the tennis court I learned how to push myself even when I had no team to rely on. Both challenged me in different ways, but each taught me the value of perseverance.

Through competitive speech I figured out that not only can I subject individuals to my continuous chatter, but I can even subject entire audiences. Hence my newfound love for public speaking. In all seriousness I learned how to present with confidence— and how much power words can hold.

My love for music evolved into a love for creating it. Because of band and my instrument, I found a new way to express myself and discovered that sometimes the most meaningful messages don't require words at all.

And finally, behind a debate podium, I learned that debate is about far more than proving someone wrong. It taught me to communicate thoughtfully, consider different perspectives, and appreciate the value of respectful disagreement—something our world could use a little more of.

These are just some, of the many seeds I have planted, and the flowers that have sprung up after.

Students have their homes, where they are raised, and their classrooms, where they are educated. But extracurricular activities provide something just as important—a third place. A place where lessons are learned that simply can't be taught from a textbook. It is in these spaces that students learn who they are, who they want to become, and given the tools to achieve just that.

However, as much as these activities have shaped me, I can't give them all the credit. The real impact came from the people within them. Coaches who saw potential in me before I saw it in myself. Advisors who encouraged me to keep going, and teammates who celebrated every success, picked me up after every setback, and became like family along the way. I am incredibly grateful for every person who has invested their time and energy in my life, as well as the countless mentors who continue to invest in the next generation.

So, before we continue, let's take a moment to recognize those people with a well-deserved round of applause.

So now let's go back to these seeds. We've discussed how third spaces give them room to be planted, and there they are able to bloom into something amazing. Because of these third spaces I have been able to accomplish more than I ever dreamed I would. But, with time, flowers eventually wilt. I mean I'm going to grow up and graduate and high school awards or achievements likely won't be the first thing on my mind. There will be much more scary things to worry about like... paying rent and... taxes. However.... healthy soil keeps producing growth. And now, I can grow my own flowers.

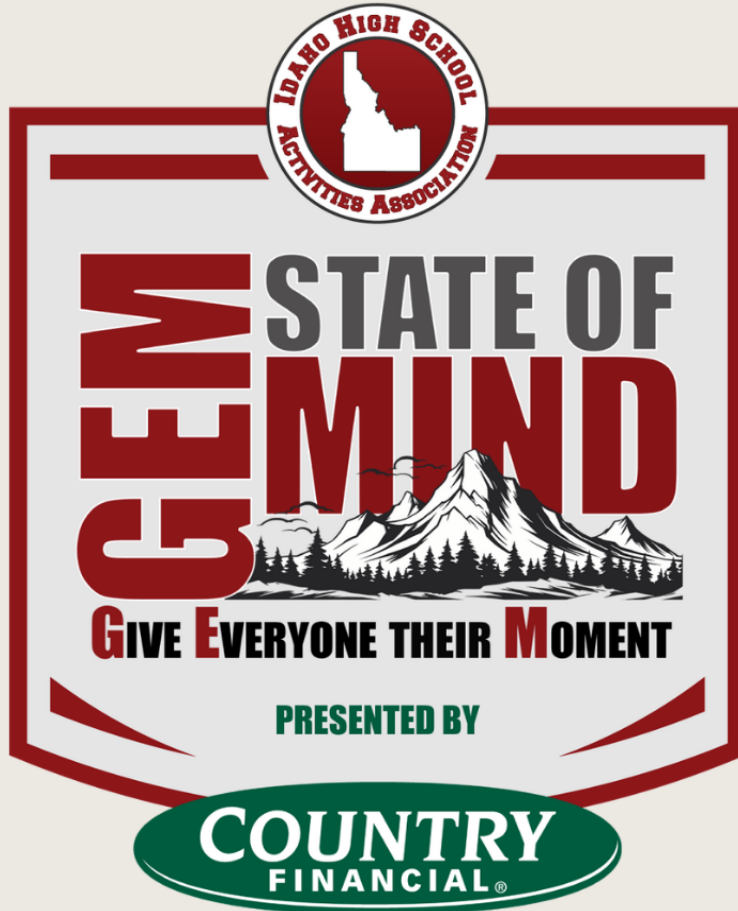
Although my future may not contain a tennis court, a stage, or a debate podium, it will include difficult conversations, new opportunities, unexpected challenges, and lifelong relationships. Thankfully, those are exactly the moments my extracurriculars have been preparing me for all along. The lessons I learned here will follow me wherever I go and into every opportunity that lies ahead.

