

# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



# Delaware Interscholastic Athletic Association Annual Report

## About DIAA

The Delaware Interscholastic Athletic Association (DIAA) was established in 2002 after operating as Delaware Association of Secondary Administrators (DASA) and Delaware Secondary School Athletic Association (DSSAA). The association receives its authority by the General Assembly and oversees a membership of 125 schools (63 high schools and 62 middle schools) for the 2021-2022 school year. Of the 63 high schools, 28 are traditional public, 11 charter, six vo-tech and 18 are private. Of the 62 middle schools, 36 are traditional public, 14 charter and 12 are private.

The DIAA is organized under the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE). DIAA regulates and oversees the conduct of interscholastic athletics in the state of Delaware and is governed by a Governor-appointed Board of Directors, consisting of high school superintendents, district board members, principals, athletic directors, administrators, coaches, a physician, a DDOE representative and public members.

The DIAA office is located at the John W. Collette Education Resource Center, 35 Commerce Way, Suite 1, Dover, DE 19904. Phone – (302) 857-3365 Email - [diaa@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:diaa@doe.k12.de.us)  
Website - <https://education.delaware.gov/diaa/>



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## **Purpose**

The DIAA's purpose is to preserve and promote the educational significance of interscholastic athletics; ensure that interscholastic sports remain compatible with the educational mission of member schools; provide for fair competition between member schools; promote sportsmanship and ethical behavior; establish and enforce standards of conduct for athletes, coaches, administrators, officials and spectators; protect the physical well-being of athletes; and promote healthy adolescent lifestyles.

The General Assembly intends for the DIAA to work in consultation and cooperation with the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) to implement this charge.

## **Duties, Powers and Authority**

In addition to the purpose above, DIAA has the authority to establish annual membership fees, establish standing committees, monitor and interpret its rules and regulations, investigate and penalize violations to its regulations, conduct hearings, act upon requests for any waiver of rules and regulations, and establish fees for officiating contests and competitions.

## **DIAA Staff**

DIAA staff runs the day-to-day operations for the association. DIAA staff provide support to ensure the following responsibilities are met through oversight and overall management: DIAA Board of Directors management, compliance (eligibility, waivers, rules interpretation), fiscal management, contracts, grants, website4sports liaison/website management, office/business operations, legislative affairs, rules and regulations, media interviews and credentials, ticket management, tournament operations, championship rosters, game programs, tournament brackets, tournament manuals, committee liaisons, committee applications and roster management, calendar and schedule of events, social media, officials registration and testing, liaison for officials and Center of Officials Services (Dragonfly), sportsmanship, rule clinics, NFHS rule books, DIAA publications, leadership programming, and conferences and awards .

This is not an exhaustive list of responsibilities and the need for additional staff members is crucial. The DIAA secretary resigned January 1, 2021. DIAA hired a secretary in February 2021 and secured two volunteer interns from Delaware State University, who assisted with Spring 2021 tournament preparations, operations, social media, marketing and office tasks.

## **Composition of the DIAA Board/Staff**

The DIAA Board consists of 19 voting members and one non-voting member as follows:

- 1) Two school district superintendents/assistant superintendents who shall be residents of different counties.
- 2) Three representatives of school district boards of education who shall be residents of different counties.
- 3) Three public school principals/assistant principals, one of which shall be from each county.
- 4) Two public school athletic directors/ coaches who shall be from different counties.

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- 5) Two non-public representatives of which one shall be a secondary school administrator and one shall either be a secondary school athletic director or coach.
- 6) One Department of Education representative, who shall be a non-voting member.
- 7) Six public members of which two shall be from each county
- 8) One DE certified physician who shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor.

The Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate, appoints all voting members.

During the 2021 year, there were six appointments replacing five members with expiring terms, two reappointments and five members submitting their resignation. There are two board members with expiring terms who have been held over until their replacement are named. Only one is eligible for reappointment. The following board members' terms have expired: 2018 – Dr. Bradley Layfield and 2020 Douglas Thompson. There are six vacant positions on the Board – one principal, one non-public representative and four public members.

## **DIAA Board Members**



**CHAIR**  
Dr. Bradley Layfield  
Principal  
Sussex Central H.S.



**VICE-CHAIR**  
Douglas Thompson  
Public Member  
New Castle County



Mr. Michael Rodriguez  
Department of Education  
Associate Secretary



Mark Robinson  
Athletic Director  
St. Georges Tech H.S.



Michael Breeding  
School Board Member  
Woodbridge School District



W.T. [Ted] Laws  
School Board Member  
Colonial School District



Dorrell Green  
Superintendent  
Red Clay School District



Dr. Sherry Kijowski  
Principal  
Caesar Rodney H.S.



Dr. Amelia Hodges  
Superintendent  
Polytech School District



Matt Smith  
Athletic Director  
Saint Mark's H.S.



Kevin Smith  
Athletic Director  
Cape Henlopen H.S.



Vetra Evans-Gunter  
School Board Member  
Smyrna School District



Robert Watson, Jr.  
Public Member  
New Castle County



Dr. Bradley Bley  
Medical Member

## **DIAA Staff**



Donna Polk  
Executive Director



Stephanie Mark  
Coordinator



Tanya Reed  
Administrative Secretary

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## 2021 – 2022 DIAA Board of Directors

### OFFICERS

Chairperson – Dr. Bradley Layfield  
Vice Chairperson – Doug Thompson

### PUBLIC SCHOOL MEMBERS

#### *NEW CASTLE COUNTY*

		<u>Term Expires</u>
Vacant	Principal/Assistant Principal	-----
W.T. [Ted] Laws	School Board Member, Colonial School District	2022
Dorrell Green	Superintendent, Red Clay School District	2024
Mark Robinson	Athletic Director, St. Georges Tech High School	2024

#### *KENT COUNTY*

Dr. Sherry Kijowski	Principal, Caesar Rodney High School	2024
Dr. Amelia Hodges	Superintendent, Polytech School District	2024
Vetra Evans-Gunter	School Board Member, Smyrna School District	2024

#### *SUSSEX COUNTY*

Michael Breeding	School Board Member, Woodbridge School District	2022
Dr. Bradley Layfield	Principal, Sussex Central High School	2019
Kevin Smith	Athletic Director, Cape Henlopen High School	2024

### NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL MEMBERS

Vacant	Non-Public Secondary School Administrator	-----
Matt Smith	Athletic Director, Saint Mark’s High School	2024

### PUBLIC MEMBERS

<u><i>New Castle County</i></u>	<u><i>Kent County</i></u>	<u><i>Sussex County</i></u>
Douglas Thompson (2020)	Vacant	Vacant
Robert Watson, Jr. (2023)	Vacant	Vacant

### MEDICAL MEMBER

Dr. Bradley Bley (Indefinite)

### DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Mr. Michael Rodriguez	Associate Secretary (Non-Voting Member)	(Indefinite)
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In January 2021, the DIAA staff consisted of Donna Polk, executive director and Stephanie Mark, coordinator of interscholastic athletics. DIAA hired Tanya Reed as DIAA secretary in February 2021. Associate Secretary of Education Michael Rodriguez is the Department of Education representative on the board and provides administrative oversight of DIAA staff on behalf of the Department of Education. Laura Makransky, deputy attorney general, is assigned to represent the board.

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## **Legislative Action**

DIAA received notification in June 2019 from the Joint Legislative and Oversight Sunset Committee (JLOSC) that a comprehensive legislative oversight and sunset review would be conducted.

- DIAA's initial presentation meeting was scheduled for March 17, 2020 but was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- DIAA's initial presentation meeting was instead held on February 10, 2021.
- DIAA had recommendation meetings on February 16, 2021, March 23, 2021 and May 4, 2021.
- JLOSC released its June 2021 final report adopting 15 recommendations for DIAA.
- DIAA submitted July 31, 2021 and October 31, 2021 status report to JLOSC.
- DIAA is held over and shall report to the JLOSC in January 2022 or when notified.

## **Rules and Regulations**

The DIAA, in consultation and cooperation with the DOE, develops rules and regulations relating to secondary and middle school interscholastic athletics for all Delaware public and charter schools, and such Delaware private schools that elect to become members of DIAA.

The following changes were made to the regulations during 2021:

- August
  - 14 Del. Admin. C. § 1011 - The amendments included adding informal instruction to defined terms in Section 2.0 and in the Return to Play Stages in Section 3.0; repealing the pre-participation physical examination requirements that applied to the 2020-2021 school year; revising the four Return to Play Stages to eliminate sports categorized as low, medium, and high risk for COVID-19 spread based on guidance from the American Medical Society for Sports Medicine and the National Federation of State High School Associations; repealing Section 5.0, which provided the dates for the fall, winter, and spring sport seasons during the 2020-2021 school year and set forth sport-specific requirements; revising the face covering requirements in subsection 3.5.3.3; and adding the previous requirements that the Board may mandate sport-specific requirements that are designed to protect the physical well-being of student athletes and that Member Schools follow any sport-specific plans approved by the Board to Section 3.0.
  - 14 Del. Admin. C. § 1011 – Regulation 1011 was repealed as a result of the termination of the State of Emergency and all related orders.

Links to the regulations are available on the DIAA website at: <https://education.delaware.gov/diaa/governance/handbook/>.

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## **Waiver Request of Regulation**

During the 2021 calendar year, the DIAA Board of Directors heard 82 requests for relief from DIAA Regulations. The DIAA Board approved 87 percent of requests heard (71/82). Fifty-three of the 82 requests were eligibility waiver requests of DIAA regulations. Of those, the board approved 42 and denied 10.. Twenty of the 53 waivers were temporary waivers granted by the executive director and approved by the board. Please see spreadsheet below to see the complete list of waiver request heard by the board.

Waiver Request of Regulation	Board Heard Waiver Executive Director Interim Ratified by Board	Board Hearing Panel Ratified by Board	Appeal	Action - Approved	Action - Denied	Action - Appeal to State Board of Education	Total
Eligibility Waiver	26	20	6	1	42	10	53
Member School Participation Rule - 8th at HS Level	13				13		13
New Membership Request	7				7		7
Renewal Associate Membership	1				1		1
Season Start Date	6				6		6
DIFCA Safety Camp	1				1		1
NFHS Uniform Rule	1				1		1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>82</b>

## **Membership & Participation**

Membership in DIAA continues to be a worthwhile investment for Delaware schools. DIAA's education-based interscholastic athletics mission is in harmony with the mission of its member schools. When DIAA was formed in July of 2002, it had 71 members (48 high schools and 23 middle schools). DIAA membership is currently 125 members (63 high schools and 62 middle schools). DIAA membership increased by 7 percent for the 2021-22 school year with a 2 percent increase for high schools and 13 percent increase for middle schools.

Participation in interscholastic athletics represents an important part of the educational experience of Delaware middle and high school students. During the 2020-2021 school year, 19,456 students participated in interscholastic athletics at the high school level (10,801 male and 8,655 female). The rate of participation by female students stands at 44 percent and 56 percent by male. Participation in interscholastic athletics is thought by many educators to be a prime motivator for many students to stay in school, achieve academic success and learn life skills. The full listing of participants by sport and gender and the number of schools sponsoring at least one team in that sport is shown below.

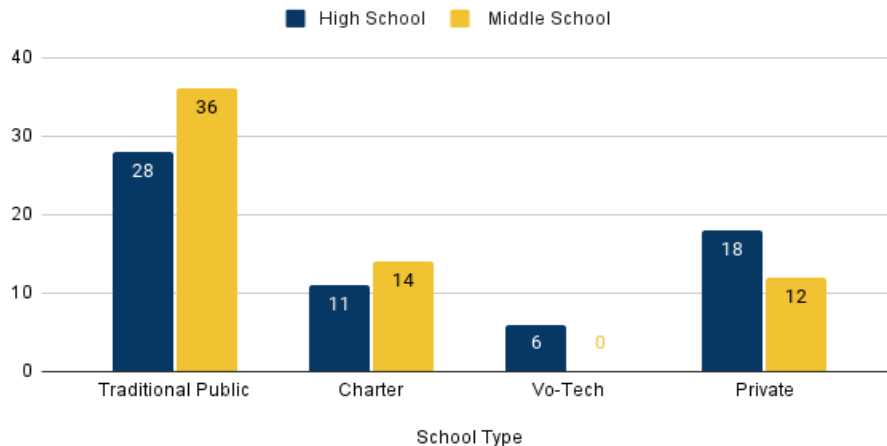
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## DIAA Participation Summary (Approved Recognized Sports) 2020-2021 - COVID Year

