



access

NEWSLETTER

MAY



Photo from the 2024 IHSA Softball State Finals courtesy of Visual Image Photography - VIP

IHSA Calendar

- May 16**
Girls Badminton State Finals Begin
- May 18**
Girls' Track & Field List of Participants Due
- May 20**
Boys' Tennis List of Participants Due
- May 22**
Girls' Track & Field State Finals Begin
Boys' Water Polo State Finals Begin
Girls' Water Polo State Finals Begin
Girls' Badminton Advisory Committee Meeting
- May 28**
2025 Football Schedules Due
- May 29**
Boys' Track & Field State Finals Begin
Boys' Tennis State Finals Begin
- June 5**
Girls' Soccer State Finals Begin
Boys' Lacrosse State Finals Begin
Girls' Lacrosse State Finals Begin
- June 6**
1A/2A Baseball State Finals Begin
1A/2A Softball State Finals Begin
Boys' Volleyball State Finals Begin
Bass Fishing State Finals Begin
- June 9**
Possible Start of Summer Contact Period
- June 11**
Boys & Girls' Water Polo Advisory Committee Meeting
- June 13**
3A/4A Baseball State Finals Begin
3A/4A Softball State Finals Begin
- June 16**
Board of Directors Meeting
- June 17**
IHSAF Dr. Marty Hickman Golf Outing
- July 11-12**
IHSA Officials Conference
- 
- August 2-3**
Student Advisory Committee Retreat
- August 11**
First Day of Fall Practices

From the Executive Director

As we culminate another school year and bring spring sport/activity championship seasons to an end, we want to thank our member schools for another great year of creating life-long memories for the students we serve. Sports and activities enrich the educational experience for our students, and we are thankful for all that you do locally for your school and conferences to support your students and the IHSA in this mission.

This school year we were able to introduce a new sport to the membership with the addition of girls flag football. We know there are challenges for schools to add a sport during the fall season that has incredible numbers of student participation already. We are excited about the growth we continue to see in girls flag football and thank schools for their reflection on the feasibility of adding this opportunity where there is interest.

One of the more significant changes coming in the 2025-2026 school year is the change to IHSA Board Policy 17 Classification. The changes to be implemented come after some significant reflection and review by the IHSA Board of Directors to adopt the recent changes.

The Board of Directors is committed to annually reviewing the impact of the changes to the competitive balance among non-boundary and boundary schools. Moving back to the one-year classification cycle allows the Board to review and adjust the Board policy accordingly. We value the feedback we have received and appreciate the responses to the waiver application process that has been instituted for non-boundary schools.

We wish all our school administrators a restful summer to rejuvenate for an exciting year in 2025-2026. This upcoming school year will allow the IHSA to celebrate 125 years as an association dedicated to supporting the mission of education-based sports and activities in our member high schools. We look forward to highlighting our accomplishments over that time.

To those who have reached the end of your career, we congratulate you and thank you for the contributions you have made to the students and communities you have served.

My best, 

New By-laws July 1st

Last December, the membership passed nine By-law proposals that were on the all-school ballot. Changes to By-laws **2.080** (Selection and Use of Licensed Officials), **2.180** (Travel Policy), and **3.153 (reduction in summer contact days from 25 to 20 days)** went into effect in January per the terms of those proposals. In addition to references of "principal" and "administrator" being changed to "Official Representative" in the IHSA handbook, the following changes will take effect on July 1st.

1.460 and 1.460.1: Associate Executive Directors, appointed by the Executive Director and with the consent of the Board of Directors, will make initial transfer/residence eligibility rulings. A Hearing Board comprised of three IHSA Board members will review and make decisions on appeals to initial eligibility rulings.

3.120: Student participation on an all-star team is only restricted during the school year from Monday of Week 8 (late August) to Saturday of

Week 49 (mid-June) while a student still has high school eligibility in that sport.

5.004: Outlines penalties for a team that exceeds season limitations as defined in the Sport Season By-laws. Penalties include suspension of the head coach during the state series and in the next season for the number of games the team went over the previous season, forfeiture of the host guarantee if the school is a state series host, and probation for the school and the school's Athletic Director. Subsequent violations by the same team results in forfeiture of the team from the state series.

5.340 and 5.350: Changes the season limitations in competitive cheerleading and competitive dance from 6 to 8 dates.

6.011: A football player who is ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended for the next four full quarters at that level of competition and all other contests at any level in the interim, in addition to other penalties the IHSA or school may assess.



IHSA Summer Operations

The IHSA office will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. Monday through Thursday from June 16th through August 7th.

The office will be closed on June 19th.

Regular office operations resume August 11th.

