



# NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2021

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## [The Parents' Playbook](#)

We sat down with high school students and asked them why they play, how they feel about parental pressure, and what kind of support they need before, during and after the game. Watch this video to learn how we can collectively help create a fun and enriching sports experience for our student-athletes. Once you're done watching, feel free to share this video with coaches and parents to begin a conversation.

[Read More](#)

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## [NCAA Educational Resources](#)

The NCAA now offers quick reference posters designed for high school student-athletes, parents, coaches and others who want to help students successfully navigate the initial-eligibility process at NCAA member schools.

[Read More](#)

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## Call for Submissions

We want to include your thoughts in the monthly TSSAA Newsletter! Do you have 50-500 words to share on the topic of **overwork & fatigue in sports**? We welcome submissions from principals, athletic administrators, coaches and students! Consider sharing your thoughts, essays or even poems for an upcoming issue. Please send submissions in Microsoft Word format to [mgillespie@tssaa.org](mailto:mgillespie@tssaa.org).

TSSAA continues its support of the **National SAT/ACT Prep Project** through the NFHS and eKnowledge which allows any Tennessee student to receive a 95% discount on SAT or ACT prep courses. This is a community-service, non-profit project and all student fees are reinvested to improve the program and reach more families. The project has more than 45,000 five-star reviews and has already assisted nearly 300,000 families. Learn more at <https://eknowledge.com/TSSAA>.



# Governor's attendance restrictions to be lifted on Feb. 1

Masks, temperature checks, social distancing requirements remain in effect

January 28, 2021

In an announcement today, Tennessee Governor Bill Lee announced that he will soon lift the restrictions on sporting events contained in Executive Order No. 74.

“The guidance and rules of local education agencies and the TSSAA remain in place but Executive Order 74 will be suspended effective Monday, February 1,” Governor Lee said in a statement today. “I encourage Tennesseans to keep up their responsible personal choices as we work towards a COVID-free Tennessee.”

The TSSAA COVID-19 Regulations and Rules Modifications for practice and competition as well as the current restrictions on preseason scrimmages and jamborees adopted by the Board of Control at their July 22 meeting are still in place for all sports and must be followed. Visit the [Tennessee Returns to Play](#) page of TSSAA.org for complete details.

With the Governor’s announcement, the restrictions limiting cheerleaders and members of the general public from attending contests will be lifted on Monday, February 1. The TSSAA rules regarding masks, temperature checks, social distancing and COVID-19 recommended venue capacities will remain in effect.

“We’re proud that our member schools have been taking steps to follow the Governor’s orders and limit the spread of the virus,” said Bernard Childress, Executive Director of TSSAA. “It is vitally important that we continue to be smart and safe in our activities, wear a mask, wash our hands and practice social distancing at every athletic contest.”

Member schools are encouraged to limit fan attendance to a number that will allow adequate social distancing (e.g., 1/4 to 1/3 of typical seating capacity, depending on the characteristics of the particular venue) and should mark/designate bleachers or seats in order to promote social distancing among spectators. Member schools must facilitate compliance with any applicable state or local order limiting gathering sizes for participation in public events. In consultation with local health providers, member schools in areas experiencing high virus transmission should consider further limitations on attendance (e.g., family members only, or no spectators). Limit informal gathering in areas where social distancing cannot be maintained.



Sports News

Championships News

## New venues secured for TSSAA Wrestling State Championships

Williamson Co. Expo Center has been in use as COVID-19 testing center since last spring

January 11, 2021

With the unavailability of the Williamson County Ag Expo Center next month, the TSSAA has selected alternative venues for the upcoming wrestling state championships.

The TSSAA Dual Wrestling State Championships will remain in Williamson County and will take place on Saturday, February 6, 2021. Nolensville High School, Centennial High School, Independence High School and Mill Creek Middle School will serve as hosts for the tournaments. Eight schools will compete in Division I Class AAA while four schools will compete for a championship in Division I Class A-AA, Division II, and the Girls Dual Meet Invitational.

The TSSAA Wrestling State Championships will be returning to Chattanooga after a twelve year absence on February 18-20. The Chattanooga Convention Center will host this year's competition. Division I Class A-AA will take place on Thursday, February 18th. Division II and Girls will compete on Friday, February 19th, and Division I Class AAA will compete on Saturday, February 20th.

A complete tournament schedule for both events will be published at [TSSAAsports.com](https://www.tssaasports.com) as soon as details for both events are finalized.

The Williamson County Ag Expo Center has been in use as a COVID-19 testing center since last spring. When it became clear the facility would not be available to host the championships, TSSAA began evaluating alternative sites. The Expo Center has served as the host for the previous 11 TSSAA wrestling championships beginning in 2010.



