



October 2026 (Items of Interest - Vol. 46 No. 2)

October Newsletter

October is an exciting time for GHSA schools. Flag football is underway, and state playoffs and championships in volleyball and softball begin this month. I look forward to celebrating the hard work of our student-athletes, coaches, and schools throughout these competitions.

I am also pleased to share that the GHSA has partnered with the Georgia Association of Secondary School Principals (GASSP), the Georgia Athletic Directors Association (GADA), and the Georgia Athletic Coaches Association (GACA) to develop a sportsmanship program for fall 2027. 2Words Character Development is working with the GHSA and our member schools to put the program together. Participation will not be mandated, but we are asking every school to take part. Sportsmanship is a responsibility we all share, and this program will give schools another way to teach and reinforce it.

We also look forward to our State Executive Committee meeting on October 5, 2026.

We are wishing all of our team a great playoff season as we begin playoffs in our sports. Thank you for all you do to support education-based athletics and the young people we serve.

Dr. Tim Scott

Executive Director

Georgia High School Association



GHSA Membership Dues and Catastrophic Insurance

Dr. Tim Scott, GHSA Executive Director has announced that fees for Membership Dues and Catastrophic Insurance will be waived for the 26-27 school year - our 7th consecutive year being

able to do this for our member schools.

Please pass this information on to your bookkeepers as we have already begun receiving checks for this year's dues and insurance that we will be returning to the sending school.

Hope you all have a great school year!

GHSa 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

TIM SCOTT - Executive Director - (ext. 141) Administration, Interpretation of GHSA Rules, Hardship Applications, Appeals, Coaches Education Program, Swimming (Andy Cowart) Wrestling (Bud Hennebaul) tim.scott@ghsa.net

CARROR WRIGHT - Associate Director - (ext. 139) Coach's Liaison, Compliance & Transfer Eligibility, Sportsmanship cwright@ghsa.net

DANNY REDSHAW - Associate Director - (ext. 135) Baseball, Volleyball dannyredshaw@ghsa.net

DARRELL LANE - Associate Director - (ext. 142) Volleyball, Basketball, Lacrosse, Officiating Department darrell@ghsa.net

ERNIE YARBROUGH - Liaison/Consultant - (ext. 127) Championship Logistics, Flag Football ery@ghsa.net

JASPER JEWELL - Associate Director - (ext. 140) Bass Fishing, Football jjewell@ghsa.net

JULIE JONES - Administrative Assistant - (ext. 124) Community Coach Program, Entry Notification, Dues, Paraprofessional Head Coach Program juliejones@ghsa.net

KENT MORROW - Associate Director - (ext. 136) PSR, eSports, Golf, Riflery kent.morrow@ghsa.net

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

MARVIN JAMES - Media Director - (ext. 126) Press Releases, Media Coordination of State Events, Newsletter, Constitution & Calendar, Tennis marvin.james@ghsa.net

MERRI SHERMAN - Associate Director - (ext. 134) Softball, Soccer msherman@ghsa.net

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

PENNY PITTS MITCHELL - Associate Director - (ext. 122) Cheerleading, Game Day Cheerleading, Gymnastics, Dance, Student Leadership, Title IX penny@ghsa.net

ROBIN BULLINGTON - Office Manager - (ext. 133) Budgeting and Finances, Playoff & Championship Finances, Staff Procedures robin@ghsa.net

ROBIN HINES - GHSA Legislative Liaison/Consultant. By-law Interpretations, Eligibility, Hardship Rulings, Swimming robin.hines@ghsa.net

SHERI EUBANKS -Administrative Assistant/Weight Management Coordinator - (ext. 131) Lifetime Passes, School System Passes, Ejection Reports, Hardship/Appeals Scheduler, Publication Orders, Rules Violation and Ejection Fines, Wrestling Weight Management, NFHS Annual Participation Survey sherieubanks@ghsa.net

STACEY JONES - Administrative Assistant - (ext. 132) School Contacts & School Passes, Directory, Coaches' Clinics, Trophies & Medals stacey@ghsa.net

TANYA ANDERSON - Associate Director - (ext. 129) Literary, One Act Play, Cross Country, Track & Field, Event Sanctioning, and Student Leadership tanyaanderson@ghsa.net

