



NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS

## NEWS RELEASE

### **NFHS, NFL Announce Partnership to Promote High School Football**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Bruce Howard

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (September 25, 2020) — The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and the National Football League (NFL) have announced a first-ever partnership aimed at promoting the growth, understanding and support for football at the high school level.

As a part of the partnership funded by the NFL, the NFHS will work to develop and execute a strategic plan with the primary objective of promoting high school football.

A major focus of the NFHS-NFL partnership will involve surveying of state high school association administrators, high school student-athletes, parents, coaches and officials with regard to their experiences in football and the benefits of participation. The NFHS will be working with UpMetrics on various survey instruments as a part of the arrangement.

“This is a fantastic opportunity for the NFHS and the NFL to work together to help ensure the long-term viability of high school football,” said Dr. Karissa Niehoff, NFHS executive director. “We are appreciative of the NFL’s commitment to helping us provide

educational resources and messaging about the benefits of high school football. The timing could not be better as many high school and NFL teams begin their seasons during these challenging times. This partnership provides much hope for the future of the sport in the years ahead.”

While boys participation in 11-player football has exceeded one million participants every year since 1999 and remains overwhelmingly the most popular boys sport, there have been concerns about slight declines in past years. Through this partnership, the NFHS and NFL hope to better understand participation trends, identify areas for potential educational emphasis, and restore confidence on the part of all stakeholders that the sport is, in fact, more focused on risk minimization than ever before.

One of the chief tasks of the partnership is to identify, inform and educate participants, partners, associations, government and media around the benefits and values of participating in high school football.

As a part of the strategic plan for promoting high school football, the NFHS will engage a Senior Consultant for High School Football Promotion who will lead these efforts to expand visibility and reach of interscholastic football participation, develop key messaging around high school football best practices and player protection efforts, manage opportunities that impact the growth and reputation of high school football, and collaborate with other organizations in the high school football community.

“This partnership champions the preservation and growth of high school football by reinforcing the life-changing values unique to the game,” said Roman Oben, NFL Vice President, Strategy and Development, Youth and High School Football. “The NFHS and NFL will work together to promote player protection best practices and emphasize that high school football equips young people for success both in the classroom and in life by

inspiring character, leadership, resilience, teamwork and other vital transferable life skills.”

It is anticipated that the Senior Consultant for High School Football Promotion will be selected in the coming weeks and will be on board shortly thereafter.

###

**About the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)**

The NFHS, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is the national leadership organization for high school sports and performing arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and performing arts activities that help students succeed in their lives. The NFHS sets direction for the future by building awareness and support, improving the participation experience, establishing consistent standards and rules for competition, and helping those who oversee high school sports and activities. The NFHS writes playing rules for 17 sports for boys and girls at the high school level. Through its 50 member state associations and the District of Columbia, the NFHS reaches more than 19,500 high schools and 12 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7.9 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; offers online publications and services for high school coaches and officials; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, speech and debate coaches, and music adjudicators; serves as the national source for interscholastic coach training; and serves as a national information resource of interscholastic athletics and activities. For more information, visit the NFHS website at [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org).

**MEDIA CONTACTS:**

Bruce Howard, 317-972-6900  
Director of Publications and Communications  
National Federation of State High School Associations  
[bhoward@nfhs.org](mailto:bhoward@nfhs.org)

Chris Boone, 317-972-6900  
Assistant Director of Publications and Communications  
National Federation of State High School Associations  
[cboone@nfhs.org](mailto:cboone@nfhs.org)

Cody Porter, 317-972-6900  
Manager of Media Relations  
National Federation of State High School Associations  
[cporter@nfhs.org](mailto:cporter@nfhs.org)

Nate Perry, 317-972-6900  
Coordinator of Media Relations  
National Federation of State High School Associations  
[nperry@nfhs.org](mailto:nperry@nfhs.org)