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2021

WISCONSIN INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION  
ANNUAL MEETING

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Annual meeting reported by Leah J. Hopewell,  
RPR, a Notary Public in and for the State of  
Wisconsin, at the Holiday Inn Convention Center, 1001  
Amber Avenue, Stevens Point, Wisconsin, on the 26th  
day of May, 2021, commencing at 9:00 a.m. and  
concluded at 9:51 a.m.



1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 MR. RUSSELL: Good morning. Well,  
3 welcome to the WIAA annual meeting -- 125th annual  
4 meeting. I am Eric Russell, Board of Control  
5 president for the 2021 school year, and I call this  
6 meeting to order.

7 Please silence all cell phones.

8 This has been an unbelievable year.  
9 So I thank you for all you do for kids. You have  
10 absolutely made a difference, and we've seen that  
11 this year. So thank you again.

12 Also, I want to thank you for taking  
13 time to come, taking time out of your busy schedule  
14 to be here today. As always, we appreciate your  
15 input and feedback.

16 For attendance purposes, please  
17 provide your name and school name on the sheet on  
18 your table, and staff members will pick it up.

19 Currently, the registration count is  
20 at 259 schools and 322 people in person, and we have  
21 another 169 schools attending virtually.

22 At this time, I'd like to make a few  
23 introductions. We have our past president -- or  
24 excuse me -- or president-elect, William Chambers;  
25 treasurer, Bernie Nikolay; executive director, Dave



1 Anderson.

2 MR. ANDERSON: Good morning.

3 MR. RUSSELL: Deputy director, Wade  
4 Labecki.

5 MR. LABECKI: Good morning.

6 MR. RUSSELL: Administrative  
7 coordinator, Julie Kage.

8 MS. KAGE: Good morning.

9 MR. RUSSELL: We have our  
10 parliamentarian, Dr. Edward Miller from the  
11 University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point; and Leah  
12 Hopewell, a court reporter from Esquire Deposition  
13 Solutions, will be recording the meeting minutes.

14 There were no 2020 annual meeting  
15 minutes as there was no meeting due to COVID.

16 We'll -- at this time, we'll have the  
17 treasurer's report by Bernie Nikolay.

18 MR. NIKOLAY: Thank you, Eric. Good  
19 morning. I am Bernie Nikolay, treasurer for the WIAA  
20 Board of Control.

21 The treasurer's report can be found on  
22 pages 17 and 18 of the annual meeting's program which  
23 can be found online.

24 I'm not going to read through all the  
25 numbers. But the WIAA's financial position is



1 solvent. The other reports have consistently  
2 reflected that.

3 You will see on page 18 the pie charts  
4 illustrating the 2019-2020 tournament revenue and  
5 expenses as well as the total operating revenues and  
6 expenses.

7 You will see that 85 percent of the  
8 WIAA's operating revenue comes from running state  
9 tournaments; and you will see that over \$7.7 million  
10 has been returned to member schools in the past three  
11 years.

12 I would like to commend David  
13 Anderson, our executive director, Kassie Mortimer,  
14 and the entire WIAA team for navigating us through  
15 the most difficult financial period in our history.

16 If you have any questions, I'd like  
17 to -- be happy to answer them. Thank you.

18 MR. RUSSELL: Thank you, Bernie. At  
19 this time, could I get a motion to approve the  
20 treasurer's report?

21 MR. MILLER: So moved. Wausau West.

22 MR. RUSSELL: Motion by Wausau West.

23 MR. THOMAS: Second. Laconia High  
24 School.

25 MR. RUSSELL: Seconded by Jeff Thomas.





1 Thank you.

2 We have a motion and second. Any  
3 questions?

4 (No response.)

5 MR. RUSSELL: Hearing none, all in  
6 favor, signify by saying "aye."

7 ALL: "Aye."

8 MR. RUSSELL: All opposed.

9 (No response.)