GHSA Celebrates Student Athletes Every Thursday

Beginning this school year, GHSA will celebrate former student athletes across our social media platforms every Thursday. So if you have any student athletes from the past that you'd like to nominate, please send your request to marvin.james@ghsa.net



GHSA Officials Appreciation Week

GHSA Celebrates 'Officials Appreciation Week' Program | GHSA.net

To recognize the important contributions contest officials make to our member schools and student-athletes, the GHSA will once again celebrate Officials Appreciation Week during each sports season.

ghsa.net

Last month, we celebrated the first of our THREE "GHSA Officials Appreciation Weeks" but you can never give enough thanks to our officials. Just a heads up on our upcoming dates:

- **WINTER | January 25-30, 2027**
Basketball • Wrestling • Swimming • Esports • Bass Fishing • Dance • Literary
- **SPRING | April 19-24, 2027**
Baseball • Soccer • Lacrosse • SP Softball • Track & Field • Gymnastics



Dalton HS



Northwest Whitfield HS



Howard HS



Midtown HS



Hardaway HS



Cairo HS



Salem HS

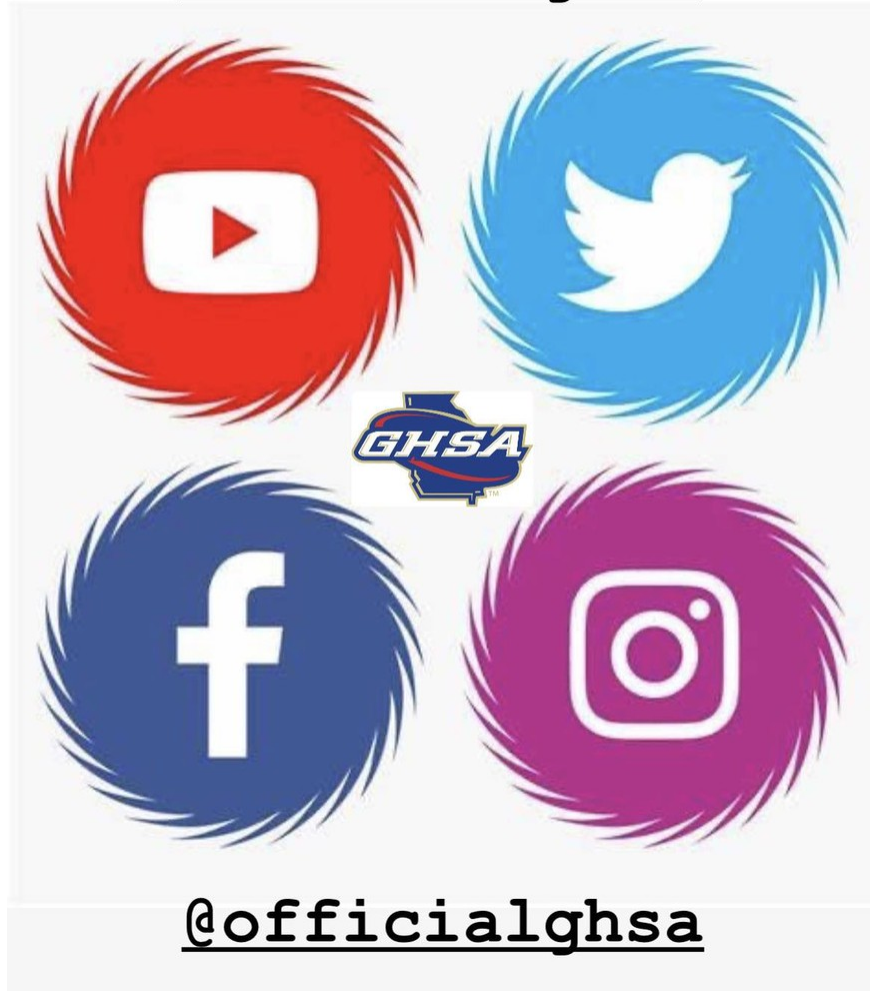


Spencer HS



Upson-Lee HS

@officialghsa



@officialghsa

2026 Aspire Awards Winners representing AAASP



Former GHSA Executive Director, Dr. Ralph Swearingin



Former GHSA Executive Director, Dr. Robin Hines



GHSA Executive Director, Dr. Tim Scott

Celebrating the 2026 AAASP ASPIRE Awards!

