



128 Starting Blocks.
One Finish Line.

The 2026 Tournament



Scholar-Athlete Award in 37th Year



MHSAA File Photo

Thousands of students voluntarily extend their classroom day by taking part in extracurricular activities, often improving their academic achievements in the process. The value that such programs play in the total education of a high school student is highlighted through the MHSAA/Farm Bureau Insurance Scholar-Athlete Award, which will award \$2,000 scholarships to 32 top student-athletes and recognize over 2,000 other outstanding individuals in 2025-26.

Underwritten by Farm Bureau Insurance, the Scholar-Athlete Award is now in its 37th year, and presents scholarships to students in every MHSAA enrollment classification. The scholarships may be used at any institution of higher learning.

"It is amazing to see the number of young people who are proven achievers in academics and activities," said Mark Uyl, executive director of the MHSAA. "At a time when our educational system is coming under fire, the Scholar-Athlete Award is something that proves how important athletics are to the development of a well-rounded person."

Students applying for the Scholar-Athlete Award must be graduating during the 2025-26 school year, carry a 3.5 grade-point average, and have previously won a letter in a varsity sport that the MHSAA sponsors postseason competition.

Applicants will also be required to show involvement in other school/community activities and submit an essay on the importance of sportsmanship in educational athletics.

Application materials can be found on MHSAA.com. Scan the code below to access the page.

Each MHSAA member school is allowed to nominate a number of student-athletes based on the size of the school. Class A schools can nominate six boys and six girls, Class B four boys and four girls, Class C three boys and three girls and Class D two boys and two girls. The first 30 scholarships will be awarded based on this graduated scale, with two additional scholarships intended for minority applicants.

A committee composed of school administrators from across the state will select regional and statewide winners.

Farm Bureau Insurance, a long-time supporter of MHSAA activities, also sponsors other educationally oriented programs.

The 32 scholarship recipients will be recognized at the MHSAA Boys Basketball Finals at the Breslin Student Events Center in East Lansing this March.



Let The Games Begin!

Living each day with an "attitude of gratitude" is a daily pursuit that is worth chasing for us all. As we move from the regular season into MHSAA tournaments, let's take a moment to thank those working on the "athletic front lines" who work long hours and do their best work behind the scenes. These athletic leaders in each of our school communities continue to make opportunities happen for our kids and are worthy of our respect.

At this event, the front-liners are the school administrators creating a safe environment, our coaches teaching kids about the game, and more importantly life lessons, and game officials applying the rules impartially for fair competition. It also includes those working behind the curtain in athletic department offices and in sports medicine that make our games happen and happen safely.

Last year, the MHSAA celebrated its 100th year. As we begin the second century of school sports in Michigan, let's remember and be thankful for the efforts of these special people and many others behind the scenes to make today's contest possible.

Enjoy the game!



— **Mark Uyl**
MHSAA Executive Director

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Student Advisory Council Aids MHSAA

Eight student-athletes who are juniors at their schools during the 2025-26 academic year are serving two-year terms on the Michigan High School Athletic Association's Student Advisory Council.

The Student Advisory Council is a 16-member group which provides feedback on issues impacting educational athletics from a student's perspective, and also is involved in the operation of MHSAA championship events and other programming. Members of the Student Advisory Council serve for two years, beginning as juniors. Eight new members are selected annually to serve on the SAC, with nominations made by MHSAA member schools. The incoming juniors will join the group of eight seniors-to-be appointed a year ago.

Selected to begin serving on the Student Advisory Council in 2025-26 are: **Nichole James**, Detroit Edison; **Mia McGregor**, Mio; **Camryn Siegers**, Holland Christian; **Lucy Weber**, Fenton; **Brody Hammer**, Middleville Thornapple-Kellogg; **Sam Bentley**, Ypsilanti Lincoln; **Mason Mireles**, Hartford; and **Joey Smokevitch**, Johannesburg-Lewiston.

Those eight new members were selected from 125 applicants, the second largest group of applicants in the 20 years of the council. The first Student Advisory Council was formed for the 2006-07 school year. With the addition of this class beginning this summer, members will have represented 148 schools from 53 leagues plus independent schools that do not play in a league. Combined, the new appointees have participated in 11 MHSAA sports, and six will be the first SAC members from their respective schools.

The Student Advisory Council generally meets eight times each school year, and once more for a 24-hour leadership camp. In addition to assisting in the promotion of the educational value of interscholastic athletics, the Council discusses issues dealing with the 4 S's of educational athletics: scholarship, sportsmanship, safety (including health and nutrition) and the sensible scope of athletic programs. There also is a fifth S discussed by the group - student leadership.



2025-26 Student Advisory Council

First Row: Mia McGregor, Mio; Joey Smokevitch, Johannesburg-Lewiston; Lucy Weber, Fenton; Mason Mireles, Hartford; Camryn Siegers, Holland Christian; Sam Bentley, Ypsilanti Lincoln; and Brody Hammer, Middleville. **Second Row:** Harper Barnhart, Brownstown Woodhaven; Diamond Cook, Southfield Christian; Ethan Stine, Bridgman; Trey LaValley, Romeo; Henry Ewles, Pontiac Notre Dame Prep; Cole Haist, Big Rapids; Frannie Keeley, Jenison; and Itzel Albaran, Bronson. **Not Pictured:** Nichole James, Detroit Edison.

Student Advisory Council Belief Statement

As the voice of Michigan's student-athletes, the Student Advisory Council's role is to convey the message of how high school sports are supposed to be played. We are responsible for helping the MHSAA maintain a positive and healthy atmosphere in which interscholastic athletes can thrive.

We believe athletes should be competitive, sportsmanlike and excel academically. We believe students in the stands should have fun, but not take the focus away from the game. We believe coaches should act as teachers, helping student-athletes develop while still keeping high school sports in perspective. We believe that parents should always be positive role models and be supportive of their child's decisions. We believe officials commit their own time to high school sports and respect should always be shown and given to them.

The most important goal for student-athletes is to enjoy high school sports while keeping a high level of respect between all those involved in the games.

This school year, the Council handed out championship trophies at Finals events, led sessions during four Sportsmanship Summits, provided feedback to the Representative Council on proposed rule changes, worked on a mental health initiative, and wrote the script for a public service announcement on adult spectator sportsmanship that was included in broadcasts throughout the last school year.

The new additions to the SAC will join the Class of 2026 members who were selected a year ago: **Itzel Albaran**, Bronson; **Harper Barnhart**, Brownstown Woodhaven; **Diamond Cook**, Southfield Christian; **Henry Ewles**, Pontiac Notre Dame Prep; **Cole Haist**, Big Rapids; **Frannie Keeley**, Jenison; **Trey LaValley**, Romeo; and **Ethan Stine**, Bridgman.



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