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HALL OF FAME LUNCHEON SET

The TSSAA Hall of Fame luncheon will be held at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Murfreesboro, located on Medical Center Parkway. We hope you will make plans to join us **Saturday, April 13, 2019** as we induct a new Hall of Fame class. The 2019 selections will be announced in March.

Participation Increases for 29th Straight Year

Led by an additional 15,009 participants in girls sports programs, the overall number of participants in high school sports increased for the 29th consecutive year in 2017-18, according to the annual High School Athletics Participation Survey conducted by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS).

The number of participants in high school sports in 2017-18 reached an all-time record high of 7,979,986, according to figures from the 51 NFHS member state high school associations, which includes the District of Columbia. The number of girls participating in high school sports reached an all-time high of 3,415,306, and boys participation also set a new standard at 4,564,680.

Among boys sports, soccer registered the largest gain with 6,128 additional participants. Other boys sports with sizeable gains were cross country (3,824), volleyball (3,767) and golf (2,558). For the second consecutive year, competitive spirit had the largest increase among girls sports with an additional 18,426 participants, followed by swimming and diving (4,797), lacrosse (3,431) and golf (3,176).

With 1,035,942 participants, 11-player football remains the No. 1 participatory sport for boys in high school by a large margin. Outdoor track and field is No. 2 with 600,097 participants, followed by basketball (551,373), baseball (487,097), soccer (456,362), cross country (270,095), wrestling (245,564), tennis (158,151), golf (144,024) and swimming/diving (138,935).

Outdoor track and field continues to lead the way for girls with 488,592 participants, followed by volleyball (446,583), basketball (412,407), soccer (390,482), fast-pitch soft-

ball (367,861), cross country (223,518), tennis (190,768), swimming/diving (175,594), competitive spirit (162,669) and lacrosse (96,904).

Despite remaining the top participatory sport for boys, 11-player football dropped for the second consecutive year. The decline in numbers, however, was not as high as 2016, and participation in 6-player and 8-player football continued to trend upward. In 2017, participation in 11-player football was 1,035,942, a two-percent decline of 21,465 from the previous year. The decline from 2015 to 2016 was 27,865, or 2.5 percent.

While there have been some recent reports about schools dropping the sport of football for the 2018 season because of declining numbers, the overall number of schools discontinuing 11-player football before the 2017 season was minimal – a decline of 20 schools from 14,099 to 14,079.

With 14,079 schools sponsoring 11-player football nationally, the loss of 21,465 participants amounts to 1.5 per school. And, although the 11-player numbers were down, the number of schools sponsoring 6-player football increased from 259 to 317, and school sponsorship of 8-player football increased from 841 to 847. Overall, the number of high schools sponsoring football (combining 6-, 8-, 9- and 11-player) increased by 29 schools – from 15,457 to 15,486.

“There are many positives about the numbers in this year’s sports participation survey,” said Karissa Niehoff, who began her duties as NFHS executive director earlier this month after eight years as executive

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DISTINGUISHED SERVICE RECOGNITION

TSSAA is proud to recognize Scott Lawless, Assistant Principal and Athletic Director at Blackman High School, as its Distinguished Service honoree as an administrator.

Mr. Lawless graduated from Oak Ridge High School. He later went on to earn his Bachelors in Math and Psychology from East Tennessee State University. He received his Masters in Administration from Trevecca. Scott has had several stops around the state as a coach and math teacher. He began his career at Brentwood High School. He then had stops at Lincoln County High School and Crockett County High School before moving to Murfreesboro in 2000 for the opening of Blackman High School. In 2006, he left the math classroom to begin his current role as an Assistant Principal.

Scott's wife Wendy also serves in the

education profession. They have two daughters, Brooke (22) who just graduated from college and Rebecca (19) who is a sophomore in high school. In his spare time Scott enjoys reading, working in the yard, volunteering at his church and watching sports on TV.

TSSAA proudly salutes Scott Lawless for his many contributions to student-athletes in Tennessee.



UPCOMING STATE TOURNAMENTS

GOLF

Willowbrook Golf Club
Manchester, TN

DIVISION I - LARGE
September 25-26

DIVISION II
October 1-2

DIVISION I - SMALL
October 9-10

VOLLEYBALL

Blackman & Siegel HS,
Murphy Center
Murfreesboro, TN

October 16 - 18

TSSAAsports.com

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS PARTICIPATION: CONTINUED. . .

director of the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference-Connecticut Association of Schools. "First, the upward trek of interest in high school sports continued for the 29th consecutive year. The model of sports within the education-based school system continues to thrive in the United States.