At the beginning, I said no one compliments the dirt. Tonight, I think we should. Because while everyone notices the flowers, it's the dirt that gave them the chance to bloom in the first place.



Idaho High School Activities Association Sportsmanship Brand

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T-Shirts

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Media Kits UPON REQUEST

- One Sheeter (black & white version)
- GEM State of Mind Logo
- Social Media Graphics
- Video Board Graphics
- PA Announcement
- Physical GEM State of Mind banner

[REQUEST HERE](#)



Questions

morgan.potter@playfly.com

GIVE EVERYONE THEIR MOMENT

ADMINISTRATORS

“In The Know”

FROM THE IHSAA

- + Update School Information on the IHSAA Website
- + Create/Update MaxPreps account
- + New Activity Card Process - go SLOW and READ

DATES TO REMEMBER

9/7	Labor Day - IHSAA Office Closed
9/10	Classification Petitions Due
9/18	Fall Sports Eligibility Verifications Due
9/24	Fall Academic State Champions Due
9/28	Board of Directors Work Session
9/29	IHSAA Board of Directors Meeting 8:00am Blaine County School District

SEPTEMBER AD CHECKLIST

- ___ Make time for family
- ___ Review fall rosters to confirm eligibility
- ___ Verify bus schedules for all fall contests
- ___ Load Rosters, Pictures, Schedules, Scores on MaxPreps
- ___ Schedule team pictures
- ___ Evaluate emergency plans
- ___ Verify coaches requirements are met
- ___ Review gate procedures with staff
- ___ Confirm schedules on DragonFly
- ___ Meet with booster club
- ___ Review Sportsmanship Manual
- ___ Review Citizenship Through Sports Manual
- ___ Distribute sportsmanship information to patrons
- ___ Calibrate your Pixellot cameras with NFHS Network



OUR PURPOSE IS TO PROTECT

The IHSAA protects high school sports by keeping them safe, competitively balanced and educational for all students.

Ensuring high school sports develop the whole person, not just the athlete.

Together, let's all **#ProtectThePurpose** of high school sports!

ProtectThePurpose.com



HOW TO BE A BETTER ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATOR



- Scott Garvis, CMAA

From managing schedules and staff to building school culture and setting a vision, the responsibilities of an athletic director go far beyond game day.

In this guide, Scott will share practical ways to become a more effective, respected, and impactful athletic director.

Whether you're new to the role or a seasoned vet, these strategies will help you lead your program with confidence and clarity.

Master Time Management

The dynamic nature of athletic programs requires ADs to juggle multiple responsibilities simultaneously. Implementing time-blocking techniques, setting clear priorities, and delegating tasks when appropriate can enhance efficiency. Utilizing digital tools for scheduling and task management can also streamline operations, ensuring that critical duties receive the attention they deserve.

Here are specific recommendations to help you master time management and set clear priorities:

Use a Calendar Blocking System

Set aside specific times of day for your recurring tasks — such as answering emails, reviewing reports, or meeting with coaches. Tools like Google Calendar allow you to visually block your time so you can stay focused and avoid task-switching. Label blocks like:

- **8:00–9:00 AM:** Staff check-ins and urgent emails
- **10:00–11:00 AM:** Scheduling and logistics
- **2:00–3:00 PM:** Facilities and event prep
- **4:00–5:00 PM:** Follow-up calls and reports

Make a Daily Priority List

Begin each day by identifying the top three tasks that must be accomplished. Use the Eisenhower Matrix to separate urgent vs. important items and delegate or defer where appropriate:

- **Do Now:** Crisis management, event cancellations
- **Schedule:** Budget planning, staff evaluations
- **Delegate:** Field prep, minor communications
- **Eliminate:** Low-impact tasks that don't serve your goals

Tools like Todoist, Trello, or even a whiteboard in your office can help manage your lists and keep priorities visible.

Implement a 15-Minute Rule

When you're short on time or energy, tackle difficult tasks by committing just 15 focused minutes. This prevents procrastination and often creates momentum to finish the job.

Build in Buffer Time

Add 15–30 minutes between meetings and major tasks. This allows you to catch your breath, deal with unexpected issues (which are guaranteed to pop up), and avoid a cascading effect of delays.