Congratulations to all the nominees and winners honored Sunday, Sept. 27, during the 2026 AAASP ASPIRE Awards in Locust Grove. It was a beautiful evening celebrating adapted sports and the incredible student-athletes, coaches and advocates who continue to make an impact. A special congratulations to GHSA Associate Director Tanya Anderson, recipient of the Eli Wolff Advocacy Award, recognizing her support and advocacy for adapted student-athletes in track and field. A

special thank you also goes to GHSA Executive Director Dr. Tim Scott, retired executive directors Dr. Ralph Swearngin and Dr. Robin Hines, and GHSA Media Relations Director Marvin James for serving as presenters during the ASPIRE Awards ceremony. Congratulations again to all of the 2026 honorees! The complete list of this year's ASPIRE Award winners is attached.
#GHSA #AAASP #ASPIREAwards #AdaptedSports
#StudentAthletes #GeorgiaHighSchoolSports

SEE ARTICLE FOR MORE PICS:

https://www.henryherald.com/sports/photos-2026-aspire-awards-at-locust-grove-event-center/collection_b89cb5f6-e027-402c-90ca-cb45a6c910f5.html#1



 The 2026 ASPIRE Awards Honors 27 Recipients in its 30th Anniversary Year - AdaptED Sports

The 2026 ASPIRE Awards Honors 27 Recipients in its 30th Anniversary Year - AdaptED Sports

The American Association of Adapted Sports Programs, Inc. (AAASP) is proud to announce the 2026 ASPIRE Awards Recipients, representing 23 categories that highlight outstanding contributions in support of student athletes with qualifying disabilities.

The Adapted Sports Programs in Recreation and Education (ASPIRE) Awards recognize the exemplary efforts of individuals and organizations that have been instrumental in advancing AAASP's mission to expand access to adapted sports programming nationwide. The Eighth ... [Read More](https://adaptedsports.org/the-2026-aspire-awards-honors-27-recipients-in-its-30th-anniversary-year/)

adaptedsports.org

The Dairy Alliance Brings Milk's Got Game to High Schools Across Georgia

[The Dairy Alliance](#) is bringing **Milk's Got Game** back to high school athletics, helping student athletes across Georgia learn about the benefits of fueling with real dairy throughout the sports season, including the role it plays in hydration, recovery, and nutrition.

The campaign will reach athletes, coaches and families throughout the fall, winter and spring sports seasons, offering practical performance nutrition education centered on the role dairy can play in an active lifestyle. Through Milk's Got Game, The Dairy Alliance will highlight milk's natural electrolytes for hydration, complete protein to support muscle recovery and essential nutrients that help support strong bones and sustained energy.

The Dairy Alliance is partnering with the [Georgia High School Association](#) to bring Milk's Got Game directly into high school sports communities. Throughout the school year, the partnerships will feature digital performance nutrition programming, championship materials, on-site activations and other opportunities for student athletes to learn about fueling and recovery.



At select state championship events, The Dairy Alliance will host on-site activations and provide chocolate milk to participating teams following competitions. The recovery-focused experience will give student athletes an opportunity to refuel while bringing the benefits of real dairy to some of the biggest moments of their athletic journey. These efforts reinforce milk's naturally occurring electrolytes for hydration and complete protein for muscle recovery, key components of an athlete's post-game recovery routine.

This year, The Dairy Alliance will also bring dairy farmers into the championship celebrations.

Local dairy farmers will present chocolate milk for the teams to strengthen the bond between farm families and the communities they serve. This partnership highlights the real nutritional value of the milk they produce and celebrates the role of real dairy in fueling student-athlete performance.

We encourage everyone to kick off the high school athletic season with a chocolate milk toast on **September 27, National Chocolate Milk Day** - a day for athletes, families, and fans across Georgia to enjoy chocolate milk and celebrate the goodness of real dairy. It's a simple reminder of chocolate milk's role as a familiar favorite with nutritional benefits, including complete protein and naturally occurring electrolytes, that support hydration and recovery for active lifestyles.