10 MR. RUSSELL: Treasurer's report  
11 passes. At this time, we will have the election  
12 report by Kassie Mortimer.

13 MS. MORTIMER: Good morning, everyone.  
14 I have our 2020 election report for the Board of  
15 Control.

16 District 2, Michael Endreas of Spencer  
17 was elected to a three-year term; District 5, Willy  
18 Chambers of Black Hawk was reelected to a three-year  
19 term; District 6, Eric Burling of Burlington was  
20 elected to a one-year term; District 7, a special  
21 election is currently taking place for a one-year  
22 term; and our gender at-large representative,  
23 Jennifer Vogler of Sturgeon Bay, was reelected for a  
24 three-year term.

25 For the Advisory Council, large school



1 representatives Ryan Christianson of Marshfield and  
2 James Darin of Mukwonago were both selected for a  
3 three-year term.

4 Medium school representative Jim  
5 Brewer of Chilton was reelected for a three-year  
6 term.

7 Small school representatives Mark  
8 Gruen of Royall was elected for a three-year term,  
9 and Cory Hinkel of Luck was reelected for a  
10 three-year term.

11 Our non-public -- non-public school  
12 at-large representative, Tedd Knutson of Aquinas, was  
13 reelected for a three-year term.

14 And for the gender at-large, no  
15 candidates were available, and the board will appoint  
16 someone to represent for a three-year term.

17 MR. RUSSELL: Thank you, Kassie.  
18 Before we move into open forum, I'd like to make a  
19 few additional introductions, the rest of the Board  
20 of Control and the WIAA staff.

21 Board of Control members, Mike  
22 Beighley, Whitehall; Phil Ertl, Wauwatosa; Mike  
23 Humke, Dodgeville School Board; Karl Morrin,  
24 Menominee Indians; Paul Pedersen, Regis, is excused  
25 for a family emergency; Dave Steavpack of Manitowoc



1 will be attending virtually due to a medical --  
2 Jennifer Vogler, Sturgeon Bay; and Scott Winch,  
3 Stratford.

4 Staff members, Tom Shafranski,  
5 assistant director; Stephanie Hauser, assistant  
6 director; Kate Peterson Abiad, assistant director;  
7 Todd Clark, communications director.

8 MR. CLARK: Good morning.

9 MR. RUSSELL: And our newest member --  
10 newest assistant director, Kassie Mortimer, will be  
11 taking over from Joan Gralla who retired after almost  
12 40 years of service. So thank you.

13 We also have Eric Dziak, technology  
14 coordinator; Megan Loken, graphics designer and  
15 social media specialist; Hydie Laidlaw,  
16 administrative assistant to Tom Shafranski; Deb  
17 Lepak, administrative assistant to Tom Shafranski;  
18 and Sandy Zastrow, printer.

19 I would also like to acknowledge our  
20 board -- board liaisons. If you're present, please  
21 stand. John Ashley with WASB and Nathan DeLany with  
22 WADA.

23 Will the Advisory Council and Sports  
24 Advisory Council committee members that are here  
25 please stand. Thank you for all you do. We



1 appreciate it.

2 We also have a couple of other special  
3 guests. We have past president Dennis Birr, and Doug  
4 Chickering, director emeritus, I believe, is present.

5 We also have a number of media joining  
6 us today. So thank you again for joining us here  
7 today. Your input is appreciated.

8 At this time, we will move into open  
9 forum. We have four mics standing up in front here.  
10 So please move to a mic, and, please, delegates, wait  
11 to be acknowledged, and then clearly state your name  
12 and the school you represent.

13 So, at this time, we'll take any open  
14 forum. Any open forum statements?

15 (No response.)

16 MR. RUSSELL: All right. Oh, thank  
17 you.

18 MS. BATES: Kathy Bates from Xavier.  
19 I'm just wondering when we'll know the schedule for  
20 the state track and field timing.

21 MR. RUSSELL: Step to your microphone.

22 MS. PETERSON ABIAD: We have the  
23 coaches' advisory and the coaches' association  
24 working on the schedule. They met the day before  
25 yesterday. And I assume I'm going to have it





1 approved by today, and I'll get it out to you as soon  
2 as possible.

