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PIAA TAKES FIRST STEP IN APPROVING GIRLS' FLAG FOOTBALL

Board of Directors accepts first reading in the process of sanctioning Girls' Flag Football as a sport in PA.

MECHANICSBURG – The Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association, Inc. (PIAA) Board of Directors held its monthly board meeting to discuss, among other things, the emerging sport of girls' flag football. The Board of Directors approved the first reading, by a unanimous vote, 30-0.

Girls' flag football achieved emerging sports status in July 2023, reaching 25 schools hosting teams. Last month, the sport surpassed more than 100 schools sponsoring girls' flag football.

With efforts from the last three years, the Philadelphia Eagles, Pittsburgh Steelers and the National Football League (NFL) have been working diligently to provide resources to female student-athletes across the state. To this date, they have helped jump start programs at 103 schools, 65 schools from the eastern side of the state and 36 from the western side of the state are participating in girls' flag football.

"We are very appreciative of the Board of Directors support and taking this first step to sanctioning girls' flag football," said Frank Majikes, PIAA President. "We have a lot of work to do, but with the support of the Eagles, Steelers and the NFL, we're hopeful of creating a solid foundation for girls' flag football that will develop the sport for years to come."

According to the National Federation of High School Associations, nine states have sanctioned girls' flag football. "The popularity of flag football – for boys and girls – has been growing at the youth levels for the past 10 years. In 2023, about 500,000 girls ages 6-17 played flag football – a 63 percent increase since 2019," said Dr. Karissa L. Niehoff, NFHS President. Even more growth, the sport was approved by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in October 2023 and will be an official Olympic Sport played in the Olympic Games in Los Angeles 2028.

Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association

Beginning in Pittsburgh, on December 29, 1913, PIAA was given the privilege of serving its member schools and registered officials by establishing policies and adopting contest rules that emphasize the educational values of interscholastic athletics, promote safe and sportsmanlike competition, and provide uniform standards for all interscholastic levels of competition.