



NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2025

[Wartburg freshman recognized for integrity and leadership](#)

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The awards were presented to the top football players in each of the nine classifications of the Tennessee Secondary Schools Athletic Association. The top kickers in the state were also recognized.

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[Congratulations to all 2025 Fall Champions!](#)

Join us in celebrating the champions and runners-up from the 2025 Fall Championships.

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[Pioneer Comfort's Playbook](#)

Whether it's on the field, in the stands, or at a local festival, Pioneer Comfort is proud to be part of the moments that bring Middle Tennessee communities together. With every event, every handshake, and every first down, the company continues to build a legacy of comfort, connection, and community.

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[Official Championship Event Merchandise](#)

Official state championship event apparel is available online anytime from the Northwest Designs store.

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[Your education, your story—digitally verified](#)

Employers increasingly want to know more than just an applicant's GPA. They're looking for evidence of communication skills, teamwork, leadership, time management and applied knowledge. TBR CRED helps demonstrate those things clearly and confidently. Once a student's TBR CRED is ready, they can add it to their résumé or LinkedIn profile, share it with potential employers as a digital portfolio or use it during college transfer to present a more complete record of what they've accomplished. Students can also reference it when preparing for interviews, allowing them to speak more confidently about their skills and experiences.

[Read More](#)

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 **empathy 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.

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>.



Wartburg freshman recognized for integrity and leadership

December 29, 2025

Wartburg Central High School ninth-grader Caleb Armes has been named a recipient of the NFHS Student-Athlete Award of Excellence, a recognition presented jointly by the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association (TSSAA) and the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS). The award honors students who exemplify the core values of educational athletics—not through statistics or trophies, but through consistent acts of respect, integrity, and leadership.

Caleb, who competes in golf and basketball, has drawn attention not for standout plays, but for how he carries himself—on and off the field. Coaches note that he arrives early, works diligently, and treats teammates, opponents, and officials with consistent courtesy. Whether helping a rival up after a fall, supporting a teammate through a mistake, or representing his school with quiet pride, Caleb's actions reflect a maturity that transcends his grade level.

Beyond athletics, he volunteers as a youth basketball referee in Wartburg and participates in his local Boys & Girls Club and church community—further demonstrating a commitment to service and responsibility.

High school sports are more than competition; they are classrooms for character. Caleb's example reminds us that how we play matters as much as whether we win. Students, parents, and coaches alike can take note: excellence in athletics includes how we treat others. Caleb Armes shows that leadership isn't always loud—it's often found in a steady hand, a word of encouragement, or a simple act of respect.

Nominate a student in your school today! Please use the form linked below to share a story about a student-athlete you know who has demonstrated exceptional sportsmanship, integrity, and ethics. If you have any questions about the award or the nomination process, please contact Courtney Brunetz (cbrunetz@tssaa.org).



Caleb Armes

[More about Student-Athlete Award of Excellence](#)



General News

Meeting Agendas/Minutes News

Legislative Council makes changes to eligibility rules, sports calendar at December meeting

December 11, 2025

The TSSAA Legislative Council approved a series of bylaw changes Thursday affecting student eligibility and coaching rules, while electing its 2026 leadership during its December meeting at the Courtyard by Marriott in Mt. Juliet.

The staff updated the Council regarding ongoing discussions with members of the state legislature regarding one-time transfers between school years and its potential impact on any decisions regarding transfer exceptions under consideration.

The council voted to add detail to Article II, Section 2, specifying that students who are ineligible during the first semester can gain eligibility no earlier than the final day of the first semester, provided the final grades have been recognized by the school administration. This proposal from Westview High School takes effect immediately.

In action regarding transfer policy, the council denied a Loretto High School proposal that would have permitted students to transfer without losing varsity eligibility after failing to make a team. However, it approved a new provision granting immediate eligibility to students who transfer due to a school closing.

Other changes include adjusting the high school basketball practice calendar to allow three weeks of practice before Hall of Champions contests, and permitting coaches to work with their own children during restricted periods if no other school students are involved.