From the start of the season through championship celebrations, Milk's Got Game will continue to bring performance focused dairy nutrition to high school athletics across **Georgia**, helping athletes make informed nutrition choices while celebrating the people and communities behind the game.

To learn more about The Dairy Alliance, visit thedairyalliance.com or @TheDairyAlliance on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#).

About The Dairy Alliance

The Dairy Alliance is a nonprofit funded by dairy farm families of the Southeast. We work diligently with dairy farmers, schools, sports teams, health professionals, local organizations, state leaders, the media, and the public to promote dairy foods and knowledge about the dairy industry. Our efforts center in eight states: Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia.

Social

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/thedairyalliance>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/thedairyalliance/>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/thedairyalliance/>

GHSA State Executive Meeting - October 4-5, 2026



GHSA STATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

M E E T I N G

GHSA State Executive Committee Meeting - October 5, 2026 | GHSA.net

The GHSA State Executive Committee will meet on October 5, 2026 at 9:00 AM at the Macon Marriott.

📄 ghsa.net

The Fall Season Playbook

Cheerleading, cross country, flag football, football, one act play, fast-pitch softball, volleyball. Whatever fall sport you're running, every coach, team parent, booster club, and volunteer gets access to all of Cheddar Up's premium features. One place to run registrations, fundraising, and spiritwear sales before the fall season gets away from you.

Collect everything in **one** place:



Fundraising

Sponsorships, car washes, donut sales. Track every dollar without a spreadsheet.



Team Fees and Membership Dues

Set up tiered levels for booster club memberships, or collect team fees. Payments and receipts track themselves.



Spirit Wear

Launch an online store in minutes with item variations, shipping, and inventory tracking.



Banquets and Senior Night

Collect RSVPs, payments, and contributions for banquets, senior night, or coach gifts.

Coaches & ADs: Share this with your booster club



BIG DEAL ALERT: GHSAs Members get Cheddar Up's Team plan and premium features worth over \$420.00 per year — for FREE! Just follow the QR code or go to getcheddarup.com/ghsa and start collecting today. Try a sports template to set up your collection in minutes!



Getting started is easy: getcheddarup.com/ghsa

GHSAs Sportsmanship Initiative: The Champions Standard Pilot Program



SPORTSMANSHIP | LEADERSHIP | CHARACTER

The GHSA is exploring **The Champions Standard**, a sportsmanship, leadership and character initiative presented by **Coach Stephen Mackey** to the GHSA Executive Committee on Monday in Macon. This program is designed to help schools create a common language and culture that goes beyond simply reducing ejections. The goal is to use athletics as a classroom for teaching student-athletes how to lead themselves, lead others, compete with character and positively impact their communities.

 400+ LEADERSHIP & CHARACTER LESSONS	 FLEXIBLE IMPLEMENTATION Individual teams, entire schools, districts or counties	 NO COST Completely voluntary for schools	 HELP SHAPE THE PROGRAM Participating schools will provide feedback to help refine The Champions Standard for Georgia.
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READY TO PARTICIPATE?

If you are interested in participating in **The Champions Standard Pilot Program**, please scan the QR code below to come aboard.



QUESTIONS?

You may also contact:
Stephen Mackey
✉ mackey@2words.tv
Windy Leighton
✉ windy@2words.tv

**PARTICIPATION IS COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY
AND COMES AT NO COST TO YOU, YOUR SCHOOL OR YOUR DISTRICT.**

GHSA Member Schools,

Following Coach Stephen Mackey's presentation to the GHSA Executive Committee Monday in Macon, we are sharing an opportunity for schools interested in participating in **The Champions Standard Pilot Program**.

This voluntary pilot will provide participating schools with access to leadership, character and sportsmanship resources at **no cost**, while also allowing schools to provide feedback that will help shape the program for implementation in Georgia.

Please see the attached letter for additional information and the accompanying flyer to scan the QR code if your school is interested in participating.

Participation is completely voluntary.

Thank you for your continued commitment to sportsmanship and the positive development of Georgia's student-athletes.