Limit Distractions

Turn off non-essential notifications, close unused browser tabs (we're all guilty of this), and set specific times to check email. Use focus tools like:

- **“Do Not Disturb” mode on your phone/computer**
- **Noise-canceling headphones for focused work blocks**

Conduct Weekly Reviews

At the end of each week, spend 20–30 minutes reviewing what worked, what didn't, and what needs to shift. Ask yourself:

- **Did I spend too much time on low-impact tasks?**
- **What could I delegate next week?**
- **What recurring fires can I prevent with better planning?**

Delegate Like a Leader

You're not meant to do everything alone. Empower your coaching staff or trusted student assistants to handle routine tasks like field or equipment setup.



COACHES CORNER



5 THINGS COACHES CAN DO AFTER A DIFFICULT LOSS



COACHES CLIPBOARD

1 PAUSE BEFORE YOU SPEAK

The locker room isn't the place to solve every problem. Emotions are high after a loss, and words spoken in frustration often do more harm than good. Give your team perspective before you give them solutions.



COACHES CLIPBOARD

2 WATCH THE FILM FIRST

The game feels different than it actually was. Before changing lineups, calling out players, or questioning your game plan, watch the film. Facts make better coaches than emotions.



COACHES CLIPBOARD

3 OWN YOUR PART

Players respect coaches who accept responsibility. Admit where you could have prepared better or made a different decision. Accountability from the top creates accountability throughout the program.



COACHES CLIPBOARD

4 TEACH DON'T PUNISH

A loss is an opportunity to improve—not simply a reason to make practice miserable. Identify the lessons, correct the mistakes, and help your players leave practice better than they arrived.



COACHES CLIPBOARD

5 MODEL THE RESPONSE

Your team will mirror your attitude. If you panic, complain, or point fingers, they'll do the same. Respond with confidence, composure, and optimism, and they'll learn how resilient competitors handle adversity.



COACHES CLIPBOARD



IHSAA

RULE CHANGES

2026-27

SCHOOL YEAR



GOVERNANCE & MEMBERSHIP

1



STATE WRESTLING SITE 2029

The 2029 State Wrestling Tournament will be held at the University of Idaho in Moscow.

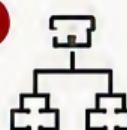
2



REGULAR MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Schools must serve as associate members for two years prior to becoming regular members.

3



RULE 2-5 REPRESENTATION

State tournament berths now based on classification size, district size, district results, and MaxPreps rankings.



PLAY-IN & STATE TOURNAMENT CHANGES

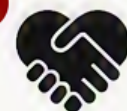
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PLAY-IN GAME CHANGES

- MaxPreps rankings determine matchups.
- Higher seed hosts.
- Host district assigns officials.
- Finances shared after travel reimbursement.

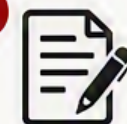
5



STATE SOFTBALL & BASEBALL SPORTSMANSHIP AWARDS

Beginning spring 2026, sportsmanship awards will be presented at the State Softball and State Baseball tournaments in all classifications.

6



CLASSIFICATION PETITIONS

All approved petitions to move up or down a classification for the 2026-28 cycle were adopted.



STUDENT ELIGIBILITY & COACHING

7



RULE 13-3-4 PHYSICALS

Students in the 10th and 12th grades transferring from another state or country must have a compliant physical exam before participation.

8



COACHING MENTAL WELLNESS COURSE

Required on even-numbered years for all coaches and replaces the Student Mental Health & Suicide Prevention course. Available on NFHS Learn.



SPORT & DISTRICT UPDATES

9



TENNIS SEEDING UPDATE

Season record will be used as qualification #8 in the seeding formula for all classifications.

10



DISTRICT COMPOSITION CHANGES FOR 2026-28

Multiple district realignments were approved statewide.



OFFICIALS & COMPLIANCE

11



RULE 10-1-2b & d BACKGROUND CHECKS

Officials will be required to have a background check upon registering and every five years thereafter. Self-disclosure requirements added when an arrest, charge or conviction occurs.



ACTIVITY PROGRAMS

12



MUSIC RULE MODIFICATIONS 3-2 & 3-3

Approved changes limit student overlap in ensemble events to a maximum of 30% and restructure the ensemble event categories.



STATE EVENT REPRESENTATION

13



STATE SWIMMING REPRESENTATION FOR INDIVIDUAL EVENTS

Three at-large qualifiers added to both the 6A and 5A individual events. Individual events will now have 18 qualifiers statewide.



