



GEORGIA ATHLETIC DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION



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You make an impact!

Hello Don,

If you attended our conference in Athens last month I want to thank for attending and making this our largest attended conference. Please respond to the post conference survey that you should have received. Thanks to Josh Mathews and the conference committee for organizing our conference. Next year's date is March 7-11, 2025 in Athens.



A big thanks to Maurice Freeman for his leadership as our president. Working closely with Maurice showed me that he has a great passion for molding our athletes into all they can be. What a great roll model. Recently Maurice announced that he plans to retire after 30 plus years. I can't begin to imagine the number of athletes he has had a positive influence on. Maurice, you are a true professional who's shown by example that excellence is something to aim for daily. You inspire everyone around you to be more, and I know that this will continue in the path you will take in the next phase of your life. Time to go fishing.

Ricky Turner will serve as our president for our 2024-2025 year. Ricky will bring over 25 years of leadership experience. We look forward to working with you. Let's Go To Work



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Joe Sanfilipo, CMAA

GADA Executive Director



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President Maurice Freeman received our 103% NIAAA MEMBERSHIP banner for 2023 during our conference in Orlando. This is a great accomplishment.



[Georgia Athletic Job Postings](#)

'Sole Finalist' Named for Executive Director Position

GHSA.net

THOMASTON, GA (March 18, 2024) -- The Board of Trustees of the Georgia High School Association has announced that Dr. Timothy David Scott is the Sole Finalist for the position of Executive Director of the GHSA.



Scott, currently the Superintendent of Dalton Public Schools, will join the GHSA on July 1, 2024, succeeding Dr. Robin Hines when he retires. Hines has served as the Executive Director of the GHSA since 2017.

Scott, who holds degrees from Georgia College, Troy State University and ARGOSY University, has an extensive background as a coach and administrator in Georgia.

Scott began his career in 1987 at Northside High School in Warner Robins where he was head wrestling coach and assistant football coach. He moved to Warner Robins High School as Assistant Principal in 1997 before returning to Northside as Principal in 2001.

Scott also served as Principal at Dublin High School and Douglas County High School before joining the Dalton Public School System as Assistant Superintendent for District Operations in 2015. He became Superintendent of the Dalton system in 2018.

Scott says that a common thread throughout his career “has been and is the collaboration of all stakeholders to share best practices and ideas for the success of every student and our organization.”

Throughout his career, Scott has worked with the Georgia High School Association on numerous occasions, overseeing the hosting of many GHSA events, including a state championship football game.

Scott also has been recognized on multiple occasions by the Georgia School Board Association for his exemplary work. He is a member of the National Association of School Superintendents, the Georgia Association of Educational Leadership, and the Professional Association of Georgia Educators, among other organizations.

"We are excited about Dr. Tim Scott being named sole finalist for the Executive Director position," said GHSA President Dr. Jim Finch. "Dr. Scott brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to the association. It was clear during the search and interview process, Dr. Scott was able to articulate a plan and vision to move the GHSA forward. We look forward to his leadership and are confident he can continue to provide a positive and enriching experience for our student athletes."

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[GHSA announces Tim Scott as lone finalist for executive director](#)

7 Simple Steps to Streamline Your Athletic Clearance Process

Author: Clay Burnett, CEO of FinalForms



7 Simple Steps to Streamline Your Athletic Clearance Process

It's never been more important to make sure only eligible athletes suit up and take the field. Fielding ineligible players comes with serious penalties at the department, district,

and state level; not to mention the public relations and legal nightmares. Unfortunately, "eligibility" is becoming increasingly complex due to evolving, required consent, compliance, and waiver forms.

Suffice it to say that athletic clearance is complex — and it's even harder when you're relying on outdated systems. That being the case, optimizing athletic clearance needs to be a top goal for every district in order to keep kids safe and avoid negative outcomes.

With that in mind, let's take a look at some of the ways you can streamline your athletic clearance process and ensure only eligible athletes play.

1. Examine your current process

Before you change anything about your program, take a hard look at your current process. Document what's working and what needs improvement.

For example, it's possible your school has a stellar system in place for collecting information and preventing ineligible athletes from taking the field. If your district never has any issues with eligibility, it may just be a matter of further optimizing your system and digitizing your operations. On the other hand, if you're constantly running into problems, you may need to scrap your current system and start fresh.

[Click HERE to download the article](#)



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enhancing features like fundraising and messaging. We are also allowing you to customize your site with Team Logos.