3 MS. BATES: Thank you.

4 MR. RUSSELL: Any other open forum?

5 (No response.)

6 MR. RUSSELL: All right. And -- and  
7 hearing no forum, we'll have Mr. Labecki give a quick  
8 update on the change to the spring tournaments as far  
9 as mitigation --

10 MR. LABECKI: Okay. Yesterday at the  
11 board meeting, the executive staff made a  
12 recommendation.

13 So the quarantine for the WIAA  
14 tournaments will be reduced from a 14-day quarantine  
15 to a 6-day quarantine for anybody who has had close  
16 contact with a positive case.

17 Keep in mind that somebody who is  
18 fully vaccinated does not have to quarantine. So if  
19 you have a student who is fully vaccinated, they  
20 would not have to quarantine.

21 So the affect of that is to allow you  
22 as a school to see symptoms that may develop in five  
23 to seven days; and, therefore, the -- the reduction  
24 is to six days, similar to the rest of the country.

25 Masking is going to be pretty simple.



1 If you are outdoors -- officials, coaches, and  
2 athletes are asked or strongly encouraged to wear a  
3 mask. That includes people in the field or in the  
4 dugout or on the sidelines. But, remember, they are  
5 strongly encouraged.

6 Spectators who cannot socially  
7 distance should be masked, but they are all strongly  
8 encouraged to wear a mask.

9 Again, if you're fully vaccinated, you  
10 would not have to wear a mask. If you are indoors,  
11 which may happen in tennis, everyone must wear a  
12 mask.

13 So that will be the policies for  
14 quarantine and masking, except for tennis players.  
15 Tennis players would be -- would not have to wear a  
16 mask, but everyone else would have to wear a mask.

17 So we're trying to make it a little  
18 bit more less stringent, if we can.

19 MR. RUSSELL: Thank you, Mr. Labecki.  
20 Any questions? Last call for open forum.

21 (No response.)

22 MR. RUSSELL: Thank you again for  
23 attending. At this time, I will read through the  
24 amendment results.

25 First, we will be reviewing our 2020



1 amendments. And so the first one is, resident school  
2 definition. This change would define resident  
3 schools. That passed 350 to 32. Any questions?

4 (No response.)

5 MR. RUSSELL: The secondment would be  
6 membership transitioning to co-ed. This change would  
7 provide a definition when a single gender school  
8 shall change classifications while transitioning to a  
9 co-ed school. This amendment passed 365 to 17. Any  
10 questions?

11 (No response.)

12 MR. RUSSELL: The third amendment  
13 is -- this amendment was brought forward by our  
14 members of the association. It would require that  
15 all changes to rules and regulations must pass the  
16 Advisory Council by a majority before advancing the  
17 Board of Control for a vote. This also passed 237 to  
18 145 members. Any questions?

19 (No response.)

20 MR. RUSSELL: The fourth amendment is  
21 the amendment brought forward by members of the  
22 association, would require that all changes to  
23 maximum game limits, as well any WIAA adaptations to  
24 the NFHS rules that would lead to financial impact on  
25 schools, must go to the annual meeting or to your



1 leadership. This also passed 274 to 108. Any  
2 questions?

3 (No response.)

4 MR. RUSSELL: And the last amendment  
5 from 2020. This change removed the unintended  
6 advantage of a transcript student attending and  
7 aborting at a resident school at the beginning of the  
8 11th grade which resulted in unrestricted  
9 eligibility. This amendment also passed 350 to 32.

10 Our editorial changes also passed.  
11 The editorial changes are just attempts to clarify  
12 existing rules without making any changes to  
13 interpretation of the rule. It passed 376 to 6.

14 Any questions from 2020?

15 (No response.)

16 MR. RUSSELL: Now we'll move to the  
17 2021 amendments. There were three of them.

18 First one, this change would clarify  
19 that co-ops for football shall meet an October 15  
20 deadline for football only conference realignment.