<b>SPORT</b>	<b>BOYS</b>	<b>GIRLS</b>	<b>SCHOOLS (B/G)</b>
Baseball	1164	N/A	50
Basketball	989	639	50/52
Unified Basketball	59	23	7
Cross Country	669	534	46
Field Hockey	N/A	1201	48
Football	2151	10	43/9
Unified Flag Football	66	23	9
Golf	288	104	43/31
Lacrosse	1147	850	44/36
Soccer	1443	1247	50/53
Softball	N/A	818	45
Swimming & Diving	438	539	36/37
Tennis	338	403	33/35
Track – Indoor	433	400	22/23
Track – Outdoor	989	700	46
Track – Unified	45	25	7
Volleyball	N/A	1121	50
Wrestling	582	18	43
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,801</b>	<b>8655</b>	

### DIAA by the Numbers

DIAA Member Schools



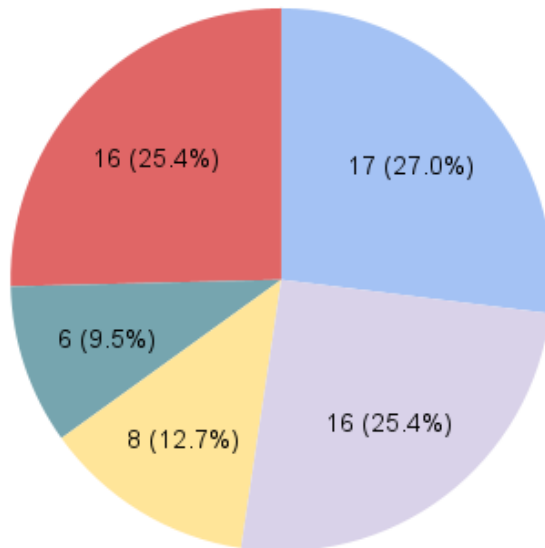


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## School Conference Membership Affiliation

- Blue Hen
- Henlopen
- Diamond State
- Independent
- Non-conference



### DIAA Affiliated Associations

- Delaware Association of Athletic Directors (DAAD)
- Coaches Associations (14)
- Delaware Interscholastic Officials Committee (DIOC)
- Delaware Athletic Trainers Association (DATA)

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## **Meetings of the Association**

The DIAA Board of Directors meetings are scheduled for the second Thursday of each month. The Annual Meeting of the entire DIAA occurs the third Thursday of January. In 2021, DIAA Board of Directors held 19 board meetings (12 regular monthly scheduled meetings, four meetings in January, February, April and August to address and manage COVID-19 pandemic impacts to interscholastic athletics, two in March and July to conduct hearing panel meetings to hear waivers and one in June to conduct a public hearing meeting to hear proposed regulations for Regulation 1009). Agendas and minutes of all Board meetings are posted on the State of Delaware Public Meeting Calendar (<https://publicmeetings.delaware.gov/>) and the DIAA web page ([https://education.delaware.gov/diaa/governance/bod/bod\\_meetings/agendas\\_and\\_minutes/](https://education.delaware.gov/diaa/governance/bod/bod_meetings/agendas_and_minutes/)).

## **Standing Committees**

The DIAA has a total of 25 committees. About 350 volunteers, without whom DIAA could not accomplish its mission, make up these committees. There are standing committees for Rules and Regulations, Sportsmanship, Officials, Unified Sports, Sports Medicine, Student Athlete Development, Student Athlete Advisory and Scheduling as well as 17 sport-specific committees. These standing and sport committees operate under the Freedom of Information Act. During 2021, 84 committee meetings were held.

The committees and their chairs are as follows:

- Sports Medicine Advisory Committee - Dr. Bradley Bley
- Rules and Regulations Committee – Dr. Matthew Donovan
- Sportsmanship Committee – Dr. Bradley Layfield
- Officials Committee - Chris Muscara
- Unified Sports – Jon Buzby
- Student-Athlete Development Committee – Dr. James Connor
- Student-Athlete Advisory Subcommittee – TBD
- Scheduling - TBD
- Cross Country Committee - George Pepper
- Field Hockey Committee - Sharyn Wingate
- Football Committee - James Comegys
- Boys' Soccer Committee - Bob Bussiere
- Girls' Volleyball Committee - Nancy Griskowitz
- Boys' Basketball Committee - Brian Fahey
- Girls' Basketball Committee - Ruth Lajoie
- Swimming and Diving Committee - Mike Hart
- Track & Field Committee - Charlie Pollard
- Wrestling Committee - Buddy Lloyd
- Baseball Committee - Mike Hart
- Softball Committee - Greg Shivery
- Tennis Committee – John Taylor
- Golf Committee – Kathy Franklin

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- Boys' Lacrosse Committee – Eric Torbert
- Girls' Lacrosse Committee- Debbie Windett
- Girls' Soccer Committee- Robert Beron

The sport committees work with the DIAA office staff to perform tasks related to running DIAA state tournaments resulting in 36 State Championship titles awarded in 18 boys', 15 girls' and 3 Unified sports. Other functions include informing the DIAA Board of Directors of issues and initiatives affecting each sport and related sports projects.

## **Rules Interpreters**

DIAA appoints rules interpreters to assist member schools, coaches and officials in the proper interpretation and application of National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and DIAA playing rules. The 2021 DIAA rules interpreters were:

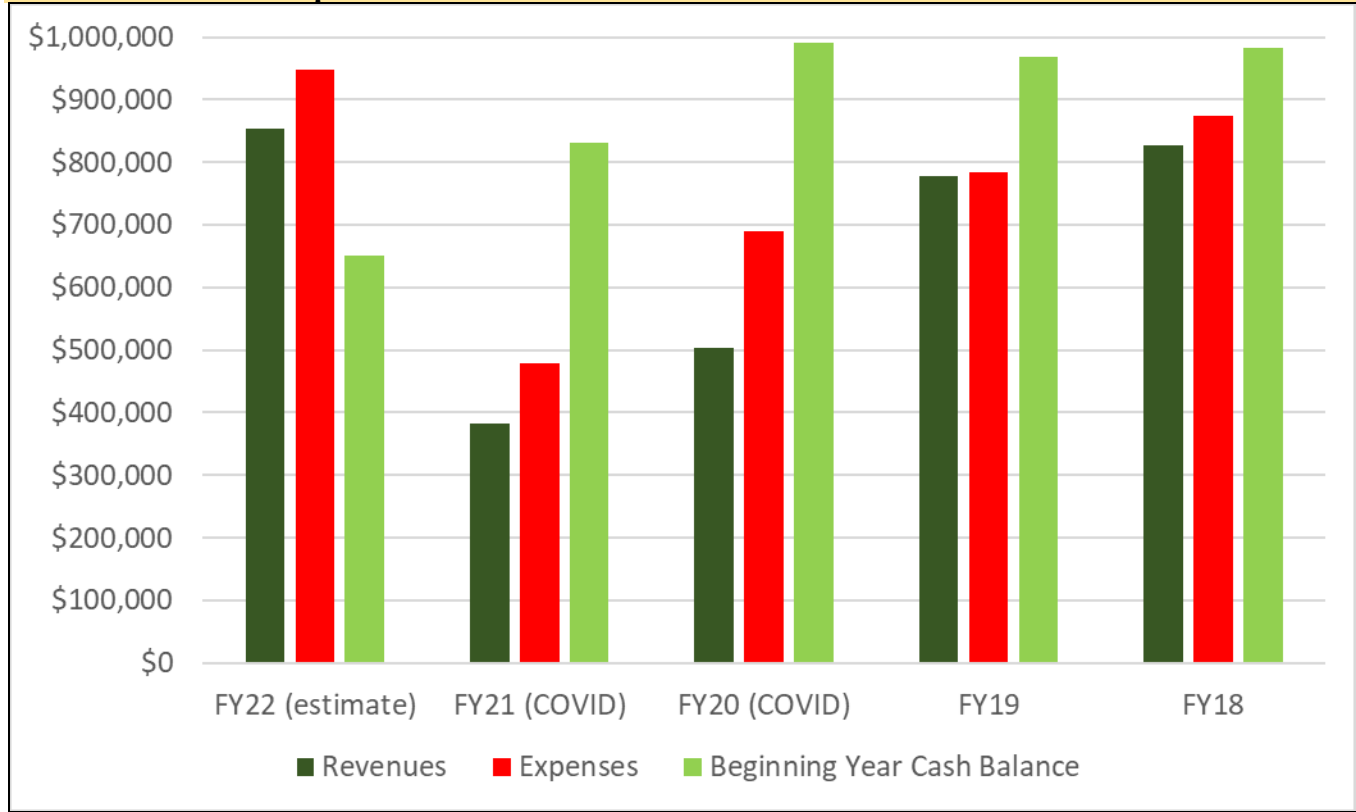
- Baseball - Tom Disharoon
- Basketball - Layne Drexel
- Field Hockey - Vicki Rhodes
- Football - Andy Bero
- Golf - *Partner with Delaware State Golf Association*
- Lacrosse, Boys' - JP Bennett
- Lacrosse, Girls' – Jill Fitzcharles
- Soccer - John Brady
- Softball - Diane Carden
- Swimming/Diving - Kent Steeves
- Tennis – *Partner with United States Tennis Association*
- Track and Field/Cross Country - Vacant
- Volleyball - Kelly Callahan
- Wrestling - Joe Lobo
- Unified Football – Vacant

## **Secondary Interscholastic Athletic Fund**

The primary source of revenue used to support DIAA is derived through ticket sales at state championship events. A special fund has been created at the Department of Education to receive and track revenues and expenditures of the organization. All membership dues, sponsorship funds and revenues from DIAA championships are deposited into this account. The account is administered under the State of Delaware Accounting System in cooperation with the DOE Finance Office.

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## Five Year Revenue/Expenditures



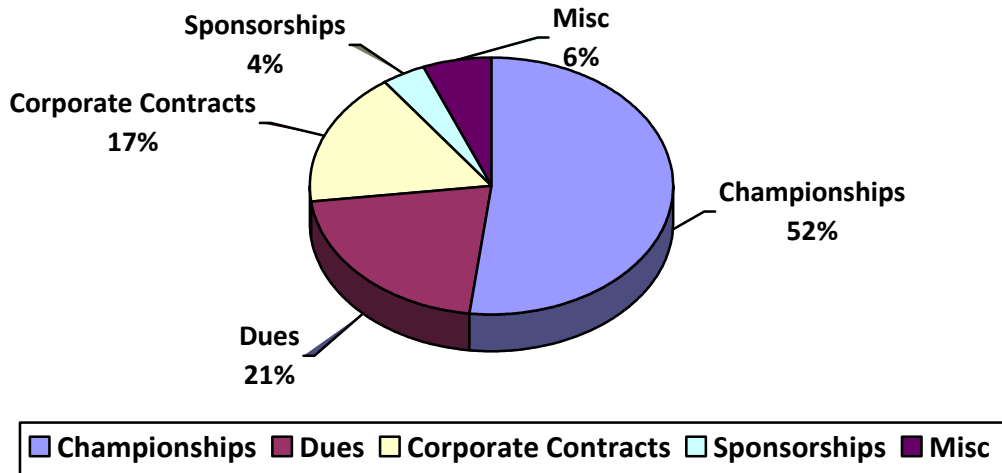
## FY21 Revenue Overview

DIAA revenues are based on a conservative approach forecasting annual revenue of \$382,150 for FY21 (low projection due to COVID-19 impact) and \$854,000 to the association for FY22. DIAA estimates \$410,000 in revenue was lost due to the State of Emergency COVID-19 public health pandemic from Winter 2020, Spring 2020, Fall 2020 and Winter 2021 state championships. The revenue lost remains a major concern, as the available cash balance for DIAA to operate will have a continual impact. The fiscal year available cash balance of \$900,000-plus what occurred in previous years, as shown in the chart above, has allowed DIAA to operate without receiving any financial assistance. Although the available balance allows for DIAA to operate without assistance at the beginning of each fiscal year thus far, DIAA may need financial support for basic operations during the 2021-2022 and/or future fiscal years depending on ticket sales due to the COVID-19 health pandemic. Spring 2021 state championships saw a 2 percent increase from FY19 (last FY not impacted by COVID-19). Fall 2021 state championships numbers are on track to meet pre-COVID revenue numbers.