GHSA SPORTSMANSHIP STATEMENT:

The GHSA and its member schools have made a commitment to promote good sportsmanship by student/athletes, coaches, and spectators at all GHSA sanctioned events.

Profanity, degrading remarks, and intimidating actions directed at officials, competitors, or other spectators will not be tolerated, and are grounds for removal from the event site.

Spectators are not allowed to enter the competition area prior to, during, or after the conclusion of the contest. Violators are subject to removal from the venue.

Thank you for your cooperation in the promotion of good sportsmanship at today's event.

TEAMWORK. RESPECT. INTEGRITY.

GHSA Championship Media Credential Policy Update

The GHSA has strengthened its credentialing standards for championship-level events due to **repeated fraudulent media representation during state finals, unprofessional conduct and violations of ethical standards.**

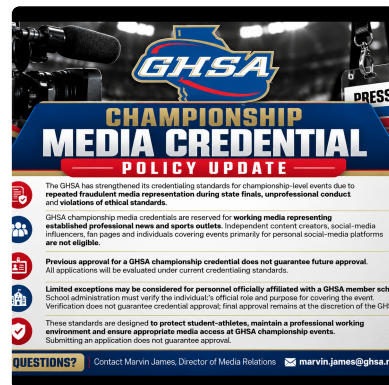
GHSA championship media credentials are reserved for **working media representing established professional news and sports outlets.** Independent content creators, social-media influencers, fan pages and individuals covering events primarily for personal social-media platforms are **not eligible.**

Previous approval for a GHSA championship credential does not guarantee future approval. All applications will be evaluated under current credentialing standards.

Limited exceptions may be considered for personnel officially affiliated with a GHSA member school. **School administration must verify the individual's official role and purpose for covering the event. Verification does not guarantee credential approval; final approval remains at the discretion of the GHSA.**

These standards are designed to **protect student-athletes, maintain a professional working environment and ensure appropriate media access at GHSA championship events.** Submitting an application does not guarantee approval.

Questions regarding media credentials should be directed to **Marvin James, Director of Media Relations**, at marvin.james@ghsa.net.



October Events



DATES TO REMEMBER

OCTOBER 2026

PEOPLE | OPPORTUNITIES | CHAMPIONSHIPS | FOR LIFE

TRICK OR TREAT GREAT STUDENT-ATHLETES!

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 • Notification of Entry – One Act Play	2	3
4 • State Executive Committee Meeting (Macon)	5 • State Executive Committee Meeting (Macon) • Earliest Date for Swimming and Diving Practice	6 • Hardship/Appeal Meeting	7	8	9	10
11	12 State Fast Pitch Softball Tournament – First Round	13 • State Fast Pitch Softball Tournament – First Round • Determine Area/Region Volleyball Winners	14 State Fast Pitch Softball Tournament – First Round • Deadline to File Riffery Schedules with GHSA • Report Region/Area Volleyball Winners to GHSA	15 State Fast Pitch Softball Tournament – First Round	16	17 State Volleyball Tournament – First Round
18	19 • Earliest Date for Wrestling Practice • Earliest Date for Basketball Practice • Earliest Date for Dance Practice • Initial Eligibility Report Due – Dance, Basketball and Wrestling State Fast Pitch Softball Tournament – Second Round	20 • Hardship/Appeal Meeting State Fast Pitch Softball Tournament – Second Round State Volleyball Tournament – Second Round	21 State Fast Pitch Softball Tournament – Second Round State Volleyball Tournament – Second Round	22 State Fast Pitch Softball Tournament – Second Round	23	24 State Volleyball Tournament – Quarterfinals
25	26 • Deadline to Post Cross Country Rosters (electronically)	27 State Volleyball Tournament – Semifinals	28 State Volleyball Tournament – Semifinals Finals – Fast Pitch Softball	29 Finals – Volleyball Finals – Fast Pitch Softball	30 Finals – Fast Pitch Softball	31 • Finals – Volleyball • Cross Country Sectional Meets • Last Contest Date for Cheerleading

SAME GAME. A BRIGHTER TOMORROW.

GEORGIA STUDENT-ATHLETES.

EDUCATE
COMPETE
SERVE
LEAD



Marvin James

October 2026



This year Halloween fell on the weekend...