21 This also adds the interpretation of  
22 the Board of Control that the applications are --  
23 applications are on a two-year cycle in even years.  
24 This passed 365 to 17.

25 Second amendment. This change will





1 require that football go -- from 11- and 8-player  
2 declarations shall meet an October 15 deadline for  
3 football only conference realignment.

4 It also adds the interpretation of the  
5 Board -- Board of Control, that the application's on  
6 a two-year cycle in even years. This also passed 365  
7 to 17.

8 And the last amendment for 2021 was  
9 the spectator -- spectator ejection penalty. This  
10 change would create a penalty for an ejected  
11 spectator to miss one additional event. That passed  
12 312 to 70.

13 The editorials for 2021 also passed.  
14 Again, the editorial changes are just attempts to  
15 clarify existing rules without making any change to  
16 the interpretation of the rule. That passed 377 to  
17 5.

18 Are there any questions or any clarity  
19 on the amendments?

20 (No response.)

21 MR. RUSSELL: All right. Hearing  
22 none, we will move on to the Award of Excellence  
23 recognitions and the Spirit of Sport award.

24 MS. HAUSER: Thank you. I think we're  
25 having a hard time getting used to all being back



1 together. It's so quiet in here. I don't know if  
2 we -- Eric, that was easy. Huh?

3 MR. RUSSELL: So far, so good.

4 MS. HAUSER: All right. It's my honor  
5 to recognize the 46 member schools that received the  
6 WIAA Award of Excellence based on the 2019-2020  
7 school year.

8 Without our in-person meetings this  
9 fall, we were unable to present the award in person,  
10 but they were mailed to our recipients.

11 At this time, we ask that any leaders  
12 of these 46 award-winning schools this year in  
13 attendance today please stand to be recognized for  
14 this achievement. And for those who are attending  
15 virtually, we applaud you as well. So please stand  
16 at this time.

17 Thank you. And the online application  
18 for the 2020-2021 school year Award of Excellence is  
19 now open and will close on June 30. So please go  
20 onto your ABC [ph] resources page to complete that.  
21 If you want to check out those requirements, we  
22 encourage you to do so.

23 It is also my honor to at this time  
24 present the Spirit of Sport award. The Spirit of  
25 Sport award seeks to recognize individuals who -- who



1 exemplify the ideals of a positive spirit of sport,  
2 which is what the core mission of education is all  
3 about.

4                   To all the athletic directors who  
5 submitted nominations to us this year, we thank you  
6 for your time, and thank you for sharing for  
7 incredibly heartwarming and gut-wrenching stories of  
8 perseverance and courage.

9                   Over the past several weeks, the WIAA  
10 has recognized the finalists for this award this  
11 year. At this time, we'd like to offer our  
12 congratulations to those three finalists; Jazmin  
13 Berschitt [ph] from Denmark High School, Ben White  
14 [ph], Middleton High School, and Michael Krawler [ph]  
15 from Milwaukee Juneau High School. Congratulations.

16                   At this time, please join me in  
17 welcoming up to the stage our 2021 Wisconsin Spirit  
18 of Sport award winner, Abby Tuma from Shawano  
19 Community High School.

20                   Joined by Abby are her parents, Steve  
21 and Kerri; her sisters, Laken and Maddie; Shawano  
22 Community superintendent, Ms. Randi Anderson; and  
23 Shawano athletic director, Joel Wondra.

24                   Joel, thank you so much for taking the  
25 time to share Abby's story with us.



1                   During Abby's sophomore year of high  
2 school, she was diagnosed with medulloblastoma, brain  
3 cancer. She underwent surgeries and rigorous  
4 treatments throughout the remainder of her sophomore  
5 and junior year. As a result, she wasn't able to  
6 play volleyball, a sport that she loved so much, but  
7 she attended every practice and match that she was  
8 physically able to do so.

9                   During her junior year, her volleyball  
10 team hosted a cancer awareness night. Abby was able  
11 to sub in and be on the court for just one play. She  
12 was so honored and felt inspired by her teammates to  
13 continue to strive to beat cancer.