The major source of revenue for DIAA was 1) championships - 52 percent, 2) dues – 21 percent, 3) corporate contracts – 17 percent, 4) miscellaneous – 6 percent and 5) sponsorship – 4 percent.

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## Revenues FY21

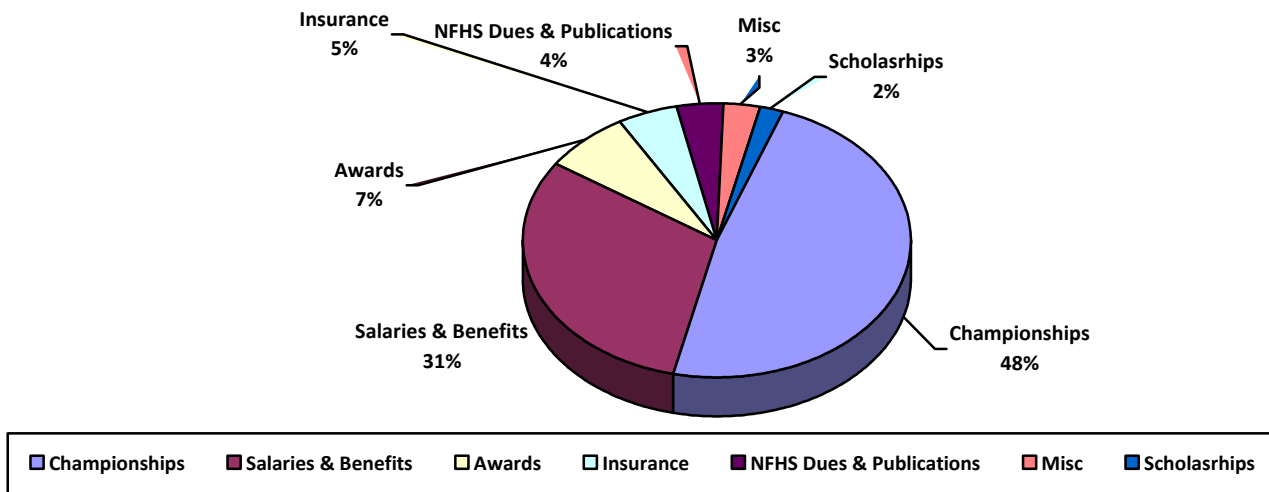


## FY21 Expenses Overview

Expenses to DIAA were budgeted at \$498,930 FY21 and \$948,500 FY22. With Fall 2020 and Winter 2021 championship seasons modified due to COVID-19, championship event expenses decreased accordingly. Expenses for FY21 were \$479,040.

The major expenses of the organization are 1) championships – 48 percent includes facility rentals, reimbursement to member schools hosting championships, officials, security, 2) salary & benefits – 31 percent, 3) awards – 7 percent, 4) insurance – 5 percent, 5) NFHS dues and rule books – 4 percent, 6) miscellaneous – 3 percent and 7) scholarships – 2 percent.

## Expenses FY21



## ***2021 YEAR IN REVIEW***

### **Managing Sports during the COVID-19 Health Pandemic**

DIAA, in consultation with the Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH) and DIAA Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (DSMAC), provided mitigating strategies for member schools via the creation of Regulation 1011.

- January 11, 2021 interscholastic sport competition for winter sports began after stoppage of play in December due to the COVID-19 health pandemic. Limited spectators and COVID-19 protocols were in place to safely conduct interscholastic sports.
- In February 2021, DSMAC implemented the updated return to play protocol for student athletes who test positive for COVID-19. DIAA submitted facility plans for approval to DPH to allow winter sport championships.
- In April 2021, the DIAA Board of Directors voted to publish amendments to Regulation 1011. The proposed amendments included repealing the pre-participation physical examination requirements that applied to the 2020-2021 school year; revising the four Return to Play Stages to eliminate sports categorized as low, medium, and high risk for COVID-19 spread based on guidance from the American Medical Society for Sports Medicine and the National Federation of State High School Associations; repealing Section 5.0, which provided the dates for the fall, winter, and spring sport seasons during the 2020-2021 school year and set forth sport-specific requirements; revising the face covering requirements in subsection 3.5.3.3; and adding the previous requirements that the board may mandate sport-specific requirements that are designed to protect the physical well-being of student athletes and that member schools follow any sport-specific plans approved by the Board to Section 3.0. The proposed amendments were published in the *Register of Regulations* on May 1, 2021.
- The board approved sport-specific guidance documents that were housed on the DIAA website as a resource. DIAA also developed and disseminated a COVID-19 screening survey to track positive COVID-19 symptoms during athletic activity pre-screenings. A total of 18 Sports Medicine Advisory Committee COVID-19 Screening Surveys were sent and completed by DIAA member school athletic directors during the 2020-2021 academic year. Those results were compiled into a summary survey and reported to the Sports Medicine Advisory Committee and Board of Directors on a monthly basis to track and monitor COVID-19's impact to DIAA interscholastic sports.
- On June 10, 2021, the DIAA Board of Directors voted to approve the amendments, as published, for adoption by the Department of Education. The State Board of Education approved the proposed amendments on June 17, 2021.
- On July 12, 2021, the Governor issued an order terminating the declaration of a State of Emergency and all related orders, effective July 13, 2021. The board voted during its July meeting to appeal Regulation 1011 that will take effect in August. The decision was to be consistent with the Governor's Order; the DIAA Board of Directors repealed the regulation, which was originally put in place to comply with the State of Emergency.
- During the Fall and Winter 2021 sport regular season and championship seasons, DIAA provided guidance and encouraged member schools to use mitigating strategies to ensure the safe operations of interscholastic athletic programs even though Regulation 1011 was not in place.

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DIAA modified eligibility requirements for teams selected for sport championships due to impacts of COVID-19. DIAA conducted modified sport seasons during 2020-2021 and thus far for the 2021-22 school year conducted sport seasons without a delayed season start.

- DIAA member schools must comply with mask requirements by the state for all indoor sporting events during the Fall 2021 and Winter 2021-2022 sport seasons. Any student athlete testing positive for COVID-19 must follow CDC, state and school guidelines prior to returning to practice or competition. DIAA will continue to collaborate with DPH, and DSMAC regarding Winter 2021 sports and Spring 2022 sports.