General News

Meeting Agendas/Minutes News

## TSSAA Board of Control selects sites for 2021 and 2022 golf and girls' soccer championships

January 14, 2021

The TSSAA Board of Control held a virtual meeting on Thursday, January 14. Among the agenda items addressed, the Board reviewed bids submitted for the state golf championships and the girls' soccer championships for the next two years.

Sevierville Golf Club was selected to host the State Golf Championships in 2021 and 2022. The 36-hole facility allows for all of the state golf tournaments to be held during the same week. With that change, the Board also approved changes in the calendar that affect the golf season in regards to the dates when districts and regions for each class must be completed by.

Chattanooga was selected to host the Girls' State Soccer Championships for 2021 and 2022. Sites for the early rounds will include Baylor School, Chattanooga Christian School, Girls' Preparatory School and University of Tennessee Chattanooga Sportsplex. The championship matches will be held at CHI Memorial Stadium.

The Board received an update regarding the upcoming Bowling and Wrestling championships and how plans for Cheer & Dance and Basketball championships are progressing. The state office is in the process of assembling a schedule for the state basketball tournament that would see those contests held at multiple member high school gymnasiums in the Murfreesboro area.

Finally, the Board voted to extend the contract of the Executive Director, Bernard Childress, for another three years. The TSSAA Constitution requires three-year contracts for the position of Executive Director and the current contract expires on June 30, 2021.

Documents

[Board of Control Minutes \(January 14, 2021\) \(PDF\)](#)



## *Distinguished Service*

Sports News

General News

# Rhea County-native honored for Distinguished Service

January 19, 2021

It was, for all intents and purposes, busy work.

A gifted student but with limited extracurricular activities, eighth-grader Janet Layman was given a proposal to help the basketball teams at Rhea County High School: keep the scorebook.

Nothing since then has been the same for Layman, honored this month as the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association Distinguished Service Award recipient for her longstanding work with the TSSAA – particularly at championship events.

“The basketball coach who was also one of my teachers decided he would teach me to do the scorebook and my parents let me do and it just kind of stuck,” said Layman. “I got to know the reporters. They would come to our games at Rhea County; Ray Talley, he is the one who really taught me to keep the book. Coach Steffan Holder also helped me learn how to fill in the scorebook.

“When those two coaches taught me to keep a scorebook in eighth grade, it fundamentally changed the course of everything. My life would be completely different. And I always will be very grateful to those two men.”

Layman's happenstance endeavor has turned into a lifelong passion, a now-burgeoning business she co-owns, and it's the best way to locate Layman in championship times – be it the annual TSSAA BlueCross Bowl or the TSSAA State Basketball Championships, among other events.

Layman's work with Tennessee's prep sports governing body extends to her days working in the sports information department at Middle Tennessee State University under Ed Given, the Sports Information Director at the university at the time. Layman earned her undergraduate degree from MTSU en route to a career as a practicing attorney.

“Mr. Given was fantastic, wonderful to work for, and kind of like a dad to all of us who worked for him. A lot of reporters had written letters to him when I went to college about me working for him, and it was a really great time with great people.”

“I guess this football season that I just did was 28 seasons at MTSU,” said Layman, who in this COVID-19 pandemic-influenced year missed the TSSAA BlueCross Bowl for the first time since 2000 because she was in quarantine (but not sick) from virus exposure. “It was fun, something to do, and honestly, until 2014, I did just a few football games, the BlueCross Bowl, basketball some at MTSU for the state



Janet Layman

championships. It's a job now. It's every bit as much work as my law office.”

The work now is more vocation than hobby because almost seven years ago, Layman and Ken Stegall launched The Scorer's Table, “a company designed to be a central network for scorekeeping and other game day workers.”

The niche company now has a full-fledged portfolio of clients across approximately 15 states, largely clustered throughout the Southeast. The Scorer's Table works with high school associations, including the TSSAA, particularly around championship events; it also works intimately with collegiate athletics programs.

Just a sampling of the company's clients include: Belmont, Chicago State, Cumberland, Lipscomb, MTSU, Trevecca Nazarene, Welch College and Western Kentucky, among myriad others.

“The Scorer's Table is Ken's brain-child,” Layman said. “But in all honesty, we thought it would be a hobby. A way to make a little money, coordinating stat crews. Working for MTSU, I was almost like a volunteer to put together the schedule, and Ken was doing the same thing at Trevecca. I think it was Jo Jo Freeman who decided we ought to be introduced and said, 'If you all could get your people working together sometimes, that might be helpful to schools.' That's kind of how it started. Ken said we should just start a business doing this, charge a little bit to put together schedules and help get the events staffed.

“It took us about two years ago to figure out how we were going to do it. In 2017-18, it just took off like crazy. It's not a hobby anymore; it's a full-on, full-time business.”

A blossoming company that, for Layman, draws its roots from eighth grade in Rhea County and subsequent work in sports information at MTSU.

TSSAA is proud to recognize Janet Layman for her numerous contributions over the years to high school athletics in Tennessee.

AUTHOR

***John Brice***