Dan Black was elected council president and Keith Turner vice president, both by acclamation.

The council also approved updated financial aid reporting requirements, moved the membership renewal deadline to Oct. 15, and allowed parents to decline physical examinations for student-athletes based on sincerely held beliefs. A proposal to remove coaching education requirements for classified employees was tabled until April.

Legislative Council Summary

December 11, 2025

1. Approved the minutes from the April 8, 2025 meeting.

2. Voted to elect Dan Black as President.

3. Voted to elect Keith Turner as Vice President.
4. Tabled the proposed change to Article I Section 10 (Coaches Education Requirements) submitted by Arlington High School until April to gather additional information.
5. Approved the proposed change to Article IV Section 8 (TSSAA Sports Calendar) submitted by Lebanon High School, which would adjust the practice calendar for high school basketball programs to ensure they have at least three weeks of practice before Hall of Champions contests.
6. Voted to deny the proposed change to Article II, Section 13 (Eligible Transfer Students) submitted by Loretto High School, which would allow students to transfer schools without loss of varsity eligibility after failing to make the team at the school in which they are attending and tried out for.
7. Voted to deny the proposed change to Article IV, Section 8 (TSSAA Sports Calendar) submitted by Van Buren County High School, which would increase the number of students who can receive individual instruction from their coaches in a given day.
8. Approved the proposed change to Article II, Section 2 (Academic Rule) submitted by Westview High School with amended language, effective immediately, stating that students can become eligible to participate no earlier than the final day of the first semester for all students, provided the final grades have been recognized by the school administration.
9. Approved the proposed change to Article IV Section 8 (TSSAA Sports Calendar) submitted by Siegel High School, which would allow coaches to coach their own children during times when the TSSAA Sports Calendar does not permit them to coach students from their own school, provided no other students from the coach's school are involved in the activity.
10. Approved the proposed change to Article II Section 13 (School Closing), which would add a transfer provision to allow students who transfer due to a school closing to be eligible immediately.
11. Approved the proposed change to Article I, Section 7 (Cooperative Programs), which would allow DI schools to host DII schools in approved cooperative programs.
12. Approved the proposed changes to Article I, Section 2 (Membership) which would define a procedure to end a school's membership if membership dues are not paid by October 15.
13. Approved the proposed change to Article II, Section 16 (Tuition and Financial Aid), which removes language that is no longer applicable to the way financial aid reports are prepared/evaluated and adds a fine for schools that are not in compliance with the reporting requirements.
14. Approved the proposed addition to Article II, Section 10 (Physical Examination & Parental Consent), which allows parents or legal guardians to decline physical examinations on grounds of sincerely held beliefs or practices.
15. Voted to table the change to Article II, Section 12d (Athletic Coaching Link) proposed by Lipscomb Academy.



DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

Sports News

General News

Longtime bowling coach honored for Distinguished Service

Hardin County coach has led her alma mater to 16 state titles in over two decades

December 31, 2025

It started with a simple enough request.

Twenty-five years ago, then-Hardin County High School Athletics Director Anthony Gilchrist had a simple ask.

“My husband (David) and I at the time owned the bowling center here in town,” Jennifer Channell recalled. “The athletic director, Mr. Gilchrist, came to us and said, ‘Hey, the TSSAA is starting bowling as a high school sport. Would you be interested in helping us start our program?’

“We said, ‘Sure. Sounds great.’”

That unassuming answer has evolved into an incomparable dynasty in Volunteer State high school excellence.

Jennifer Channell has helped coach her alma mater, Hardin County High School, to a Sweet 16 of TSSAA State Bowling Championships, the last dozen in a row.

She’s also been named the TSSAA Distinguished Service Award winner for December.

“It’s just a lot of good kids that buy in and work hard,” Jennifer Channell said.

“It’s a great experience to be able to share it with (David), something that we both love and are able to do it together. Working with the kids and to just love sharing bowling with the kids, it’s something they can do for years to come and it’s always good to see a new group accomplish a goal that they’ve set.

“It’s just fun watching them grow and get better.”

