GHSA Newsletter

March 2026 (Items of Interest - Vol. 45 No. 7)

Dr. Tim Scott addresses the importance of Sportsmanship

Welcome to March 2026!

Sportsmanship – Set the Example at the Georgia High School Association, we believe athletics are about far more than wins and losses — they are about developing character, leadership, and integrity in the young people we serve.

Sportsmanship is the foundation of that mission. The way our coaches lead, the way our parents support, and the way our student-athletes compete all shape the culture of high school athletics. Every contest is an opportunity to model respect — for opponents, officials, teammates, and the game itself.

Our student-athletes are always watching. They learn just as much from how adults handle adversity as they do from practice drills and game plans. When we respond to challenges with composure, honor the rules of competition, and treat others with dignity — especially in moments of intensity — we set a powerful example that extends far beyond the field of play.

True sportsmanship means competing with passion while maintaining perspective. It means celebrating success with humility and accepting defeat with grace. It means understanding that character is revealed not only in victory, but in how we conduct ourselves at all times.

As we move through the spring season, let's recommit ourselves to creating environments that reflect the very best of educational athletics. By doing so, we ensure that the lessons our students carry forward — teamwork, accountability, resilience, and respect — will serve them long after the final whistle.

Together, we can continue to make GHSA athletics a source of pride for our schools, communities, and most importantly, our student-athletes.

I wish each of you the very best as you lead your teams this spring!

Staff & Responsibilities

151 S. Bethel St., Thomaston, GA 30286 Phone: 706-647-7473 Fax: 706-647-2638 Web: www.ghsa.net Office Hours: 8am to 4 pm Monday - Friday

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robin.hines@ghsa.net

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PAM THOMPSON - Officials' Registrar - (ext. 130) Officials' Clinic Attendance, Officials' Registrations, Test Scoring & Records, Waivers, Officials and Evaluator Passes, GHSA Recruiting Grant, Publications and eBooks, Awards, Service Plaques pamthompson@ghsa.net

LINDA CROWDER - Administrative Assistant - (ext. 121) Organizing Championship Medals, Assist with Cheerleading, Student Leadership, Literary, School System Passes, Finance Reports linda@ghsa.net

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Congratulations to the 2026 GHSA Swimming and Diving State Champions!

The 2026 GHSA Swimming & Diving State Championships were held Feb. 2-7 at the Georgia Tech McAuley Aquatic Center and Marist (diving) with supportive fans during the five-day event. Congratulations to state champions and all swimmers and divers who competed. Team winners were:
Boys - Brookwood (6A, Back-to-back), Lassiter (5A, First state title), Marist (4A, Last title 2022) and Greater Atlanta Christian (1A-3A, Back-to-back);
Girls - South Forsyth (6A), Lassiter (5A, 7th straight), Marist (4A, Back-to-back) and Greater Atlanta Christian (1A-3A, First state title).
View past state champions - Boys / Girls
Much appreciation goes to Atlanta Swimming Meet Directors Franke Marsden, Matt Murphy and Evan Nylander, Georgia Tech Aquatic Center, Marist, NFHS Network, GoFan, River Oak Photography, PepWear, West Georgia Sports Information Services, coaches, athletes, meet officials, sponsors, volunteers, parents and fans that supported this outstanding state meet.

Meet Results

1-3A / 4A Results

5A Results

6A Results

Merchandise

Order state championship merchandise at PepWear.

Video

Order digital downloads at NFHS Network.

Photos

All action photography orders were taken by riveroakphotography.com. Contact orders@riveroakphotography.com with any questions.

6A Boys - Brookwood

6A Girls - South Forsyth

5A Boys - Lassiter

5A Girls - Lassiter

4A Marist Boys & Girls

1A-3A Boys Greater Atlanta Christian

1A-3A Girls - Greater Atlanta Christian

Congratulations to the 2026 GHSA Traditional Wrestling State Champions!

The 2026 GHSA Traditional Wrestling State Championships were held February 11-14 in the inaugural event for the Arena at Southlake. Congratulations to the 98 individual state champions and place winners in boys and girls divisions.
Traditional team champs were: Camden County (6A), South Effingham (5A), Woodland, Cartersville (4A), Jefferson (3A), East Jackson (2A), Social Circle (1A) and Lumpkin County (Girls). View past state champions.
Much appreciation goes to the Atlanta Takedown Association, Arena at Southlake, Takedown Sportswear, NFHS Network, TrackWrestling, FloSports, Ortho Atlanta, BPI Photography, sponsors, officials, table workers, and fans.