"Second, we are encouraged that the decline in high school football has slowed due, in part, to our efforts in reducing the risk of injury in the sport. While there may be other reasons that students elect not to play football, we have attempted to assure student-athletes and their parents that thanks to the concussion protocols and rules in place in every state in the country, the sport of football is as safe as it ever has been."

In addition to playing rules in place that remove an athlete from a game when a concussion is suspected, states have enacted rules that limit the amount of contact before the season and during practices. With a more directed focus on risk minimization related to concussions the past 10 years, two recent studies have revealed that the rate of concussions has decreased the past couple of years due to more stringent rules related to protecting the head.

"It is great to see new sport opportunities created to involve as many students as possible in high school sports," Niehoff said. "While we continue to try to make football a viable option, we understand that some parents continue to have a concern about the physical nature of the sport. Certainly, the goal is to involve more and more young people in sports and activity programs because the benefits of participating in sports and activities is the same whether it is football, baseball, lacrosse, music, band or debate."

The participation survey has been compiled in its current form by the NFHS since 1971 through numbers it receives from its member state associations. The top 10 sports for boys and girls and the year-by-year participation totals are listed below. The complete 2017-18 High School Athletics Participation Survey is available via the following link:
<http://www.nfhs.org/ParticipationStatistics/ParticipationStatistics/>

Request to host Hall of Champions benefit basketball games

Schools may choose any two dates to play Hall of Champions basketball games between Monday, November 12 and Saturday, November 17, with an unlimited number of games on those two days. These games will not count against the 24 games a school is allowed to schedule during the regular season.

The request to host form is located in your school's TSSAA Portal, and can be entered in electronically by a school administrator. An e-mail will be sent once the request has been approved.

The Hall of Champions Game Financial Report can also be found in the Portal at the conclusion of your contest(s). You will complete a single report for all games hosted. Print and sign a hard-copy of the online financial form to mail in with your check.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact Heather Carter at hcarte@tssaa.org or 615-889-6740.

NFHS/TSSAA Guidelines on Handling Practices and Contests During Lightning or Thunder Disturbances

1. Assign staff to monitor local weather conditions before and during practices and contests.
2. Develop an evacuation plan, including identification of appropriate nearby safer areas and determine the amount of time needed to get everyone to a designated safer area.
 - A. A designated safer place is a substantial building with plumbing and wiring where people live or work, such as a school, gymnasium or library. An alternate safer place from the threat of lightning is fully enclosed (not convertible or soft top) metal car or school bus.
3. Develop criteria for suspension and resumption of play.
 - A. When thunder is heard or lightning is seen*, the leading edge of the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play for at least thirty minutes and vacate the outdoor activity to the previously designated safer location immediately.
 - B. Thirty-minute rule. Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or lightning is witnessed* prior to resuming play.
 - C. Any subsequent thunder or lightning* after the beginning of the 30-minute count will reset the clock and another 30-minute count should begin.
 - D. When lightning-detection devices or mobile phone apps are available, this technology could be used to assist in making a decision to suspend play if a lightning strike is noted to be within 10 miles of the event location. However, you should never depend on the reliability of these devices and thus, hearing thunder or seeing lightning* should always take precedence over information from a mobile app or lightning-detection device.
4. Review the lightning safety policy annually with all administrators, coaches and game personnel and train all personnel.
5. Inform student athletes and their parents of the lightning policy at start of the season.

Protocol and chain of command for suspension of play should be discussed in the pre-game meeting with the game officials. **If a host school has a policy which bases suspension of play on proximity of lightning while using a lightning detector, this must be communicated to the game officials at the pre-game meeting.** It should be clearly stated who will be in charge of monitoring the lightning detector and notifying the game officials when lightning is in the area. **If cloud to ground lightning is seen or thunder is heard by the game officials before a lightning detector displays an alert, the game shall be suspended and the 30 minute count shall begin.**

** - At night, under certain atmospheric conditions, lightning flashes may be seen from distant storms. In these cases, it may be safe to continue an event. If no thunder can be heard and the flashes are low on the horizon, the storm may not pose a threat. Independently verified lightning detection information would help eliminate any uncertainty.*