

**NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE  
HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS**



**NEWS RELEASE**

**New NFHS Officers, Board Members Elected**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact: Bruce Howard**

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (July 18, 2007) — **Ron Laird**, commissioner of the Wyoming High School Activities Association (WHSAA), is the new president of the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) for 2007–08. Laird, who is the 48<sup>th</sup> president of the NFHS, began his one-year term July 5 following the NFHS Summer Meeting in Palm Desert, California.

**Jim Tenopir**, executive director of the Nebraska School Activities Association (NSAA), was elected by the NFHS Board of Directors to the position of president-elect for the upcoming year.

Laird became commissioner of the WHSAA in July 2004 after serving many years as an instructor, assistant principal and athletic director of Powell (Wyoming) High School. He also was head basketball coach at Powell from 1980 to 2000 and an

assistant football coach for 15 years. Laird is a member of the Wyoming Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association, Wyoming Coaches Association, and the National Football Foundation and College Hall of Fame.

A Certified Master Athletic Administrator, Laird received a bachelor of science degree in physical education and health from Eastern Montana College and a master of sport science degree from the United States Sports Academy in Daphne, Alabama. Afterward, he went on to earn his K-12 administrative endorsement from the University of Wyoming.

Laird formerly served on the NFHS Athletic Directors Advisory Committee and in many capacities on the WHSAA Board of Directors, including president.

Tenopir began his career at Otis (Kansas) Bison High School and later moved to McCook (Nebraska) High School to teach and coach football. He was named athletic director at McCook, where he stayed for the next 10 years. After one year as general manager of a radio station, Tenopir served as athletic director at Scottsbluff (Nebraska) High School before moving to Cambridge (Nebraska) High School as superintendent in 1983. He remained at Cambridge until being named NSAA executive director in 2001.

Tenopir holds a bachelor's degree from Sterling (Kansas) College in mathematics, a master's from Idaho State University in athletic administration and a Ph.D. in administration, curriculum and instruction from the University of Nebraska.

In addition, two new NFHS Board of Directors members were approved for four-year terms by the NFHS National Council. **Nina VanErk**, executive director of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA), Section 1; and **Bill Farney**, director of the Texas University Interscholastic League (UIL), Section 6, will join the Board of Directors during 2007-08. The NFHS is in the process of filling an additional vacancy on the Board of Directors.

VanErk was named NYSPHSAA executive director in 2000 after working as the director of health, physical education and athletics in the Katonah (New York) Lewisboro School District for five years. Previously, she served as athletic director of Rhinebeck (New York) Central Schools in New York from 1983 to 1995. VanErk began her career in teaching at Rhinebeck Central Schools in 1977 along with serving as recreation director of the town of Rhinebeck beginning in 1979.

Throughout the years, VanErk has served on numerous committees including the Section 1 Athletic Council for 11 years, the Section 1 Executive Committee for nine years, the NYSPHSAA Executive Committee for nine years, the NYSPHSAA Championship Advisory Committee for three years and the NFHS Annual Meeting Planning Committee. She has also presented at several conferences including the NFHS Summer Meetings in Chicago and San Diego, the NFHS Legal Meeting and the National Conference of High School Directors of Athletics in San Antonio.

VanErk received an associate's degree in physical education in 1975 from Marymount College in Arlington, Virginia, and a bachelor's degree in physical education from Ithaca (New York) College in 1977. In 1981, she received a master's degree in health education from Russell Sage College in Troy, New York, and in 1984 she earned certification as a school administrator/supervisor from the State University of New York in New Paltz, New York.

Farney was chosen as the director of the UIL in 1995 after serving as assistant director and athletic director in the organization since 1977. During this time, he assisted the director in administration and policy areas, helped develop athletic, academic and fine arts programs and represented the UIL in litigation. He has been a member of the NFHS Basketball Rules Committee, NFHS Swimming and Diving Rules Committee and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Football Rules Committee.

Farney began his teaching career in 1962 at Tulsa (Oklahoma) Madison Junior High School and a year later taught and served as assistant basketball and wrestling coach at Tulsa (Oklahoma) Will Rogers High School. Farney also served as the principal of Lorena (Texas) High School from 1967 to 1970 and Waco (Texas) Robinson High School while coaching football, basketball, track and field, junior high basketball and golf. In 1970, he became the superintendent of schools in Crawford, Texas.

Along with his extensive background, Farney has participated in state and national studies on athletic injuries and is a leader in assisting projects involving dental and medical information.

Farney received a bachelor's degree in English from the University of Tulsa in 1963, and a master's degree in English and a doctorate in education administration from Baylor University in 1968 and 1979, respectively.

*This press release was written by Nikki Miller, a summer semester intern in the NFHS publications/communications department and a senior at the University of Dayton (Ohio), majoring in journalism and Spanish.*

#### **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 18,500 high schools and 11 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7 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; and serves as a national information resource of interscholastic athletics and activities. For more information, visit the NFHS Web site at [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org).

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