Merchandise

State championship merchandise can be ordered at Takedown Sportswear.

Photography

Action & podium photography will be available for order at BPI Photography.

Video

Digital downloads available to order at NFHS Network.

Final Results

View final results on TrackWrestling.

Congratulations to the 2026 GHSA Dance State Champions!

The 2026 Dance State Championships presented by Rebel Athletics were held February 11-12 at Akins Arena at Classic Center in Athens. This year dance squads were awarded trophies by dance style and classification in jazz, high kick, hip hop and pom.
Congratulations to winners: Stephens County (1A-6A High Kick), Denmark (6A Hip Hop), Mill Creek (6A Jazz), North Gwinnett (6A Pom), Tri-Cities (3A-5A Hip Hop), Starr's Mill (3A-5A Jazz), Starr's Mill (3A-5A Pom), Lakeview-Fort Oglethorpe (1A-2A Hip Hop), Thomasville (1A-2A Jazz), and Ringgold (1A-2A Pom).

Much appreciation goes to Akins Arena at Classic Center, Penny Mitchell (GHSA Dance rep), GHSA staff, Rebel Athletic, TeamIP, NFHS Network, BPI Photography, sponsors, volunteers, judges, dancers, coaches and fans.

Merchandise

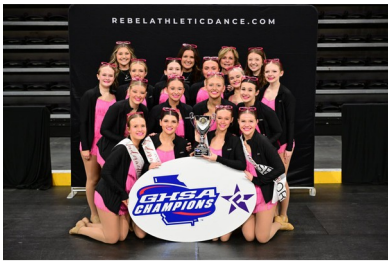
Order state championship merchandise at PepWear.

Video

Order digital downloads at NFHS Network.

Photos

Order action photos by BPI Photography.



Stephens County (1A-6A High Kick)

Denmark (6A Hip Hop)

Mill Creek (6A Jazz)

North Gwinnett (6A Pom)

Tri-Cities (3A-5A Hip Hop)

Starr's Mill (3A-5A Jazz)

Starr's Mill (3A-5A Pom)

Lakeview-Fort Oglethorpe (1A-2A Hip Hop)

Thomasville (1A-2A Jazz)

Ringgold (1A-2A Pom)

GHSA Associate Director Job Posting

Applications are now being taken for the position of Associate Director of the GHSA.

MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Sports administrator – seasonal sports / activities; manage state championship events in assigned sports.
- Specific sports' duties may be adjusted after hiring
- GHSA policies and by-laws interpreter
- Student eligibility reviews and decisions
- Job related travel
- Assist Executive Director in any and all association tasks and objectives

PERSONAL / PROFESSIONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Strong knowledge of high school sports
- Strong knowledge of the GHSA Constitution and By-Laws; student eligibility rules
- Strong inter personal skills to build and maintain relationships with member schools
- Knowledge of operational policies and procedures through the Georgia Department of Education

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Minimal: Bachelor's Degree with field related experience
- Preferred: Master's Degree and/or beyond with field related experience

LOCATION:

- Candidates must be able to regularly work in the Thomaston office.

SALARY & BENEFITS:

- Salary commensurate with education and experience. Excellent benefits are available.

BEGINNING DATE: TBD

APPLICATION PROCESS:

Open until filled (Send letter and resume to GHSA address below)