MEMBERSHIP APPROVALS

14



GEM PREP MERIDIAN NORTH MEMBERSHIP

Approved for speech and debate only and allowed to compete immediately after approval.

15



STATE BASEBALL TOURNAMENT FORMAT

The State Baseball tournament format was removed from pilot status and will continue as currently implemented.

16



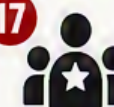
NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBER SCHOOLS

- Richard McKenna Charter Secondary School
- Pine Grove Academy were approved as associate members.



LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

17



AD MENTORING PROGRAM

The IHSAA, IAAA and IASA have developed a mentoring program for new athletic/activity directors beginning in 2026.



IHSAA RULE CHANGES

2026-27 SCHOOL YEAR

18



RULE 10-1-6 PLAY-IN GAME OFFICIALS

All play-in game officials will now be selected and assigned by the host district.

19



RULE 8-14-1 TERMINATION OF PREVIOUS RESIDENCE

If a student transfers within 50 miles of their previous residence, the proof of termination must show that the escrow papers, lease or rental contract is in another party's name.

20



FOOTBALL GAME LIMITATIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS

Participation in special teams does not count as a quarter played.

21



RULE 2-5-2 WRESTLING REPRESENTATION

Wrestling representation will be calculated annually using participation data from January 10 for the current year's state tournament.

22



RULE 2-2-2a CLASSIFICATION PROPOSAL TIMELINE

The deadline for submitting new classification proposals was moved from December 15 to September 10.

23



ADDITION OF 1A STATE TRACK

Beginning with the 2027 State Track meet, the IHSAA will sponsor a 1A classification with 12 berths for individual events and 8 berths for relays.

24



GIRLS WRESTLING EXPANSION

Girls will be split into two divisions beginning in 2027. Schools with enrollment of 1200+ in Division I and 1199-and-below in Division II.

25



IDAHO FINE ARTS ACADEMY - LIMITED MEMBERSHIP

Idaho Fine Arts Academy was approved as a member school in speech and debate only beginning in fall 2026.

**Requires final reading in Aug 2026*

26



ROLLIE LANE WRESTLING TOURNAMENT EXCEPTION

The Rollie Lane tournament will count as a single event for participating wrestlers in 2026-27 and 2027-28.

27



GOLF - ALLOWABLE COACHING DURING MATCHES

Coaches will now be allowed to coach their players from tee to green as long as pace of play is not affected. No coaching will be allowed on the green.

28



RULE 8-2 AGE ELIGIBILITY

Students will not be eligible for the sport season in which they turn 20 years of age.

29



RULE 2-5-6b IDAHO MAXPREPS RANKINGS DEADLINE

Rankings are considered final once they are posted on the IHSAA website.

30



LIFETIME PASS ELIGIBILITY FOR ATHLETIC TRAINERS

Athletic trainers were added to the list of roles that qualify for a lifetime pass after 25 years of service at the high school level.

31



RULE 2-5-1 SCHOOLS ELECTING NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN PLAY-IN GAMES

If a school chooses not to participate, the game will be considered a forfeit and the opponent will automatically advance. In baseball, if a school chooses not to participate in a 3-team regional, the remaining teams will play a best 2/3 series.

32



GOLF TEAM HARDSHIPS

Only teams that miss qualifying by one place at the district tournament are eligible to submit a team hardship for State qualification. The review committee will use a performance score calculation that incorporates course rating for evaluating hardships.

33



POLICY CHANGES DUE TO BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

Three major policy changes were made during approval of the FY26-27 budget. See details below.

34



DRAGONFLY DIGITAL ACTIVITY CARDS

Activity cards will be digital using the DragonFly platform. World schools will become an event at State Debate in 25-26 and will replace Policy debate.

DETAILS: POLICY CHANGES DUE TO BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

1



State Tournament ticket prices will increase approximately

\$2 per ticket.

2



Team reimbursements for volleyball and wrestling were eliminated. Team reimbursements for other state tournaments will be limited to those schools who do not reside in the host district.

3



IHSAA activity cards will increase from \$35 to \$40. Cards will be digital using the DragonFly platform.