## Significant Initiatives and Events in 2021

### January 2021

#### DIAA Lifetime Achievement Award

DIAA recognized Kevin Charles, Debbie Corrado and James Harvey with Lifetime Achievement awards at the 76th Annual DIAA meeting in January 2021, which was held virtually. Each honoree served DIAA for more than 39 years in varying roles. The outstanding honorees were recognized for their exemplary contributions and service to DIAA.



**Debbie Corrado    Kevin Charles    Jim Harvey**

**February 2021** - The DIAA Board approved the football reclassification model proposed by Delaware Association of Athletic Directors (DAAD). The approved three-tier classification system is a change from the two-division format. There will be three classifications consisting of districts competing for three state championships. Districts were determined by geographic location. 3A classification will have 11 teams in two districts, 2A classification consist of 21 teams in three districts and 1A classification will have 14 teams in two districts. The football reclassification allows for more uniformity among schools, provides relief with in-state scheduling, addresses safety concerns, and will hopefully increase student athlete participation and interest in football to provide more teams the opportunity to compete competitively.

**March 2021** – DIAA safely conducted winter sport championships for girls basketball, boys basketball, indoor track, swimming and diving and wrestling. Spring sports practice season began on March 1. DIAA Board Hearing Panel conducted four eligibility waivers using the hearing panel process.

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**April 2021** – DIAA revised DIAA Committee application to capture important information to assist with approving committee members for DIAA committees. DIAA Board approved the hearing panel schedule for 2021. DIAA Board heard and approved proposed amendments to 1009 that included coaching out-of-season regulations recommended from DIAA Rules and Regulation Committee. The approved proposed amendments were published with the Registrar of Regulations May 1 and a public hearing to hear public comment occurred in June. DIAA Board approved proposed football tournament criteria proposed by DIAA Football Committee that addressed the new classification system football tournament.

**May 2021** – DIAA hosted the first ever vaping education viewing contest, which awarded three member schools a total of \$1,500 to be used to assist the schools to host a student development activity that could include leadership or wellness speakers. The winning schools that had the most "video views" were: non-conference (Ursuline Academy), Blue Hen Conference (St. Georges High School), and middle school (Tatnall School.) In total, more than 300 Delaware students from more than seven schools viewed the NFHS "Understanding Vaping and E-Cigarettes" video. To enhance communication with member schools with the DIAA office, weekly calls started with conference presidents and nonconference school athletic directors.

**June 2021** – DIAA received the JLOSC final report adopting 15 recommendations for DIAA. DIAA Board received an update regarding JLOSC Recommendation 3: Coaching Out of Season. The board after hearing the update voted that SB 130 is not necessary and that the next steps to developing coaching out-of-season regulations will be done in collaboration with Rules and Regulation Committee. DIAA conducted a public hearing to hear public comment regarding proposed amendments to Regulation 1009.

## Scholarship

The winners of the 2021 DIAA/Harry Roberts Senior Scholar-Athlete awards are listed below. The award is named in recognition and memory of Dr. Harry Roberts, former superintendent of the Caesar Rodney School District who served DIAA on several committees, most notably as chair of the DIAA Sportsmanship Committee for many years. The awards are presented annually by the DIAA based on a student's academic, athletic and leadership achievements. The award amounts are as follows: First place - \$2,000, Second place - \$1,500, Third place - \$1,000.

Jacob Bole  
Caesar Rodney HS  
Cross Country



Emma Fisher  
Middletown HS  
Girls Lacrosse



## **Female Winners:**

First Place: Emma Fisher, Middletown HS

Second Place: Stephanie Kulenguskey, Ursuline Academy

Third Place: Katherine Zabel, Sanford School

## **Male Winners:**

First Place: Jacob Bole, Caesar Rodney HS

Second Place: Spencer Zbranak, Sanford School

Third Place: Declan Burke, Indian River HS



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**July 2021** – The board voted to repeal Regulation 1011. DIAA’s Board Hearing Panel conducted two eligibility waivers using the hearing panel process. DIAA received an update from JLOSC that the Sunset Committee decided not to move forward with SB 130 based on information from DIAA that DIAA would work with the Public Integrity Commission (PIC) to submit proposed regulation to PIC to get an opinion on language incorporated into the regulation that will comply with PIC code of conduct. DIAA approved to withdraw proposed regulation 1009 as published with the Registrar and continue working on the amendments. The Board conducted its annual election for chairperson and vice-chairperson and voted to approve Dr. Bradley Layfield as chair and Doug Thompson as vice-chair. Based on concerns received regarding Preparticipation Physical Examination form and transgender policy, DIAA updated DIAA PPE form to address concerns and voted to form a committee to review minimum standards for member schools’ policies on transgender student athlete participation.

**August 2021** – DIAA hosted new athletic director training and a Delaware Association of Athletic Directors (DAAD) meeting on August 2 and 3. DIAA presented information to new athletic directors during an orientation session. DIAA also presented at DAAD’s August 4 and October 6 meetings. **Student Leadership Conferences** - The NFHS sponsored a Virtual **National Student Leadership Summit** August 8-10, 2021. The summit was free to students and adult leaders. The 2021 summit was held virtually for the second year due to the impacts of the COVID-19 health pandemic. The goal of the summit was to employ a “train the trainers” approach to instructing the DIAA representatives on topics such as leadership, team unity, sportsmanship, character and responsible use of social media. The 2021 DIAA Student Leadership Conference, which was scheduled to be held in August, was cancelled. The cost of the conference and safety precautions due to COVID-19 were the deciding factors to cancel the annual conference. Fall sport season began practices on August 6 for 3A approved football schools and August 9 for 2A and 1A approved football schools and August 16 for boys’ soccer, cross country, field hockey and volleyball. Competition began for approved football schools on September 1 and September 8 for boys’ soccer, cross country, field hockey and volleyball.

## Sportsmanship

DIAA announced winners of the 2020-2021 Dale Farmer Champions in Sportsmanship award on August 17, 2021. The member schools compete against a set of 10 standards, not against other schools. Member schools submit an extensive portfolio that is judged by the Sportsmanship Committee to determine if each school has successfully met the standards. The award is named in honor of former DSSAA Executive Director Dale Farmer. The 11 winning schools are listed below. Thirty-five different member schools have now won this award at least once in the 24-year history of the award.