1. Letter of interest with full contact information

2. Career resume

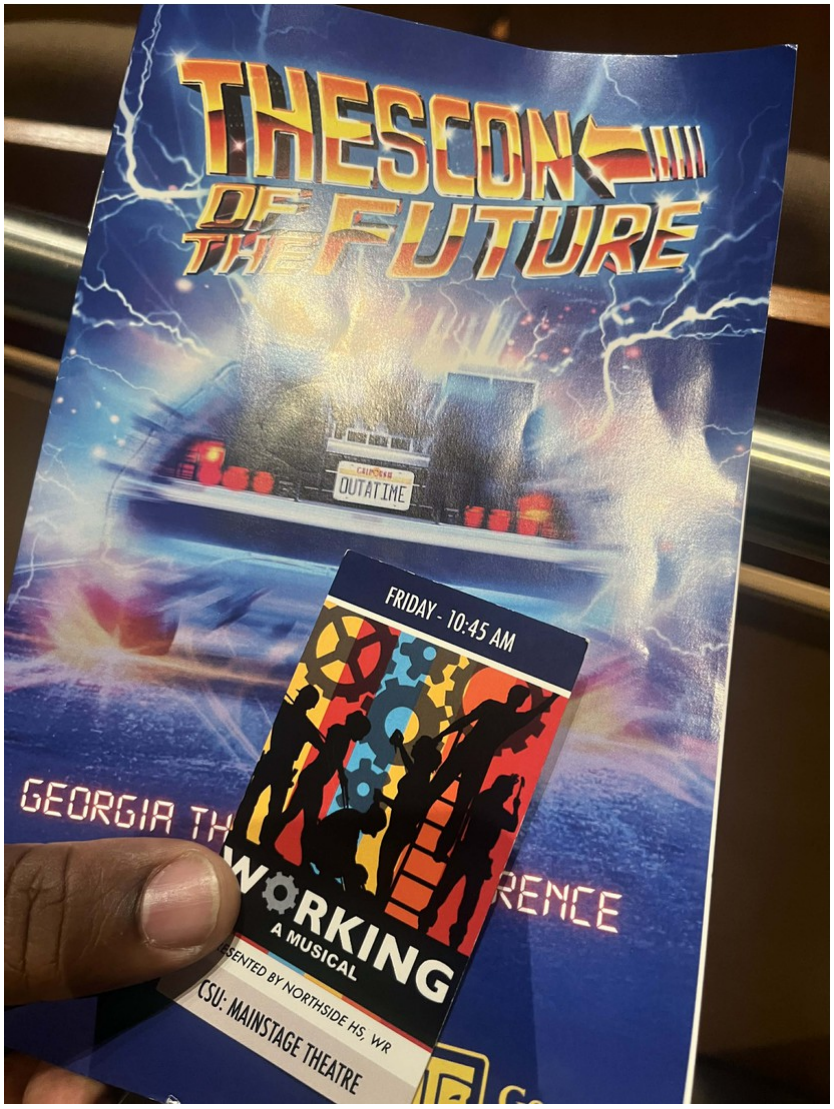
3. List of references

For further information contact:

Dr. Tim Scott (Tim.Scott@GHSA.net)

Georgia High School Association
151 South Bethel Street
Thomaston, GA 30286

Columbus Hosts Successful Georgia Thespian Conference



More than 260 schools and over 62,000 Georgia thespians gathered in Columbus this February (5-7) for a three-day celebration of creativity, performance, and possibility.

The conference theme, *THESCON of the Future*, tipped its hat to the iconic 80's trilogy *Back to the Future*, inviting students to imagine what tomorrow's stage might look like while honoring the craft that brought them here.

For three days, the Fountain City pulsed with talent. Young actors and actresses filled workshops focused on juggling, vocal performance, choreography, and countless other disciplines that sharpened both skill and confidence.

In addition to hands-on learning, several GHSA schools brought their One Act plays to life throughout the conference, showcasing months of preparation, passion, and storytelling in front of peers from across the state.

THESCON was not just a conference. It was a launchpad for the next generation of performers stepping boldly into their spotlight.

THESCON 2026

Columbus, GA

2026 Southern Tennis Foundation College Scholarship Application is Now Open!

SOUTHERN TENNIS FOUNDATION

The Southern Tennis Foundation (STF) is proud to announce that the 2026 College Scholarship application is officially open! Ten scholarships will be awarded for the 2026/2027 academic year and are renewable for the next three years (four years total) if the student remains eligible.

The scholarships are designed to support students who demonstrate academic excellence, community leadership, and financial need. Additional details are included in the 2026 Scholarship Fact Sheet linked below.

IMPORTANT:

- Please share this information with your community, especially high school students and their parents.

Key Dates:

- **Deadline to Apply:** March 30, 2026
- **Notification Date:** May 4, 2026

CLICK HERE TO APPLY: STF College Scholarship Application
FOR MORE INFO: STF Fact Sheets

POC: Jean Marie Simon
Manager, NJTL & Foundation

USTA Southern
5685 Spalding Drive
Peachtree Corners, GA 30092
(770) 368-8200 x.109

simon@sta.usta.com

MatchUp can help YOU with your season scheduling!

- Introducing a website called MatchUp, that allows coaches of all sports to create their team and post their scheduling needs. I know this site, won't help you this season but could be used at a tool in the future.
- It's FREE! The more you register your programs, it could become extremely helpful. Scheduling is hard and annoying! So, check it out if you like.

http://www.matchupusa.com

For more information, contact Brandon Evans (912) 424 3866 or email coaches@matchupusa.com or bkevans90@gmail.com

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Power Up Your Booster Club with Cheddar Up

Running a high school booster club means handling a nonstop list of tasks: fundraising, collecting dues, selling spirit wear, coordinating volunteers, and keeping track of every dollar. Whether you support band, football, or cheer, staying organized and transparent is critical. Cheddar Up gives

booster clubs a smarter way to manage payments and forms all in one place, without the headache.