14                   Through the gruelling months of  
15 treatment, Abby never complained; she simply viewed  
16 each treatment as being one step closer to being back  
17 on that court playing volleyball.

18                   Then in the fall of 2020, her senior  
19 year, Abby had -- finally had concluded her  
20 treatments and an MRI revealed that she was cancer  
21 free.

22                   Her next physical challenge was to get  
23 enough strength to get back on that volleyball court.  
24 She was determined to give it her all just to be on  
25 that court one more time, one more season, her senior





1 year, and she will never forget that day in her life  
2 as a senior when she earned her spot back on the  
3 court and she stepped foot on the varsity volleyball  
4 court again.

5 Let's watch Abby's journey through  
6 this video that she created herself for this special  
7 day.

8 We do have something very special that  
9 we want to send Abby home with today. We'd like to  
10 ask board president Eric Russell to please come back.

11 He's going to present Abby with a  
12 certificate and a plaque from the National Federation  
13 of High Schools. Abby was not only our Wisconsin  
14 Spirit of Sport winner, but she was also the  
15 recipient for -- for Section 4, all of Midwest. So  
16 congratulations for that.

17 And then on behalf of the Dairy  
18 Farmers of Wisconsin, the sponsor of this award,  
19 please welcome Ms. Katie Hepler who is with us  
20 virtually today who will present Abby with the 2021  
21 Wisconsin Spirit of Sport.

22 MS. HEPLER: On behalf of the Dairy  
23 Farmers of Wisconsin, I'm honored to present the  
24 Spirit of Sport award to Abigail, an individual who  
25 shares the characteristics of hard work, passion, and



1 determination with all dairy farmers across the  
2 state.

3 Abigail and all of the nominees serve  
4 as an inspiration to myself, dairy farmers, and  
5 Wisconsin residents and reminds us that one can  
6 persevere even through the greatest challenges.

7 Congratulations, Abigail, on receiving  
8 this award. We're so proud of you.

9 MS. HAUSER: Thank you. Again, one  
10 more big round of applause for Abby and all of her  
11 support.

12 MR. RUSSELL: As we all know, these  
13 are the highlights of what we do and why we do these  
14 things every day. It's for the kids, and you guys  
15 have proved that this year, and so I thank you again.

16 At this time, we'll have the  
17 director's report. Mr. Dave Anderson.

18 MR. ANDERSON: Thank you, Eric, and  
19 good morning and welcome to all of you. It's -- it's  
20 really good to see you all in here.

21 The -- the closest experience of  
22 emotion to this meeting was walking into the La  
23 Crosse Center for the very first morning and the very  
24 first round of the intermural girls' state basketball  
25 championship this past winter sometime and seeing the



1 kids and fans, as limited as they are, able to come  
2 back together and celebrate this membership.

3 And the -- and the experiences that  
4 all of you provide was nearly overwhelming, as it is  
5 in seeing all of you today.

6 So I'm going to echo Eric's gratitude  
7 for all of you traveling here today. And -- and, I  
8 will be honest, there have been many, many thoughts  
9 in the days leading up to this and the most  
10 appropriate remarks of what might be shared, what  
11 might be reflected upon.

12 You know, most of those things, you  
13 already know; the importance of the work that you do,  
14 the meaning that you bring to the lives of the young  
15 people who enjoy the fruits of your hard work.

16 But you know those things, as I've  
17 said, and, you know, except -- some have said, "Well,  
18 you know, reflect on the past dozen years or so."  
19 And -- and, quite honestly, except for the evaluative  
20 benefits of reflection, I'm just not a  
21 backward-looking person.

22 We move forward, we keep going. Next  
23 challenge, next opportunity, next successes.

24 It would be important to acknowledge  
25 the work that has gone into the conference



1 realignment process. And while it will never, ever  
2 remove all of the passion and -- and emotion of  
3 conference realignment, it is such a far step better  
4 than where we were.