It has been a family affair for the Channells, who have transformed bowling excellence into transcendent opportunity.



Jennifer Channell

Their oldest daughter, Ashley, garnered a bowling scholarship to pay for her college at Louisiana Tech University; younger daughter Kaileee then obtained a bowling scholarship to prestigious Vanderbilt University, where she helped the Commodores claim an NCAA National Championship.

They are but two of the several bowling standouts to, well, strike an opportunity to continue their education by competing at the college level.

“Working with the kids and I just love sharing bowling with the kids, something they can do for years to come and it’s always good to see a new group accomplish a goal that they’ve set,” Channell said. “It’s just fun watching them grow and get better.

“A lot of boys and girls are going to be able to further their educations with bowling.”

But, this is no casual passion. It takes work.

“Most of them bowl league on Mondays, with three games that day,” she said. “We meet together on Tuesdays and Thursdays to have organized practices of some sort, working fundamentals, spare shooting, something along those lines, and then they bowl on their own usually on Fridays and Saturdays.

“It’s a lot of games.”

Ultimately, it’s a lot winning.

TSSAA proudly salutes Jennifer Channell for her more than two decades of coaching student-athletes in the sport of bowling.

AUTHOR

John Brice



Chattanooga middle-schooler honored with NFHS sportsmanship award

December 31, 2025

Normal Park Museum Magnet School eighth-grader Jaylee Hutchinson has been recognized with the NFHS Student-Athlete Award of Excellence, a joint recognition from the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association (TSSAA) and the National Federation of State High School Associations.

The award acknowledges Jaylee's consistent demonstration of good sportsmanship as captain of her volleyball team. Throughout the season, she took initiative by organizing her teammates to prepare the gym, set up equipment, and lead warm-ups while her coach attended to other duties. Rather than waiting for direction, Jaylee stepped forward—showing responsibility without being asked.

Her coach noted that Jaylee never complained about challenges, whether in practice or competition, and consistently gave her full effort. This approach had a meaningful impact on younger teammates, particularly sixth-grade players who saw in Jaylee—despite her smaller stature—a model of determination and capability. Over her three years in middle school athletics, she became one of the team's strongest contributors.

Outside athletics, Jaylee maintains straight A's and trains in dance, reflecting the same discipline she brings to the court.

The NFHS Student-Athlete Award of Excellence isn't given for spectacular plays or individual statistics. It's awarded for the everyday choices that build team culture and uphold the educational purpose of school sports. Jaylee's example—of reliability, effort, and quiet leadership—reminds us that sportsmanship isn't a single act, but a habit.

Nominate a student in your school today! Please use the form linked below to share a story about a student-athlete you know who has demonstrated exceptional sportsmanship, integrity, and ethics. If you have any questions about the award or the nomination process, please contact Courtney Brunetz (cbrunetz@tssaa.org).



Jaylee Hutchinson

[More about Student-Athlete Award of Excellence](#)

TENNESSEE TITANS



Sports News

General News

2025 Tennessee Titans Mr. Football Award Winners Announced

Awards were presented to 10 winners and 20 finalists at Nissan Stadium

December 9, 2025

Tennessee's best high school football players for 2025 were recognized at the Tennessee Titans Mr. Football Awards luncheon hosted by the Tennessee Titans.

More than 400 people, including the honorees, their families, coaches, school administrators and members of the media from all parts of the state, attended the 2025 luncheon at Nissan Stadium.

"This is such an outstanding honor for all 30 of the young men recognized today at the Tennessee Titans Mr. Football Awards," said Mark Reeves, Executive Director of the TSSAA. "They were here not only due to their athletic ability that they displayed on the field throughout the season, but just as much for their outstanding character and academic achievements."

"For decades, the Titans have made supporting high school and youth football programs a top priority. The athletes being honored today represent some of the most talented across the state – not only showing determination on-the-field, but also demonstrating tremendous character off-the-field," said Burke Nihill, Titans President and CEO. "We are proud to support the Mr. Football Awards and highlight these incredible men who will be the leaders of tomorrow."

