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PIAA Executive Director becomes first NFHS President from Pennsylvania

*Dr. Robert Lombardi is the 65th elected National Federation of State High School
Associations President.*

MECHANICSBURG, PA – As one of the nation's longest-tenured state association administrators, Dr. Robert Lombardi has served the PIAA since 1988 and will now serve a one-year term as the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) President.

There have been 64 NFHS presidents. Dr. Lombardi became the 65th NFHS President on July 2nd, commencing the 105th NFHS Summer Meeting in Boston, Massachusetts. He's the first from the Keystone State to hold this role. Pennsylvania became a member of the NFHS in 1925.

Prior to becoming president, Dr. Lombardi was voted to the NFHS National Board of Directors in [July 2021](#) and in July 2023, he was voted as the president-elect. At the national level, Dr. Lombardi was chair of the NFHS Officials Education Committee, the Officials Recruitment, Retainment, Training and Evaluation Committee, the Risk Management Committee for Officials, the Coaches and Athletic Administrators Committee, NFHS Soccer Rules Committee and has served a term on the NFHS Basketball Rules Committee.

In 2006, Dr. Lombardi was the first representative from Pennsylvania to be honored by being named a recipient of an NFHS Citation. The citations are presented to those whose contributions have made an impact, with a longstanding and distinguished record of involvement, with high school activity programs through their state association.

Since joining the PIAA staff in 1988, he has been tournament director for most PIAA championships. He started his career at the PIAA as assistant executive director and, after five years, was promoted to associate executive director prior to being named the executive director, 12 years ago. As PIAA executive director, Dr. Lombardi handles bylaw interpretations, strategic planning, fiscal management, office operations, the PIAA Foundation and legislative affairs.

Dr. Lombardi is recognized as the founding father of the PIAA Officials Convention. This year is the 29th Annual Officials' Convention. It started with only 75 officials in attendance and has grown to over 1,300. The convention has become the largest interscholastic sports officials' convention in the country! It's a chance for officials to gain educational knowledge and review rule changes for the upcoming sports season(s). The convention caps off by recognizing PIAA officials for their years of service to the high school student-athletes in Pennsylvania. While in the official's role at the PIAA, Dr. Lombardi's responsibilities included managing the day-to-day duties of the PIAA officials' program and its continuing education component, which has more than 14,500 registered sports officials. His supervisory duties included registration, recruitment, evaluation and assignment of registered sports officials for all PIAA championship events. He



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coordinated the guides, annual rules bulletins, evaluation instruments and educational seminars.

Dr. Lombardi earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in physical education from East Stroudsburg University and later received his doctorate in sports administration from the University of New Mexico. Before joining the PIAA, Dr. Lombardi was a teacher and coach in the Wayne Highlands School District, near the area where he grew up.

More about the new NFHS Board of Directors can be found [here](#).

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.