Future State Finals Hosts

The IHSA will be seeking state finals hosts for **boys and girls' water polo** (beginning Spring 2026) and **boys' soccer** (beginning Fall 2026). RFPs are forthcoming.

Interested schools are invited to shadow the current state finals to observe and learn more about each event.

- 2025 Water Polo State Finals: May 22nd-24th at Stevenson High School
- 2025 Boys' Soccer State Finals: November 6th-8th at Hoffman Estates High School

Contact Beth Sauser (bsauser@ihsa.org) for more information.

NFHS Learn Course of the Month

Sports and activities are an integral part for many students in high school, and many have aspirations to compete at the next level. As students and parents plan for the future, they may have questions about NCAA requirements. This month's NFHS Learn Course of the Month is [NCAA Initial Eligibility](#), which was created in partnership with the NCAA Eligibility Center.

This course is designed for students and parents and addresses initial NCAA eligibility requirements, which includes a walkthrough of academic requirements, amateurism policies, and important documents to have prepared.

This is another free course offered by the NFHS. Anyone can set up an account for free at www.nfhslern.com and get started.

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Inaugural Bass Fishing Regionals

The IHSA conducted a regional round of competition in the Bass Fishing State Series for the first time on May 15th. The bass fishing advisory committee recommended to expand the state series by adding regionals to account for the growth in participation since 2009.

In this updated format, 30 total regional tournaments were held with five regionals feeding into one of six sectionals. The top six boats from each regional have advanced to the sectional, and the top ten boats in each sectional will advance to the IHSA State Finals at Lake Shelbyville on June 6th and 7th.



Photo from 2025 Bass Fishing Regional at Lake Mattoon

SAC Seniors

Five senior members of the IHSA Student Advisory Committee (SAC) were recognized at their final meeting on April 27th. Their contributions to the committee include organizing and presenting at the 2023 Student Leadership Conference, updating the criteria of the Student Section & Spirit Showdown, and establishing new SAC social media pages.



Congratulations to Abbey Williams (Mother McAuley), Sophia Zepeda (Mundelein), OluwaTamilore Ogundeyi (Thornton Fractional North), McKayla Harms (El Paso-Gridley), and Megan Allen (Monticello)!

Girls Flag Football Rules

The NFHS Flag Football rulebook is coming soon. The IHSA anticipates receiving final copies at the end of May, and schools should receive a rulebook in early June.



Photo from the 2024 IHSA Girls Flag Football State Finals courtesy of Visual Image Photography - VIP.

Let's Talk SMAC (Summer Heat Safety Tips)

Summer is an exciting time for athletes, offering long days, outdoor competitions, and increased training opportunities. However, higher temperatures and humidity can pose serious risks if not managed properly. Heat-related illnesses such as heat exhaustion and heat stroke are preventable with the right precautions. By following these summer safety tips, athletes can enjoy peak performance while minimizing the risks associated with heat.

1) Dehydration is one of the most common and dangerous threats to athletes in the summer. Sweating causes the body to lose water and electrolytes rapidly. Drink water regularly throughout the day, not just during exercise. Include drinks that are rich with electrolytes during prolonged or intense activity. Warning signs that the body is not getting enough fluids include dark urine, dizziness, dry mouth, and fatigue.

2) The sun is at its peak between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Exercising during these hours can increase the risk of overheating. Train early in the morning or later in the evening when temperatures are cooler. Consider indoor workouts or shaded routes during heat waves.

3) Wearing the wrong gear can make the body retain heat, increasing the risk of heat stress. Choose lightweight, breathable, and moisture-

wicking fabrics in light colors, and don't forget that hats and sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher) help protect against sunburn, which can interfere with the body's ability to cool down.

4) Jumping into full-intensity workouts on the first hot day is a common mistake. Gradually increase the duration and intensity of workouts over 1-2 weeks to allow the body to adapt. Take more frequent breaks during the acclimatization phase.

5) Early recognition of heat-related symptoms can prevent major health issues.

- Symptoms of heat exhaustion: heavy sweating, weakness, cold/clammy skin, fast/weak pulse, nausea, or fainting.
- Symptoms of heat stroke: High body temperature (above 103°F/39.4°C), hot/dry or damp skin, confusion, unconsciousness. Heat stroke is a medical emergency.

6) Nutrient-rich foods help maintain energy and electrolyte balance, which are both critical in the heat. Eat a balanced diet with fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean protein. Avoid excess caffeine and alcohol, which can contribute to dehydration.

7) Incorporate adequate rest, stretching, cooling strategies (like cold towels or baths), and post-workout hydration to help with recovery.