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School	Times Won	School	Times Won
William Penn HS	24	Charter School of Wilmington	8
Sussex Tech HS	15	Middletown HS	5
McKean HS	12	Newark Charter School	6
Conrad Schools of Science	12	Brandywine HS	5
Caesar Rodney HS	11	Mt. Pleasant HS	5
Sanford School	10		

**September 2021** - DIAA went live with its new website. DIAA successfully partnered with Department of Education’s technology workgroup to relaunch DIAA’s website to a new platform and design. DIAA is committed to being a resource for interscholastic athletic participants and the updated website provides more user-friendly navigation and a much -improved visitor experience. DIAA’s new website address is <https://education.delaware.gov/diaa/>.

**October 2021** - PIC reviewed a draft of proposed regulation changes concerning out-of-season interscholastic athletic activities. After receiving feedback from PIC, PIC feedback was shared with the DIAA Board for review and action at the October 6, 2021 Delaware Association of Athletic Directors Meeting. Provided tutorial on waivers and sanctions, shared newly created DIAA website features that will enhance workflow efficiency and provide more user-friendly navigation, addressed fall sports sportsmanship concerns from types of incident reports received, provided update on 1009 proposed regulation and out of season coaching, shared recruiting inquiry concerns received and update on fall sport championships. DIAA held Officials Appreciation Week October 24-30, 2021 to thank and bring attention to the hard work and dedication of DIAA’s registered sport officials.

**November 2021** – DIAA successfully conducted fall sport season championships for cross country, field hockey, boys soccer and volleyball. Digital ticketing enhanced the operations of ticket administration and financial reconciliation for the DIAA office and championship participants.

**December 2021** – DIAA Board reviewed Regulation 1009 proposed amendments and PIC opinion. The board voted to send Regulation 1009 proposed draft changes addressing coaching out of season to Rules and Regulation Committee to review the PIC opinion, consider the options in the draft and incorporate into regulations for the January meeting. DIAA conducted its first classification football championships for three classes and unified on one day. The championships were conducted at University of Delaware and were a success.

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## State Championships

During calendar year 2021, the following schools won DIAA state championships in the sports as listed:

Winter 2021			
Basketball	Boys		Sanford School
Basketball	Girls		St. Elizabeth High School
Basketball	Unified		Dover High School
Swimming & Diving	Boys		Salesianum School
Swimming & Diving	Girls		Tower Hill School
Indoor Track and Field	Boys		Salesianum School
Indoor Track and Field	Girls		Padua Academy
Dual Team Wrestling	<i>No championship due to COVID-19 pandemic</i>		
Individual Wrestling	Boys	DI	Cape Henlopen
Individual Wrestling	Boys	DII	Caravel Academy
Spring 2021			
Baseball	Boys		Delaware Military Academy
Lacrosse	Boys		Salesianum School
Lacrosse	Girls		Cape Henlopen
Softball	Girls		Caravel Academy
Soccer	Girls	DI	Padua Academy
Soccer	Girls	DII	Caravel Academy
Tennis	Boys		Tower Hill School
Tennis	Girls		Dover High School
Outdoor Track and Field	Boys	DI	Salesianum School
Outdoor Track and Field	Girls	DI	Padua Academy
Outdoor Track and Field	Boys	DII	Lake Forest High School
Outdoor Track and Field	Girls	DII	Saint Mark's High School
Outdoor Track and Field	Unified Track		Smyrna High School
Golf			Tower Hill School
Fall 2021			
Cross Country	Boys	DI	Salesianum School
Cross Country	Girls	DI	Padua Academy
Cross Country	Boys	DII	Tatnall School
Cross Country	Girls	DII	Saint Mark's High School
Field Hockey	Girls	DI	Cape Henlopen High School
Field Hockey	Girls	DII	Delmar High School
Football	Boys	Class 1A	Laurel High School
Football	Boys	Class 2A	Archmere Academy
Football	Boys	Class 3A	Middletown High School
Football	Boys	Unified	Dover High School
Soccer	Boys	DI	Salesianum School
Soccer	Boys	DII	Caravel Academy
Volleyball	Girls		Saint Mark's High School

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Individual champions were crowned in indoor track, individual wrestling, swimming and diving, and cross-country. Thirty-six team titles were awarded by DIAA in 2021. Seventeen different schools won at least one team state championship. The Henlopen Athletic Conference won the most team titles at six. A complete listing of team champions can be found at [https://education.delaware.gov/diaa/sport\\_championships/](https://education.delaware.gov/diaa/sport_championships/)

Schools	Conference	# of championships
Salesianum School	Nonconference	6
Padua Academy	Nonconference	4
Caravel Academy	Nonconference	4
Cape Henlopen High School	Henlopen	3
Dover High School	Henlopen	3
Saint Mark's High School	Nonconference	3
Tower Hill School	Independent	3
Delmar High School	Henlopen	1
Lake Forest High School	Henlopen	1
Laurel High School	Henlopen	1
Smyrna High School	Henlopen	1
Middletown High School	Blue hen	1
Archmere Academy	Diamond State	1
Delaware Military Academy	Diamond State	1
St. Elizabeth High School	Nonconference	1
Sanford School	Independent	1
Tatnall School	Independent	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>36</b>

Conference Totals
18 - Nonconference
10 - Henlopen
5 - Independent
2 - Diamond State
1 - Blue Hen

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## Summary of Championship Awards and Events

Sport	# state champions awarded	# championship events
<b>Swimming &amp; Diving - Boys and Girls</b>	2	2
<b>Indoor Track &amp; Field</b>	2	2
<b>Boys Basketball</b>	1	46
<b>Girls Basketball</b>	1	40
<b>Wrestling</b>	2	2
<b>Unified Basketball</b>	1	6
<b>Baseball</b>	1	43
<b>Softball</b>	1	36
<b>Track and Field</b>	4	3
<b>Girls Soccer</b>	2	18
<b>Girls Lacrosse</b>	1	15
<b>Boys Lacrosse</b>	1	15
<b>Tennis</b>	2	18
<b>Golf</b>	1	1
<b>Unified Track and Field</b>	1	1
<b>Football</b>	3	29
<b>Boys Soccer</b>	2	18
<b>Field Hockey</b>	2	18
<b>Volleyball</b>	1	23
<b>Cross Country</b>	4	1
<b>Unified Football</b>	1	7
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>344</b>
<b>Spring</b>	14	150
<b>Winter</b>	8	98
<b>Fall</b>	13	96

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## **Partnerships and Outreach**

### **Go-Fan**

DIAA has partnered with Go-Fan, a digital ticketing platform that provides a ticketless, cashless and contactless experience for DIAA championship events. All Fall 2021 championship events were ticketless, which enhanced DIAA ticket management operations. DIAA received positive feedback from the change.