All-in-One Tools Built for Booster Clubs

Cheddar Up takes the chaos out of collecting money. Instead of juggling paper forms and mystery Venmo transactions, booster clubs can set up a simple online page to collect everything from membership dues and donations to event tickets and merchandise orders.

Each payment is tracked automatically, with real-time reports and clear records. You'll know who paid, what they paid for, and when. Plus, you can collect information, waivers, and volunteer sign-ups alongside payments without needing separate sign-up tools.

Payments Without the Hassle

Families don't need to download an app or create an account. They can pay by credit card, eCheck, or even installment plans if you're using the Team plan. Booster clubs can choose to absorb fees or pass them on to payers, depending on what works best.

Built-In Transparency and Controls

Treasurers and board members will love how easy it is to manage finances with Cheddar Up. The platform offers downloadable reports, receipt customization, and role-based manager access. That means multiple club leaders can manage collections with permissions you control, so no one is locked out or overwhelmed.

Real Booster Clubs, Real Results

Booster clubs across the country are already seeing the difference. Avon Eagles Boosters used Cheddar Up to simplify everything from membership and spirit wear to game day meals and donations. Before switching, their volunteers juggled multiple apps and manual tracking. With Cheddar Up, they consolidated all their collections into one platform and saw a big boost in efficiency—and membership.

"Cheddar Up has been a total game-changer. It's so easy to use, helps us stay organized, and makes collecting payments a breeze. We've been able to get all our teams on board, and it saves us hours of work." —Stephanie Kiesel, President of Avon Eagles Boosters

Exclusive GHSA Team Plan, Free for Booster Clubs

As the official payment partner of GHSA, Cheddar Up is giving teams and booster clubs access to the Team plan at no cost. That includes unlimited items and forms per page, ticketing, recurring payments, a custom group website, and access for unlimited managers. You'll also get lower processing fees and advanced reporting tools to keep everything organized and easy to review.

Ready to Boost Smarter?

Skip the paperwork and constant follow-ups. Cheddar Up gives your booster club the tools to fundraise, organize, and operate like a pro. Sign up through this exclusive GHSA link to activate your free Team plan and start simplifying today

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Georgia High Schools Eligible for Grant Funding to Support Girls Flag Football

Every high school in Georgia will be eligible to receive a grant from the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation, in partnership with the Atlanta Falcons, to either support its existing girls flag football program or launch a girl's flag football program in 2026, the Foundation announced. In 2025, the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation provided grant funding to 305 Georgia high schools to support the growth of girl's flag football, including 45 high schools

that established new girls flag football programs for their student athletes this past year. Georgia high schools interested in applying for grant funding to establish a girl's flag football program or support their existing program can do so by visiting AtlantaFalcons.com/girls-flag-football.

Midtown Student-Athlete Named Gatorade GA Boys Cross Country Player of the Year

In its 41st year celebrating the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Cameron Collier of Midtown High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Georgia Boys Cross Country Player of the Year.

Gatorade Player of the Year is the top honor in high school sports, celebrating the nation's best high school athletes for their excellence in sport, academics and community. The award recognizes Collier as Georgia's best high school boys cross country athlete, and he joins an elite legacy that spans professional athletes and coaches to CEOs, such as Lukas Verzbicas (2009-10 & 2010-11, Carl Sandburg High School, IL) Edward Cheserek (2012-13, Saint Benedict's Preparatory School, NJ) and Charlie Vause (2024-25, Rio Rancho High School, NM).

The 5-foot-10, 130-pound senior won the GHSA Class 4A state meet this past season, breaking the tape with a time of 16:07.8. Collier clocked a personal-best 14:54.1 at the Alexander/Asics Invitational and also took 15th at the Canadian U18 National Championships. He raced to victories in 2025 at the Wingfoot Classic, the AT&T Starr's Mill Meet and the Atlanta Public Schools City Championship.

Collier has volunteered locally mentoring youth athletes at track and field camps. He has also donated his time as both a regional officer and webmaster for Midtown High School's chapter of the Future Business Leaders of America. "Going from 41st to first in year-over-year placement at the state meet and experiencing similar progress at other key races, Cameron Collier's senior-year development is the type of improvement most distance runners can only dream of," said Rich Gonzalez of PrepCalTrack.