90+ Courses | 60+ Free

Coaches | Administrators | Officials | Performing Arts | Students | Parents

NFHSLearn.com Provides

- Education & professional development for the interscholastic community
- Tools to monitor course completion
- National credentials programs
- Sport-specific courses for coaches and officials

17+ Million
Courses
Delivered

Fundamentals of Coaching



Concussion in Sports/
Concussion for Students



Sudden Cardiac Arrest



Protecting Students from Abuse



First Aid, Health and Safety



The Collapsed Athlete



Heat Illness Prevention



POSITIVE PARENTING WITHIN SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Parents play an influential role in the lives of their children, including the part they play when their children participate in interscholastic sports and activities. This is why the National Federation of State High School Associations has created the course Positive Parenting within School Programs. Parents need to understand that their behavior in the stands, how they talk to their student after a practice or game, and the way they interact with the coaches and officials, makes all the difference in the enjoyment of their children's experience. Learn how you, as a parent, can have a positive impact on your child and help create a memorable experience for everyone.



THE PARENT SEAT

Your students high school years will provide a lifetime of memories and experiences. How do you want your student to remember this experience? To help guide parents in this journey, the National Federation of State High School Associations has created THE PARENT SEAT. This course has been designed to help you understand the importance of participation in school programs, your expectations of behavior at events, how your behavior affects your child, and how you can use your child's high school experience as a way to grow a healthy relationship for years to come. The "Parent Seat" originated as a video series, including The Parent Seat, Beyond the Scoreboard, and A Lasting Relationship. These videos are available to download at no cost.

NFHS VIDEO LIBRARY

THE PARENT SEAT

A LASTING RELATIONSHIP

BEYOND the SCOREBOARD

FIND WHERE YOU BELONG

High school sports and activities give students a chance ...

To grow. To belong. To THRIVE.

Find your place in high school sports and activities!

PlayPerformCompeteTogether.com





National Student Credential

NFHS National Student Credential

The NFHS National Student Credential recognizes students who are committed to leadership, personal growth, and contributing positively within interscholastic programs and their school communities.

Through three FREE NFHS Learning Center courses, student development skills that extend beyond participation and support success in school, activities, and everyday life.

REQUIRED COURSES:

- The Student Experience
- Student Leadership: Becoming a Leader
- Student Mental Wellness

Why Earn the Credential?

Students who complete the credential demonstrate:

- Leadership and initiative
- Commitment to personal growth
- Awareness of student mental wellness
- Positive engagement within their school community

The credential also provides students with a nationally recognized accomplishment that can be included on resumes, college applications, and scholarship opportunities. Every student that completes the credential earns a certificate and an NFHS Learning Center badge.

The NFHS believes interscholastic programs play an important role in preparing students for life. The NFHS National Student Credential supports that mission by helping students develop skills that will benefit them during their school years and beyond.



Most Popular

The Student Experience

NFHS Core Course

Student

Free



Most Popular

Student Leadership: Becoming a Leader

Elective Course

Student

Free



New

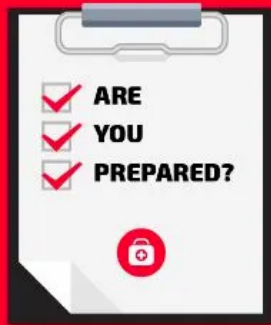
Student Mental Wellness

Elective Course

Student

Free

Emergency Response Planning



As fall sports and activities start in Idaho and across the country, the IHSAA and the NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) wanted to call your attention to the importance of having an Emergency Action Plan (EAP).

The potential for a medical emergency is ever present. The risks of catastrophic injury and sudden death exist during both practice and competition. The purpose of the EAP is to facilitate a prompt, efficient, coordinated response in the case of a medical emergency. All schools and school districts should have an EAP that addresses medical emergencies among athletes, staff, officials and spectators. Planning, preparation and practice are the keys to achieving success in the case of an actual emergency.

ALL schools should have an EAP in place for all high school sports and activities for the 2026-27 school year. The plan should be current, practiced and executed.

AED



AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR

Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) is the number one cause of sudden death in student-athletes during activity. In the event of a sudden cardiac arrest episode and automated external defibrillator (AED) can save a life.

Each minute defibrillation is delayed, the chance of survival decreases 10%

Use this AED checklist to be sure you are prepared.



The AED is easily accessible at every practice/game location and available for use within 2-3 minutes (ideally it is onsite). The device is NOT in a locked or secured area where retrieval could be a challenge.



Personnel are always available onsite who are trained in CPR and AED use.



The AED is checked regularly to ensure it is working and the pads and battery are not expired.



The Emergency Action Plan has been rehearsed PRIOR to the beginning of the season with everyone potentially involved in the emergency response.



