



ILLINOIS HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION



The IHSA governs the equitable participation in interscholastic athletics and activities that enrich the educational experience.

April 15, 2025

Dear State Representatives:

This letter is in response to yours of March 17, 2025, requesting information about the IHSA's plans to comply with the President's Executive Order pertaining to transgender participation in athletics.

The Illinois High School Association (IHSA) is a voluntary, private, not-for-profit unincorporated association, the membership of which is comprised of 809 high schools in Illinois. The IHSA receives no state or federal funding.

Initially, it should also be noted that the policy in question applies only to state series competition sponsored by the IHSA. IHSA member schools determine participation opportunities for transgender students during the regular season.

Assuming for purposes of this discussion that the Executive Order in question represents an authorized exercise of presidential authority that accurately reflects federal law, the inquiry is not ended. The Illinois Attorney General ("AG") and, more recently, the Illinois Department of Human Rights ("IDHR") have asserted to the IHSA that the Illinois Human Rights Act requires that transgender athletes be permitted to participate in events and programs aligning with the gender with which they identify. As a result of the foregoing, compliance with the Executive Order could place the IHSA out of compliance with the Illinois Human Rights Act and vice versa.

The IHSA simply desires to comply with the law and takes no position as to which of the foregoing is correct or whether there can be alignment between claimed federal and state law. Given the conflict described above, however, we are left in an untenable position. We therefore urge that state officials, including the legislature, the governor and the Attorney General, work together with federal authorities to provide clear direction on this issue.

The IHSA appreciates the support it has received from members of the Republican caucuses of both houses and trust we can continue to work together for the benefit of students in the State of Illinois.

Very Truly Yours,

Dan Tully
IHSA, Board President

Craig Anderson
IHSA, Executive Director

THE FUTURE PLAYS HERE!