

**NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE
HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS**



NEWS RELEASE

**NFHS Member State Associations
Reject Proposal to Conduct National Championships**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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INDIANAPOLIS, IN (January 6, 2011) — In a re-affirmation of its longstanding opposition to national championships in high school sports, the membership of the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) defeated a proposed amendment to the NFHS Bylaws that would have allowed the NFHS to conduct national championships in golf and cross country.

At the January 4 NFHS National Council meeting in Savannah, Georgia, the 43 member state associations in attendance defeated the proposed amendment to Article 17 of the NFHS Bylaws, 21–22. (21 opposed, 22 in favor). A two-thirds majority of the Council members in attendance was necessary to amend the NFHS Constitution or Bylaws. The Council is composed of one representative from each of the 51 member associations (the 50 states plus the District of Columbia).

Article 17 of the NFHS Bylaws states that “sanction shall not be granted for any tournament, meet or other contest to qualify for and/or determine a single national

high school individual champion or championship team.” The proposed amendment would have added the following: “. . . with the exception of a team/individual golf championship and/or cross country championship, provided said championships are conducted by the NFHS.”

As a part of the 2008–2011 NFHS Strategic Plan, the NFHS staff was instructed to develop model national championships in several sports for consideration by the membership. After discussion at the 2010 NFHS Summer Meeting and at all eight section meetings this past fall, the NFHS Board of Directors – at its October 2010 meeting – forwarded the proposed amendment to the entire membership.

Since the original declaration by the membership against national championships in 1934, the NFHS has not supported or sanctioned national competition that leads to a single team champion. Prior to the action by the Council earlier this week, the only other recorded vote by the entire membership occurred in 1979, when the Council, by a 38–9 vote, turned down a proposal to conduct national invitational competitions in golf, tennis, and track and field during the summer. In the ensuing decades, the membership has revisited periodically the subject of national championships; however, in the absence of full membership support, the NFHS has not conducted or endorsed such events.

“The continued opposition to national championships by our membership reaffirms the belief that state championship competition should be the culminating activity for high school student–athletes,” said Bob Gardner, NFHS executive director. “The NFHS will continue to support the more than 7.6 million student–athletes involved in high school sports whose dream each year is to win a state title in their particular sport.”

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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 fine arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and fine 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 19,000 high schools and 11 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7.6 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; produces publications for high school coaches, officials and athletic directors; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, spirit coaches, 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 Web site at www.nfhs.org.

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