Simplifying Registrations

Pickle Juice simplifies registrations for you. The online registration platform gives you the ability to customize your registration and include special events. Since that's taken care of, you can focus on streamlining the registration process for yourself by:

- Offering incentives for early registrants like early-bird discounts and referral discounts.
- Setting up registrations online and sending hyperlinks to parents, taking them directly to where they need to register.



Simplifying Payments

Sports are expensive, and that's understandable. But you can take care of athletes, parents and coaches by taking some of that burden away from them.

- Set up custom payment plans for your teams: Give your parents and players the options to pay in full or over multiple payments. These can be set up in advance of the season and ready to go when the season starts.
- Make sure you have a system capable of accepting all types of payments and managing all forms of payment.

If you allow Pickle Juice to help simplify your registrations and payments, then you'll have access to a secure card and chip reader that allows you to accept payments on your smartphone, and we have an application you can download to your phone that makes the process even easier.



Simplifying Communication

One of the best ways you can plan ahead for your next season is to communicate early and often with all of your parents, players and coaches.

- Set deadlines for registration and fees and communicate those deadlines via email or text.
- Make sure you have a management program that integrates an email function to send invoices, payment reminders and notifications for any failed payments.

Pickle Juice makes communicating across your team, league or club easy with its messaging center that's managed from one centralized location.





An update on GHSA Bass Fishing

By Hayden Gilbert, ScoreAtl.com

Bass fishing is in its fourth year of competition as a GHSA sanctioned sport. Bass fishing is one of the most unique sports that the GHSA sponsors, a sport that many people inside and outside the state do not understand.

Qualifying for the state championship is done through four qualifying tournaments at Lake Seminole, Lake Oconee, West Point Lake, and Lake Hartwell. Teams qualify by boat not by school. Schools can have multiple boats,



A deep dive into GHSA esports and Brookwood's continued success

By Staff, ScoreAtl.com

There's less than a month to go before GHSA Spring esports playoffs begin and things are starting to heat up. In Spring esports, teams compete for championships in four games – Rocket League, Splatoon 3, NBA 2K24, and Madden 24.

Last Spring's finals resulted in Brookwood beating Calhoun 4-1 in Rocket League, Discovery beating Northview 3-0 in Splatoon 3 and Carrollton beating Early County 2-0

but each boat competes independently from each other. The number of boats that qualify from each tournament varies based on the number of boats in each tournament. A minimum of 15 boats qualify for the state tournament, and an additional boat qualifies for state for every 10 boats over 100. For example, 29 boats qualified for state from this year's qualifying tournament at Lake Seminole 15 as automatic qualifiers and 14 from the 243 boats that entered the tournament.

Boats are scored by how much their catch weighs. Anglers can keep up to five fish that are a minimum of 12 inches or the size of a legal bass, depending on the regulation of the lake being fished. Bass must be brought to the weigh-in alive, or an eight ounce penalty will be assessed for every dead fish presented.

This season, 97 teams have already qualified for the state tournaments

in Madden 24. Games which had championships in the Fall are still playing in the Spring, but are non-championship titles – League of Legends, Mario Kart 8 Deluxe, and Super Smash Bros.

The playoffs for spring titles start on April 14 with the finals being held at University of West Georgia on May 1.

Esports joined the GHSA in 2018 and has become a popular avenue for high school athletes to explore. Many kids have had the opportunity to showcase their skills in a competitive scene that is much more accessible than professional play.

This spring, Brookwood is one of the premier teams in all GHSA esports.

They are competing in Rocket League, Madden and Splatoon. The Broncos are looking to win back-to-back titles in Rocket League, with an

in the first three qualifying tournaments. The final tournament at Lake Hartwell on April 20 will be any remaining team's final chance to qualify for the state tournament. The first three qualifying tournaments were won by Bainbridge's Hayden Reynolds and Caleb Logue won the qualifying tournament at Lake Seminole with a five fish weight of 19 pounds 10 ounces. The tournament at Lake Oconee was won by Oconee County's Churchill Harris and Campbell Patterson with a five fish weight of 13 pounds 15 ounces. The third tournament at West Point Lake was won by Trion's Rayne Melton and Cohen Blaschke, who had a five fish weight of 19 pounds five ounces.

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all-new roster, as every player in their championship winning team from last year graduated in 2023.

"Our team this year is currently undefeated and looking like serious contenders for the title," said Brookwood coach Jack Branch.

The Broncos are 5-0 overall and are currently leading the standings for 5A-7A Rocket League. On top of the amazing series record, Brookwood is 15-3 in individual games, which is only a half game back from West Forsyth and Innovation Academy, who are tied at 15-2.