Someone has been designated to retrieve the AED if needed. This person knows the exact location of the device at all times.

HEAT EXHAUSTION

OR

HEAT STROKE

FAINT OR DIZZY

EXCESSIVE SWEATING

COOL, PALE, CLAMMY SKIN

NAUSEA OR VOMITING

RAPID, WEAK PULSE

MUSCLE CRAMPS



THROBBING HEADACHE

NO SWEATING

BODY TEMPERATURE ABOVE 103° (RED, HOT, DRY SKIN)

NAUSEA OR VOMITING

RAPID, STRONG PULSE

MAY LOSE CONSCIOUSNESS

Meet the New IHSAA Board Members & IHSAA Staff



IHSAA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Meet Phil Hartman: Music Educators Representative

After 44 years in education, Phil Hartman is bringing his experience and passion for students to the Idaho High School Activities Association Board of Directors as the new Music Educators Representative.

Hartman is an adjunct professor of music education at Boise State University, where he has spent 11 years teaching music education courses and supervising student teachers. Prior to Boise State, he spent 27 years as Director of Bands at Centennial High School in Boise.

Throughout his career, Hartman has been recognized as the Idaho Music Educator of the Year, District III Music Educator and Band Director of the Year, and Centennial High School Teacher of the Year. He is a

member of both the Idaho Music Educators Hall of Fame and Centennial High School Hall of Fame.

Hartman hopes to use his position on the IHSAA Board to advocate for opportunities for all Idaho students and increased recognition and support for activities, particularly the arts. “I have continued to be an active educator for over 40 years due to my passion for students and learning,” Hartman said. “As educators, we have the ability to impact the future of our society while helping individual students become the best they can be.”

Hartman and his wife, Wendy, also a Boise State educator, have two children. Their daughter, Angela, teaches at Owyhee High School, while their son, Ryan, works at Clearwater Analytics.

And, according to Hartman, board members can expect one more thing from him: “a refined sense of dad humor” that he plans to use at every opportunity.



IHSAA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Meet Shawn Lawler: Girls Coaches Representative

With nearly three decades in education and a coaching career filled with success, Shawn Lawler is beginning his first year on the Idaho High School Activities Association Board of Directors as the Girls Coaches Representative.

Lawler has spent the past 23 years teaching Physical Education and Health at Timberlake High School, where he also established the school’s cross country program. A Vallivue High School graduate, Lawler competed collegiately in cross country and track before earning his bachelor’s degree from Boise State University and master’s degree from the University of Idaho.

Lawler has built a remarkable legacy at Timberlake. Over 22 seasons, the Timberlake cross country program has earned 23 state trophies, including four state championships. He also serves as an assistant track coach for a program that has captured 15 state trophies, including four state titles.

One of Lawler’s most memorable experiences as both a coach and parent came watching his daughter, Keelie, and her teammates compete in the Idaho State Basketball Championship game all four years of her high school career. The team captured state championships during her junior and senior seasons.

Lawler and his wife, Stacie, have been married for 31 years. They have a son, Keegan, and daughter-in-law, Amanda, along with two grandchildren, Julian and Rosalind, as well as daughter Keelie.

Outside of school and coaching, Lawler and his wife share a passion for travel. The couple purchased a camper van, allowing them to explore the country and visit national parks. So far, they have checked 47 of the 63 national parks off their list.

As he begins his service on the IHSAA Board, Lawler is looking forward to giving back to the activities community that has played such an important role throughout his career. “I look forward to serving the member schools in a selfless way while promoting ALL activities in Idaho.”



IHSAA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Meet Nick Smith: District III Representative

With 24 years in education and experience ranging from teaching and coaching in rural Idaho to leadership in the state's largest school districts, Nick Smith brings a broad perspective to the Idaho High School Activities Association Board of Directors as the new District III Representative.

Smith is in his third year as Deputy Superintendent of the Boise School District and is beginning his first year in his current role on the IHSAA Board. He previously served as the State Department of Education representative.

Smith began his career in the Bliss School District as a social studies and health teacher while coaching basketball and track. He later moved into administration before joining the Idaho State Department of Education in 2006 as Idaho's Civic Education Coordinator. He eventually served as Deputy Superintendent of School Support Services, Deputy Superintendent of Federal Programs and Chief Deputy Superintendent.

