



# Missouri State High School Activities Association

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## MSHSAA Announces Next Executive Director

**COLUMBIA, Mo.** – For only the seventh time in the 96-year history of the Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA), the Board of Directors has announced a new Executive Director. Dr. Jennifer Rukstad has been named the Association’s seventh Executive Director, to begin in late June following the retirement of current Executive Director, Dr. Kerwin Urhahn.

A Missouri native, Rukstad is originally from Frankford in Pike County. She and her family briefly lived in West Plains before moving to Columbia at the age of 10.

Rukstad currently serves as Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources for Columbia Public Schools. In 24 years with CPS, Rukstad served most of that time at Rock Bridge High School in Columbia. She taught Mathematics and coached for the Bruins before serving as the Athletic Director and Principal. In 2019, she became the Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Schools in Columbia. Rukstad has been a member of the MSHSAA Board of Directors and a member of the MSHSAA Appeals Committee. During her time as athletic director, she served on the Missouri Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (MIAAA) Board.

Outside of school, Rukstad has served on the ACT Services Board of Directors, the NCAA Student Records Review Committee and the Columbia Sports Commission.

Rukstad holds a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership from the University of Missouri as well as an educational specialist in Mathematics Curriculum Leadership, a master’s degree in Educational Administration, and a bachelor’s degree in Secondary Mathematics Education.

“Missouri has established itself as one of the best Associations in the country,” said Kevin Smith, President of the MSHSAA Board of Directors. “We believe Dr. Rukstad will continue to build on this success while leading the Association to a bright future.”

“As an educator, having the opportunity to work with all the great people in our member schools who have dedicated their lives in the service of kids is a tremendous honor,” Rukstad stated. “I am grateful and excited to lead and support all who make athletics and activities a great experience for the students of the state of Missouri.”

Rukstad and her husband, Jeff, have a son, Trevor (21) and a daughter Hayden (6). They reside in Columbia.

**-MSHSAA-**

**“The 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.”**