5                   Expanding the opportunities for young  
6 people across these past dozen years has been a great  
7 source of pride with fighting for their opportunities  
8 in -- in top venues across the state, defending our  
9 membership's interest to retain control of the  
10 broadcast media and a broadcast rights that are so  
11 important to our operations as we go forward both now  
12 and in the future; the concussion insurance that the  
13 board was willing and eager to embrace at a time when  
14 concussion lawsuits were -- were traveling across the  
15 country, and we were finding that hundreds of our own  
16 student athletes were -- were left short of the  
17 healthcare and the protections that they have  
18 benefitted from since the board has done that.

19                   The no dues and fees that the board  
20 advanced has helped us more times than anyone in this  
21 room will know, other than the guys that have been to  
22 court and the guys that have been in front of the  
23 legislature defending the rights of this private  
24 organization; and the over \$26 million -- over --  
25 since 2009, \$26 million that have been returned to





1 our members as part of their shared revenue and  
2 rental agreement sort of process. 26 million.

3 But, as I said, we look forward, and,  
4 of course, there is -- there is still work to do and  
5 there are challenges that will always be in front of  
6 this membership.

7 As an organization, while we are  
8 fiscally sound, the next 12 months, especially,  
9 remain important. The board may need to look at and  
10 revisit a step, and we may have to come back and --  
11 and explain and educate where we are now.

12 So much of the past 12, 14, 16 months  
13 has been by feel and by development and evolution.

14 While we're talking about something  
15 here today, we are trying to project how this  
16 discussion will actually feel and fit and land a  
17 month from now or two months from now. And in this  
18 age of COVID, we know that plans that we made  
19 yesterday are worthless by tomorrow in many  
20 instances.

21 And so there will be close fiscal  
22 monitoring to keep the organization sound and moving  
23 forward.

24 It seems as though we're in a period  
25 as an organization where the crosshairs of the



1 legislature have been almost permanently affixed on  
2 some aspect of our operation or another, and there  
3 will continue to be those legislative challenges.

4                   Sometimes we are able to be partners.  
5 And we will be fantastic partners, whether it's on  
6 concussion or cardiac arrest, sudden cardiac arrest,  
7 supplement education. We can be phenomenal partners,  
8 but we reserve the right to be a private and  
9 not-for-profit voluntary membership organization, and  
10 we ought to continue to -- to defend that  
11 voraciously.

12                   There will be -- and -- and don't ever  
13 underestimate the importance of your grassroots  
14 involvement. When a notice may go out from our  
15 office that, "Hey, be aware, be advised, this bill is  
16 in -- in conversation, this bill is being  
17 circulated," it is important beyond the ability to  
18 express that you do pick up a phone, that you do send  
19 an e-mail.

20                   Take a minute, and -- and if you don't  
21 understand, ask the questions, write the questions,  
22 why are we in favor of this, why are we opposed to  
23 this, and staff will be able to tell you exactly why  
24 and what the implications are.

25                   But do not ever underestimate. You



1 are -- you are the local voter in your hometown.

2                   If one of us picks up a phone and  
3 calls, they -- they may have interest and they may  
4 want to know the deeper reasons for support or  
5 opposition, why we like something or don't, but you  
6 are the local constituent, and your vote matters. So  
7 don't ever underestimate your power as a grassroots  
8 organization.

9                   COVID. A friend of mine said it's --  
10 it's been a year, and the experience is best measured  
11 in dog years. And you -- you all know the -- the  
12 feeling and meaning of that.

13                   While we are -- while we were making  
14 headway, there is no doubt that the challenges will  
15 continue on through the spring, on through the  
16 summer, and -- and, certainly, in particular, as --  
17 as all of you go back to your schools and -- and  
18 figure out how you're going to open your doors for  
19 the next school year.

20                   The challenges of getting competitions  
21 as a -- as a big and broad and diverse membership  
22 with diverse populations, diverse social economic  
23 circumstances, the struggle, the challenge of, you  
24 know, getting it just right, so that it may be -- it  
25 may be a quest, much like conference realignment.