High school head coaches and members of the media nominated the finalists. A committee of statewide sports writers selected winners based on performance in the 2025 regular season. Academics and character were also taken into consideration.

The awards were presented to the top football players in each of the nine classifications of the Tennessee Secondary Schools Athletic Association. The top kickers in the state were also recognized. There were three finalists in this category, regardless of their school's classification.

The Titans became sponsors of the Mr. Football Awards in 2007.

2025 TENNESSEE TITANS MR. FOOTBALL AWARD WINNERS

Division I, Class 1A

DaYon Cooper, South Pittsburg

Division I, Class 2A

Zach Groves, East Robertson

Division I, Class 3A

Graham Simpson, Westview

Division I, Class 4A

Caden Baugh, Greeneville

Division I, Class 5A

Cooper Newman, Sevier County

Division I, Class 6A

Kelvin Perkins, Southwind

Division II, Class A

Jared Curtis, Nashville Christian School

Division II, Class AA

Kaedyn Marable, Battle Ground Academy

Division II, Class AAA

David Gabriel Georges, Baylor

KICKER OF THE YEAR

Tommy Bauchiero, Brentwood Academy



2025-2026 Champions

Champions by School Year:

2025-2026

▼

[VIEW BY GRAND DIVISION](#)

Boys' Cross Country



Class A Team Champions
[University School Johnson City](#)
Runner-up: [University High Memphis](#)



Class A Individual Champion
[Vaughn Bounds](#)
[Dresden](#)
Runner-up: [Jackson Smith, Happy Valley](#)



Class AA Team Champions
Nashville Martin Luther King
Runner-up: [Murfreesboro Central Magnet](#)



Class AA Individual Champion
Trey Bailey
Greeneville
Runner-up: Wyatt Boling, [Nashville Martin Luther King](#)



Class AAA Team Champions
Independence
Runner-up: [Houston](#)



Class AAA Individual Champion
Owen Clemons
Cleveland
Runner-up: Asher Oates, [Independence](#)



Division II A Team Champions
Davidson Academy
Runner-up: [University School of Nashville](#)



Division II A Individual Champion

Duncan Oshumu

[King's Academy](#)

Runner-up: Noah Losacker, [Lakeway Christian](#)



Division II AA Team Champions

[McCallie](#)

Runner-up: [Baylor](#)



Division II AA Individual Champion

Andrew Beroset

[McCallie](#)

Runner-up: Marshall McConville, [Baylor](#)

Girls' Cross Country



Class A Team Champions

[University School Johnson City](#)

Runner-up: [University High Memphis](#)



Class A Individual Champion

Hudson McDaniel

[Dresden](#)

Runner-up: Abigail Wallace, [McKenzie](#)

Class AA Team Champions

Signal Mountain

Runner-up: [Heritage](#)



Class AA Individual Champion

Ava Moody

Anderson County

Runner-up: Arvela Nave, [Elizabethton](#)



Class AAA Team Champions

Brentwood

Runner-up: [Collierville](#)



Class AAA Individual Champion

Lauren Banovac

Brentwood

Runner-up: Lakin Hailey, [Rockvale](#)



Division II A Team Champions

Battle Ground Academy

Runner-up: [Columbia Academy](#)





Division II A Individual Champion
Maggie Crosslin
St. Cecilia
Runner-up: Sophie Lee, [Knoxville Grace](#)



Division II AA Team Champions
Webb School of Knoxville
Runner-up: [Knoxville Catholic](#)



Division II AA Individual Champion
Calysta Garmer
Webb School of Knoxville
Runner-up: Addy Cotter, [Baylor](#)

Football



Class 1A Team Champions
South Pittsburg (14-1)
Runner-up: [McKenzie \(13-2\)](#)



Class 2A Team Champions
Huntingdon (14-1)
Runner-up: [Marion County \(13-2\)](#)



Class 3A Team Champions
Westview (14-0)
Runner-up: [Gatlinburg-Pittman \(14-1\)](#)



Class 4A Team Champions
Alcoa (14-1)
Runner-up: [Pearl Cohn \(10-5\)](#)