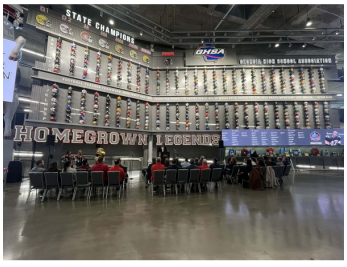
Collier has maintained an A average in the classroom. He has signed a written letter of athletic aid to run at Villanova University this fall.

The Gatorade Player of the Year program annually recognizes one state winner from each of the 50 states and Washington D.C., in 12 different sports: football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, baseball, softball, boys and girls soccer, and boys and girls track & field. In total, 610 high school athletes are honored each year. From the pool of state winners, one national winner is selected in each of the 12 sports. The selection process is administered by the Gatorade Player of the Year Selection Committee, which leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the winners in each sport.

As part of Gatorade's commitment to breaking down barriers in sport, every Player of the Year also receives a grant to donate to a social impact partner. To date, the Gatorade Player of the Year program has provided more than $6.4 million in grants to winners across more than 2,200 organizations.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit playeroftheyear.gatorade.com or follow us on social media on Instagram at instagram.com/Gatorade, Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY and X(Twitter) at x.com/Gatorade.

Chick Fil A, Atlanta Falcons & GHSA debut Helmet Wall and Digital Display



February 24, 2026 at MBS

GHSA helmets are on display.

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

Falcons, Chick-fil-A, and GHSA Unveil Chick-fil-A Homegrown Legends Helmet Wall at Mercedes-Benz Stadium

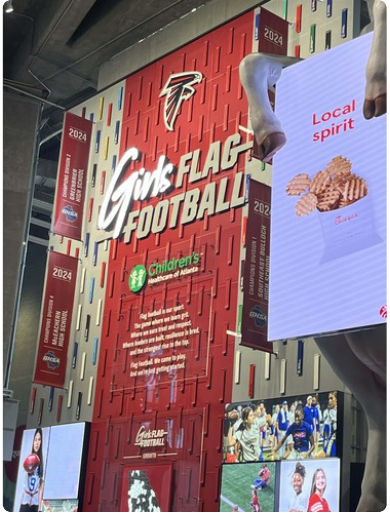
The Atlanta Falcons, Chick-fil-A, and the Georgia High School Association (GHSA) hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Tuesday, February 24 at Mercedes-Benz Stadium to celebrate their expanded partnership and reveal the newly named Chick-fil-A Homegrown Legends Helmet Wall, now officially part of the stadium.

This long-standing tradition, originally showcased in the Georgia Dome, honors high school football programs from across the state of Georgia. At Mercedes-Benz Stadium, the display has

grown significantly. It now includes memorabilia from Georgia-born players who achieved major success in the sport—such as trophies and autographed cleats from Calvin Johnson, a Sandy Creek High School standout and NFL legend.

A new digital display has also been added, highlighting NFL Hall of Fame inductees with Georgia roots who played their high school football in the Peach State.

The Chick-fil-A Homegrown Legends Helmet Wall can be found on the 100-level concourse near Section 130.



The GHSA is now accepting applications for the 2026–27 Student-Athlete Advisory Council! This is a great opportunity to represent your school, your region/classification, and student-athletes across the entire state.

• Open to current Sophomores and Juniors
• Application deadline: May 5th

Apply here: https://forms.gle/Dc3ZKyct7oSwhqZK9

March Dates to Remember

(1) Deadline for Notification of Entry in Gymnastics, Lacrosse, Riflery & Wrestling for next season
(1) Football Schedules Due in GHSA Office
(3) Complete Riflery Semifinals
(3-4) State Basketball Tournament - Quarterfinal Round
(6-7) State Basketball Tournament - Semifinals Round
(7) Bass Fishing Qualifier #3 - Clarks Hill
(7) Region/Area Literary Meets
(7) Report Region/Area Literary Winners to GHSA
(10) Hardship/Appeal Meeting
(11-14) Dr. Ralph Swearngin Basketball State Championships presented by Breda Management
(14) AASP/GHSA Wheelchair Basketball State Championship
(21) GHSA State Literary Championships
(24) Hardship/ Appeal Meeting
(30) eSports - Spring 2025 - Regular Season Ends

Marvin L. James II (GHSA Media Director)

Spring has Sprung - March 2026