1                   I don't know if we will ever remove  
2 all of the passion and emotion about who is the  
3 sectional champ or who might be able to go to state,  
4 but they are conversations worth having, and I do  
5 wish you -- you all great success in that.

6                   For me now, personally, I have mostly  
7 feelings of gratitude and for the opportunities that  
8 I've been provided over these past number of years.

9                   And I begin now with remembering those  
10 people who have put a hand out to me. Al Rosenthal,  
11 superintendent at Sun Prairie, who gave me an  
12 opportunity upon leaving coaching to join the ranks  
13 of athletics administrators. Excuse me here.  
14 Mr. Chickering who gave me the opportunity to look  
15 behind the curtains and -- and lend a hand to his  
16 staff and his team at that time; Hydie and Julie, my  
17 assistants over all these years; and, frankly, all of  
18 the WIAA staff that I've worked with both now and in  
19 the past, you go back, Frank and Karen and Don  
20 Herman, and through our current staff now.

21                   I can tell you from an insider's point  
22 of view, though, as an athletic administrator, I may  
23 have questioned, I may have not fully understood, but  
24 with this insider's perspective, they are  
25 extraordinary professionals.





1                   The ideas that they generate each and  
2                   every day, their efforts at problem-solving each and  
3                   every day, of weighing the depth and the breath of  
4                   every topic that comes before them is as remarkable  
5                   as it is challenging to the executive.

6                   I'm grateful to the Board of Control,  
7                   both the current and the former board, both  
8                   collectively and individually for the help, the  
9                   friendship, the guidance, and the leadership that  
10                  they have given not only to me personally, but, also,  
11                  to staff and its membership.

12                  All of the other committees, all of  
13                  you who have stepped up on Advisory Councils, Sports  
14                  Advisory and so on, coaches' advisory, officials'  
15                  advisory, that have given your hearts and best  
16                  efforts in making contributions. Your willingness to  
17                  serve this organization is what keeps it great and  
18                  keeps it strong.

19                  You know, there have been countless of  
20                  others along the way as well who have stepped up,  
21                  helped out, lent a hand, and stand out in my  
22                  memories.

23                  This organization is blessed and, I  
24                  think, no more greatly so than over the course of  
25                  this past year with the first and, in my opinion, the



1 very, very best board medical advisory committee in  
2 the country; Dr. Andringa, Dr. Walter, Dr. Rudolph.

3 I'm -- yeah, this is going to be a  
4 dangerous game, when you start mentioning names, and  
5 I acknowledge that, and I thought about it in  
6 advance.

7 But Tim McGuire, Jane Foos, Randy  
8 Clark, who are not on our medical advisory committee  
9 has led the 7 percent along with Steve Nash [ph] and  
10 Cindy Stripe [ph]. All of those other waterways of  
11 all of those wrestlers across the years, some key  
12 people that at a time like this come back in my  
13 reflections.

14 The countless numbers of sport  
15 officials who went beyond making the calls on the  
16 courts or the diamonds and the mats and held my hand  
17 as a new executive trying to figure my way with how  
18 to communicate with wrestling coaches as an old  
19 pencil-neck.

20 Arvo Britten, Mary Crownhart, Dick  
21 Fredricks, Hank Stillman, Mike Blasczyk, Paul  
22 Fieldhouse, John Peterson, the Seiger, Siebers, and  
23 Schuffers connection of the Fox Valley. And that  
24 list goes on and on, and there are many others.

25 I've enjoyed the friendships and



1 appreciated the help and the good friends in Madison  
2 and Green Bay and La Crosse and their CBPs [ph] who  
3 really stepped up.

4 And they stand out in helping not only  
5 in their -- in the committees they serve, but, also,  
6 this organization and -- and help us solve the  
7 challenges that sometimes arise in going into another  
8 community.

9 There are many friends of the  
10 organization on the campuses at UW-Madison and UW-La  
11 Crosse who help us deliver and enjoy some of the most  
12 fantastic celebrations of high school sports  
13 anywhere.