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Bill would ban trans girls from sports that match gender identity

By Kristal Dixon, Axios.com



Republican lawmakers are resurrecting debate over whether transgender students can participate in girls' sports or use bathrooms that align with their gender identity.

Why it matters: The legislation is the latest in a slew of bills that have been filed over the last few years in Georgia and across the country targeting LGBTQ

minors.

Zoom in: House Bill 1104, which a state Senate committee passed this week, would: require schools to notify parents if their children check out library materials; prohibit sex education before the sixth grade; require students to use facilities that align with

their assigned sex at birth; and ban students who were assigned male at birth from participating in girls' sports.

Catch up quick: The bill originally addressed student athletes' mental health concerns but was also amended to include language from other bills the committee passed previously.

What they're saying: Republican Sen. Clint Dixon said at the committee meeting that the amended bill has a "common thread empowering parents to ensure that children are learning and competing in safe and supportive atmospheres."

"Most importantly, this bill protects the rights of women to compete against each other in women athletic competition that is fair to each one of them," Dixon said.

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Florida high school football's growing problem: 'Coaching in Georgia is astronomically better'

By John Santucci, Palm Beach Post MSN.com

If it weren't for a family situation, Chuck Kenyon would have stayed in Georgia.

Kenyon was happy as an assistant high school football coach in the Peach State. After all, he was making more money as a teacher and assistant in Georgia than he did as a successful head coach in Florida.

“The cost of living is less, and you get paid more. It’s a win-win,” said Kenyon, who is heading into his third season as head coach at Royal Palm Beach. “Coaching in Georgia is astronomically better. I only came back because of family. It wasn’t the job or status or anything like that. It was strictly for family. If it wasn’t for that situation, I would probably still be in Georgia.”

Kenyon is one of the few coaches who have returned.

Several others, recognizing things literally are greener in other parts of the country, have left Florida for higher-paying jobs — primarily in states where coach pay is not collectively bargained by a teacher's union.

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The Month of March, Beyond the Madness

By Dr Karissa Niehoff, CEO NHSF.org



for more than a century.

In the world of high school and collegiate athletics, when the calendar turns to March, a spotlight seems to turn on with it. That spotlight, of course, shines on the sport of basketball, where the countless buzzer-beaters, monumental upsets and unlikely heroes of state- and national-tournament lore have provided top-flight drama

And this year has been no different, as magical March moments have been produced all over the tournament landscape.

In the NCAA men's tournament, there was sharpshooter Jack Gohlke leading 14-seed Oakland University over the 3-seed University of Kentucky, and 13-seed Yale University's upset of No. 4 seed Auburn University. In the women's bracket, University of Iowa superstar Caitlin Clark helped the Hawkeyes edge West Virginia University in the final home game of her storied career and Tara Vanderveer's Stanford University Cardinal fended off Iowa State University in an overtime thriller to advance to the Sweet Sixteen.

Earlier this month, the Yuma High School boys basketball team went on a thrilling run to the Colorado High School Activities Association Class 3A title, grinding out their quarterfinal, semifinal and state final contests all by a single point; and in Missouri, the St. Louis Incarnate Word Academy girls team capped a perfect 31-0 season with their seventh consecutive Missouri State High School Activities Association championship, while extending the nation's longest high school basketball winning streak to an astounding 131 games.

And while these unforgettable storylines are every bit deserving of the increased media coverage and fan intrigue, a brighter "spotlight" on the hardwood can overshadow those illuminating other scenes in the bigger picture. Often lost in the March hoops hysteria are the outstanding achievements of student-athletes, coaches and administrators in other sports.

For instance, on March 2, the Brecksville-Broadview Heights High School (BBHHS) gymnastics program claimed its 21st consecutive Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) state championship, adding to the longest high school gymnastics state title streak in the history of the sport. It was trophy No. 24 overall for the Bees, who trail only Essex (Vermont) High School (28 state titles) as the most successful program in the

country. Head coach Maria Schneider has guided BBHHS to its last five crowns and previously served as an assistant under her parents, Ron and Joan Ganim, the architects of the BBHHS dynasty.

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Partnerships of Success: Principals Supporting Athletic Directors

By Dr Steve Amaro, CMAA

The football game had long since ended, and the parking lot was empty except for one vehicle. The athletic director locked the door to the office and made the long walk to the car. The home team won the game, but the myriad responsibilities of tickets, game setup, announcing, guiding officials to appropriate locations, and making sure the needs of the visiting team were attended to had left the athletic director exhausted.