### **Dragonfly**

Through a partnership with the NFHS, DIAA went paperless to administer official's registrations to use the Center for Official's Services (COS) through the Dragonfly platform. Dragonfly is a hub for all officials' registrations, tracking official's eligibility requirements, and for officials to submit NFHS and DIAA payments. DIAA successfully worked with 18 local official associations in 12 different sports to transition to the new platform.

### **Unified Sports**

DIAA continued its relationship with Special Olympics Delaware (SODE) for the eighth year. With the continued partnership, DIAA and SODE work closely to offer unified football, basketball and outdoor track programs.

### **Marketing Special Promotions**

DIAA continued its partnership with Delaware- based Marketing Special Promotions (MSP) to provide championship apparel for students and spectators of DIAA State Championship events.

### **American Lung Association**

In partnership with the American Lung Association through the Delaware Division of Public Health's tobacco prevention community contract, DIAA was awarded a \$7,500 grant again for the 2021-2022 academic year to educate student and parents about the dangers of tobacco and vaping use and to promote the benefits of healthy adolescent lifestyles. The messaging will be delivered during DIAA State Championship events via giveaways at the event, emails, press releases, public service announcements, livestream ads, program ads, scoreboard messages, signage, and on DIAA's social media channels.

### **Wilson/Spalding**

DIAA continued its partnership agreements with the following: Wilson (football, basketball, baseball, soccer, and tennis) and Spalding/Dudley (volleyball and softball) to provide game balls at no expense for DIAA state championship events.

### **Chocolate Milk**

DIAA continued its partnership with the Mid-Atlantic Milk Marketing Agency via its "REFUEL, got Chocolate Milk" campaign.

### **Championships**

DIAA member schools hosted DIAA 2020-2021 state championship games. Higher seeded teams hosted all rounds except championship rounds. DIAA for fall 2021 championships returned to the University of Delaware to host volleyball and football championships. Cross country championships

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were held at Brandywine Creek while Dover High School hosted boys soccer and field hockey championships.

## **Communication**

DIAA created and sent 100 press releases to constituent groups during the year.

## **National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Membership**

DIAA has been a member of the NFHS since January 1945. The NFHS serves its member associations, related professional organizations, and students by providing leadership for the administration of education-based interscholastic activities that support academic achievement, good citizenship and equitable opportunities. NFHS is the nationally recognized expert in the area of writing the playing rules for most interscholastic sports and it is recognized as the leader in research and policy advocacy in the area of sport safety for interscholastic athletes.

**NFHS Network** - DIAA continues to be a part of the NFHS Network. The Network is a partnership between the NFHS and NFHS state associations. The Network web streams state championship games on the internet for a fee. Locally, 302 Sports has been contracted by NFHS as the production company for all DIAA Tournament events.

**Representation on National Committees** - DIAA and our member schools continue to support and provide expertise to NFHS national committees. With the exception of the Football Rules Committee, all associated expenses for participation on these committees are paid by the NFHS.

The following Delawareans served on NFHS Committees in 2021:

- James Connor (St. Georges), National Coaches Advisory
- Layne Drexel (IAABO #11) NFHS Basketball Rules
- JP Bennett (DIAA State Interpreter), Boys Lacrosse Rules
- Andrew Bero (DIAA State Interpreter), NFHS Football Rules
- Dorinda Toney (Field Hockey Official), NFHS Field Hockey Rules
- Donna Polk (DIAA), NFHS Technology
- Stephanie Mark (DIAA), NFHS Girls Lacrosse Rules

## **Upcoming Regulations for DIAA Consideration**

- Regulation 1009 and Coaching Out of Season
- Regulation Restructuring for editorial and clarification
- Transfer Regulation
- Officials Fees
- Student Athlete Enrollment and Participation for Another Member School
- Amateurism Rules due to recent NCAA Name, Image and Likeness

## **DIAA Areas of Opportunities/Improvement**

- Student Athlete Programming
- Continued website updates to enhance resource offerings for stakeholders and public and features to improve office workflow processes

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- Working with Websites4sports (member school website platform for eligibility, scheduling, compliance management and other work flow processes) to create a DIAA platform that will import member school information for reports and enhance DIAA office workflow processes (waiver application upload option, championship reconciliation reports, participation reports, coaches verification requirements, etc.) and assist with member school regulation compliance. DIAA is also working with DOE DTI to ensure technology and data storage requirements are met.
- Working with local universities and colleges to partner to provide compliance and initial eligibility education.
- In communication with Delaware State University to host spring sport championships for girls soccer and girls lacrosse and University of Delaware for softball.

## **DIAA Challenges**

- DIAA staffing shortage remains a concern to ensure appropriate oversight and management of all areas of responsibility for the association
- Available facility to conduct indoor track championships
- Board meeting time devoted to conducting waivers during board meetings
- Board meeting executive sessions length of time
- Board membership turnover resulting in quorum issues during board meetings
- Stakeholder and public understanding of DIAA purpose, authority and role
- Compliance management/oversight
- Sportsmanship concerns during sporting events from fans, coaches and student athletes
- Officials shortage – looking at recruiting efforts and ideas
- COVID-19 impacts to regular and championship seasons

## **DIAA Hot Topics**

- DIAA governance structure, authority and understanding the role of DIAA
- Waivers
- Public vs private school – equity, opportunities
- Transfers/recruitment
- Compliance management
- Shortage of officials
- Division classification vs three-tier classification

If there are any questions regarding this report or any other interest in the business of DIAA, please contact me during business hours at 302-934-3166.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Bradley Layfield, Ed.D. //*

Bradley Layfield, Ed.D.  
Chair, DIAA Board of Directors  
Delaware Interscholastic Athletic Association

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