Class 5A Team Champions
Page (14-0)
Runner-up: [Sevier County \(14-1\)](#)



Class 6A Team Champions
Oakland (15-0)
Runner-up: [Ravenwood \(14-1\)](#)



Division II-A Team Champions
Nashville Christian (13-0)
Runner-up: [University School of Jackson \(11-2\)](#)



Division II-AA Team Champions
Battle Ground Academy (13-1)
Runner-up: [Franklin Road Academy](#) (10-2)



Division II-AAA Team Champions
Baylor (12-0)
Runner-up: [Brentwood Academy](#) (11-1)

Unified Flag Football



Team Champions
Hardin Valley
Runner-up: [McGavock](#)

Boys' Golf



Class A Team Champions
Signal Mountain
Runner-up: [Dyer County](#)

Class A Individual Champion

Sam Otwell

Signal Mountain

Runner-up: Parker Beck, [Stone Memorial](#)



Class AA Team Champions

Hardin Valley

Runner-up: [Brentwood](#)



Class AA Individual Champion

Cody Walter

Walker Valley

Runner-up: Charlie Clubertson, [Bearden](#)



Division II A Team Champions

First Baptist Academy

Runner-up: [Franklin Road Academy](#)



Division II A Individual Champion

Walker Webb

Franklin Road Academy

Runner-up: Carson Andreoni, [Jackson Christian](#)





Division II AA Individual Champion
Brantley Moore
Memphis University School
Runner-up: Reece Shipley, [Christian Brothers](#)



Division II AA Individual Champion
Brantley Moore
Memphis University School
Runner-up: Zack Bourgeois, [Baylor](#)



Division II AA Individual Champion
Brantley Moore
Memphis University School
Runner-up: Andrew Sciortino, [Brentwood Academy](#)

Girls' Golf



Class A Team Champions
Greeneville
Runner-up: [Murfreesboro Central](#)



Class A Individual Champion
Elizabeth Prowse
Springfield
Runner-up: Lauren Powell, [Murfreesboro Central](#)



Class AA Team Champions

[Page](#)

Runner-up: [Hardin Valley](#)



Class AA Individual Champion

Poppy Pewitt

[Dickson County](#)

Runner-up: Addisyn Newman, [Hardin Valley](#)



Division II A Team Champions

Christian Academy of Knoxville

Runner-up: [Lakeway Christian Academy](#)



Division II A Individual Champion

Tori Robinson

[Trinity Christian](#)

Runner-up: Isabella Coughlin, [Christian Academy of Knoxville](#)



Division II AA Team Champions

Baylor

Runner-up: [Harpeth Hall](#)



Division II AA Individual Champion

Jada Lin

[St. Mary's](#)

Runner-up: Hayden Cherry, [Ensworth](#)

Girls' Soccer



Class A Team Champions

[Westview](#) (15-3-1)

Runner-up: [Merrol Hyde](#) (16-4-1)



Class AA Team Champions

[Liberty Creek](#) (22-1-2)

Runner-up: [Tullahoma](#) (20-2)



Class AAA Team Champions

[Bearden](#) (20-2-1)

Runner-up: [Houston](#) (16-6-2)



Division II A Team Champions

[St. George's](#) (16-3-2)

Runner-up: [Evangelical Christian School](#) (14-6)



Division II AA Team Champions

Baylor (19-2-1)

Runner-up: [Webb School of Knoxville](#) (15-2-1)

Girls' Volleyball

Class A Team Champions

Eagleville (43-5)

Runner-up: [Gordonsville](#) (26-2)



Class AA Team Champions

Valor College Prep (30-3)

Runner-up: [Dyer County](#) (38-8)



Class AAA Team Champions

Summit (33-10)

Runner-up: [Brentwood](#) (29-6)



Division II A Team Champions

Middle Tennessee Christian (33-3)

Runner-up: [Silverdale](#) (29-9)





Division II AA Team Champions

Briarcrest (30-8)

Runner-up: [Christ Presbyterian Academy \(26-6\)](#)