It's a job that few understand, but it is all smiles as the athletic director gets in the car and is thankful for being an important member of the administrative team supported by a collaborative principal.

Regular Meetings Promoting Safety and Best Practices

In a different generation, a high school athletic director could run a successful program with little support or input from school administration, but the role of an athletic director has transformed today, and success depends on support, strategic planning and collaboration. Principals and their administrative teams need to meet regularly with athletic directors to ensure program success.

Athletic directors understand the culture of team programs and administration must have a shared understanding of program values so they can support and promote in times of criticism and praise. Working together, they have the potential to create a safe, organized and effective program for everyone.

Regularly scheduled meetings between administrators and athletic directors should cover a wide variety of topics including student and parent concerns, issues that arise with coaches and athletic personnel, and time devoted for the athletic director and administration to engage in long-term planning so that future events can be scripted for success. Feedback during these meetings should be reciprocal. Athletic directors may need help on how to address particularly difficult programs or parents while principals may need help in communicating that students understand that the purpose of athletic participation must support the school mission. Regardless of whether a principal has an athletic background or not, if both the principal and athletic director agree that they are part of a team working toward successful environments, they are likely to share perspectives that will allow for better solutions to emerge while addressing current and future challenges.

Adapting and Supporting Needs Through Professional Growth

Like all facets of education, high school athletics continues to evolve. Both principals and athletic directors find their roles constantly changing by a variety of local, state and national variables which require adaptability and flexibility. To better understand the changing climate, principals can support professional growth. Professional growth not only promotes time to analyze and address individual and organizational weaknesses, but allows those engaged in professional activities to better understand the changing responsibilities of positions.

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How a new coach at Memorial Day School is leading transition to eight-man football

By Dennis Wright, SavannahDailyNews.com

Change is in the air with the Memorial Day School athletic program.

The Matadors have recently hired a new athletic director, a new football coach and announced that the football program will be moving to the eight-man format competing in the Georgia Independent Athletic Association.

Memorial Day parted ways with head football coach Jaha Taylor in February at the same time it announced the move to 8-man football next season. Taylor, who had coached the Matadors for two seasons, didn't agree with the move and is looking to land a job as an assistant coach in the Savannah area.

The school also announced the hiring of a new athletic director as Andrea Bagnall stepped in to run the program last month. She has more than 40 years of experience, and moved to Savannah from Arizona, where she was the Director of Sports Medicine at Eastern Arizona College.

The school announced the hiring of a new football coach last week as Zane Rowland took over the reins of a program with a history of success in GIAA that includes six state championships competing in 11-man football, with the most recent coming in 2017. Rowland has experience including working as an assistant at Valdosta High, and most recently at Savannah High, where he was the offensive coordinator last season for the Blue Jackets.



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Resource Information

Your April AD Checklist

- Begin preparations for budget proposals for next fiscal year.
- Schedule physical exam dates for fall sports athletes
- Handle spring sports rainouts/cancellations and weekly schedules as needed.
- Don't forget National Secretaries Day!
- Set dates for summer gymnasium maintenance.
- Set schedules for teams throughout the summer.
- Send out school sponsored summer camps brochures and information to media.
- Winter sports schedules should be finalized and contracts completed for next year.
- Winter sports inventories should be completed and all equipment stored and secured.
- Review and schedule maintenance on all scoreboards.
- Prepare for spring sports region tournaments to include scheduling, traveling,
 - lodging and meals.
- Monthly athletic department meetings.
- Have scheduled end of the year team banquets and prepare to order awards.
- Meet with Athletic Trainer (ATC) to receive monthly injury updates.
- Prepare sites to host region events (if applicable).
- Check for scheduling for officials, umpires and referees.
- Communicate with Region Secretary for area/Region information and updates.
- Check the GHSA website for pertinent information.



[Download April Checklist](#)

Title IX Regulations Checklist



On May 6, 2020 the United States Department of Education released new Title IX Regulations with expectations for districts to be compliant by August 14, 2020. Although there aren't major changes in athletics, in your role you should be aware of the new requirements.

While working with colleagues of yours, I shared the attached K12 Title IX Checklist. This is a great resource to help reach compliance. Feel free to share with your team.

[Click here for the checklist](#)

Best,

Christopher Simmons, Ph. D.
Director of Business Development

[ICS Solutions](#)

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Thank You ,

Ricky Turner CMAA
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