In 2013, Smith joined the Boise School District as principal of Lowell Elementary School and became the district's Director of Human Resources in 2016. He also served as Deputy Superintendent in the West Ada School District during the 2022–23 school year before returning to Boise.

Smith holds a bachelor's degree in Secondary Education, a master's degree in Educational Leadership and an Education Specialist degree, all from the University of Idaho.

As an IHSAA Board member, Smith hopes to bring a student-centered approach to every decision while helping preserve and expand opportunities for Idaho students. "Extracurricular activities and athletics provide invaluable opportunities for students to develop leadership, teamwork, character, and strong connections to their schools and communities."

Smith's perspective is shaped by his own Idaho roots. He grew up in Fairfield and attended the Camas County School District before beginning his career in Bliss. His professional experience has since taken him through Idaho's two largest school districts, Boise and West Ada. "I understand that Idaho's schools are not one-size-fits-all," Smith said. "I hope to help ensure that the needs and perspectives of both large and small districts are represented as we work to serve students across Idaho."

Outside of his professional responsibilities, Smith enjoys spending time with his wife of 20 years, Amaya, and their three sons, Andoni, Luken and Kepa. All three boys are involved in a variety of athletics and activities, giving Smith plenty of opportunities to watch, follow and coach his sons.

With experience across Idaho's educational landscape and a strong commitment to students, Smith is looking forward to representing District III and helping strengthen extracurricular opportunities for students throughout the state.



IHSAA STAFF

Meet Emalee Evans: A Passion for Sports, Idaho and Serving Others

For Emalee Evans, sports, hard work and Idaho have always been a big part of her life.

A Blackfoot native, Evans grew up on her family farm, where they raise potatoes, sugar beets, grain, alfalfa and quinoa. As the oldest of four siblings, she learned the value of hard work from her parents and the farm life that shaped her.

Evans graduated from Blackfoot High School, where she played volleyball and managed the track and girls basketball teams. She went on to earn degrees in Sport Management and Athletic Administration from Idaho State University. While at ISU, she worked in the university's Event Management Department and gained valuable experience working at sporting events. She also coached volleyball in Blackfoot for five years—a role she considers one of her favorite experiences.

Now an Executive Assistant with the IHSAA, Evans hopes to use her experience and passion for athletics to support Idaho schools and provide positive experiences for everyone who works with the association.

"Idaho is a great place, and I want to be someone who helps exemplify just how amazing our state and schools are," Evans said.

Outside of work, Evans enjoys volleyball, pickleball, spikeball, gardening, reading, concerts, rodeos and just about any sport. She also misses her cowboy corgi, Retro, who remains happily enjoying farm life in Blackfoot.

And one fun fact about Evans: she can drive a manual transmission—a skill her parents insisted she learn with her first car. She also plays the violin and took lessons for nine years.

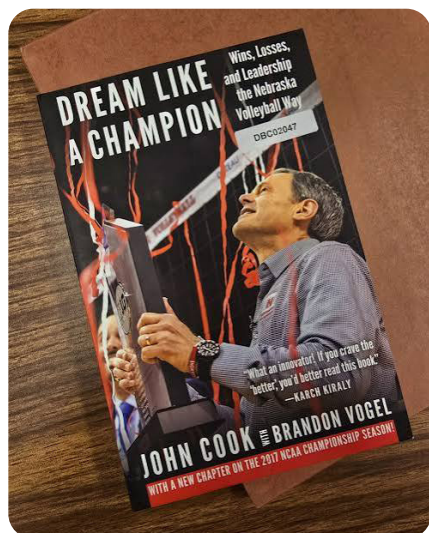
From the family farm to the IHSAA office, Evans brings a love of sports, a strong work ethic and a genuine desire to serve Idaho's schools and student-athletes.





Favorite Leadership Book of the Month

by the **IHSAA Staff**



Dream Like a Champion: Wins, Losses, and Leadership the Nebraska Volleyball Way by John Cook with Brandon Vogel

In *Dream Like a Champion* Cook shares the philosophy behind Nebraska's culture of success and reveals how he's had to learn, evolve, and be coached himself, even in his fifth decade as a coach. With openness and candor, he delivers insights about his methods and passes along lessons that can be used by leaders in any field. Cook also shares behind-the-scenes anecdotes about Nebraska volleyball moments and players and how he coaches and teaches his players about life beyond the court.

Emalee's favorite quote from the book:

"Great leadership is not about doing it all yourself. Trust others to see the things you cannot see and rely on their expertise."

