



Missouri State High School Activities Association

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MSHSAA Response to Attorney General Lawsuit

COLUMBIA - The Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA) is a private, nonprofit organization that has served Missouri students and schools for 100 years. It was not created by statute, receives no state funding, and is governed by a volunteer [board](#) selected by its public, private and charter member schools rather than by the state.

The lawsuit filed by the Attorney General seeks to impose state control over the internal governance of a private association. Missouri did not create MSHSAA, does not fund it, and does not oversee its operations. Nonetheless, the state now asks a federal court to dictate who may serve on MSHSAA's volunteer Board of Directors and how its 724 member schools structure their leadership.

This action raises serious concerns about governmental overreach and the precedent it would set for all private, voluntary organizations across Missouri. Allowing the state to restructure the leadership criteria of a private nonprofit organization it did not create, fund or control would mark a significant expansion of state authority into areas historically governed by local schools and private associations.

At a time when policymakers are actively debating state control of high school athletics and activities in Missouri, this lawsuit represents a fundamental threat to the system of interscholastic activities as it has existed for generations. If the state succeeds in asserting control over a private organization it neither created nor funds, it would fundamentally alter high school athletics and activities in Missouri and undermine the voluntary, school-driven model that has long served students and communities across the state.

MSHSAA respectfully disagrees with the claims made in the complaint and believes the lawsuit mischaracterizes both the Association's role and the law. Because this matter is now pending before the court, MSHSAA will not litigate it in the press.

The Association remains focused on its mission of supporting member schools — public, private and charter — and providing safe, fair and meaningful interscholastic opportunities for Missouri students.

For reference, here was our [response](#) to the Attorney General's investigation announcement in November.

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"MSHSAA promotes the value of participation, sportsmanship, team play and personal excellence to develop citizens who make positive contributions to their community and support the democratic principles of our state and nation."