14 And those friends, while at times like  
15 family, we -- we need to iron out things and -- and  
16 make things clear, but they are family -- family and  
17 friends, no doubt.

18 Our organization -- and my memory is  
19 still thinking of other friends, like Justin Fritz  
20 [ph], a young man who came in a stocking cap years  
21 ago down at West Allis, who said, "Hey, I think I  
22 have an idea for something here you might be  
23 interested in."

24 And Mr. Clark, and he's smiling  
25 because he was in our office, which was the Phys Ed



1 equipment storage closet for that team tournament.

2 Tim Eichorst, Tim Knoeck, Tom Allen,  
3 and all of their teams collectively along with the  
4 many others in the print and broadcast media who help  
5 us deliver these experiences to the entire state.

6 And, finally -- and, finally, I think  
7 a lot about you all and my gratitude for you and this  
8 WIAA membership. It's a very special membership.

9 And I mostly remember the smiles, the  
10 words of support and encouragement, because they  
11 always seem to come at just the right time.

12 You're educators, you're nurturers,  
13 and that's what you do. And, you know, for those at  
14 this table, we are grateful. We recognize, as do  
15 you, that we all have warts and we all have  
16 shortcomings, and when you have to stand up at the  
17 head of the table, you're the ones that put your  
18 words on display the most for all to see and all to  
19 point at.

20 But I remember the smiles, the  
21 extended hands, the expressions of gratitude. And I  
22 am grateful for the work that you do year in and year  
23 out to provide the opportunities for your students  
24 and to each other's students, and it's too important  
25 to go unmentioned and unappreciated, especially the





1 leadership that you have demonstrated through the  
2 darkness and uncertainty of this past year.

3 That's when your lights have shined  
4 the brightest. You didn't have a roadmap, there was  
5 no calendar file. You were surprised, you were  
6 disappointed, you were uncertain, and, yet, you found  
7 a way to deliver for those kids, and that is -- that  
8 is a credit to you.

9 When your light shines the brightest  
10 in the most challenging and darkest of times, this  
11 membership stood up, took it square on, and overcame.

12 You know, over the course of this  
13 pandemic, there's been a lot of talk of heros and the  
14 celebration by clinking glasses or beating on pots  
15 and pans and -- and very rightfully and, I think,  
16 deservedly so.

17 But I can tell you, from this  
18 perspective, from this platform, that, insofar as  
19 caring for students, I have observed that not all of  
20 the heros of this pandemic wore scrubs. Some of  
21 those heros wore whistles, some of them wore caps,  
22 some of them wore suits and ties, not all of the  
23 heros wore scrubs.

24 Each of you, whether you're here in  
25 person or virtually, the board and staff applaud you



1 and thank you for your service this past year and the  
2 uncertainty to kids.

3 I'd -- I'd invite the board to join me  
4 in a round of applause for all of you.

5 And, with that, I will say good-bye,  
6 thank you, and fair well. Mr. President, that  
7 concludes my remarks.

8 MR. RUSSELL: Thank you, Dave, and  
9 thank you for 22 years of service to the WIAA and to  
10 the kids of Wisconsin. Your leadership has left a  
11 positive mark on the State of Wisconsin, especially  
12 the kids and especially this year.

13 You've always said it was more and  
14 about the kids, and this year you proved that. You  
15 and your staff have worked extremely hard to provide  
16 every and any available opportunity to kids.

17 So thank you so much again for years  
18 of service, and we wish you the very best.

19 MR. ANDERSON: Thank you, thank you.

20 MR. RUSSELL: It is my pleasure now to  
21 introduce the new executive director for the WIAA.

22 This year brought another challenge,  
23 besides the pandemic, of filling Mr. Anderson's  
24 shoes.

25 Thank you to everyone who helped in



1 this selection process. We were fortunate to have a  
2 very strong candidate pool.

3 We interviewed eight people from all  
4 over the country in the first round. We brought  
5 four -- four finalists back. In the end, it was a  
6 very tough decision, but I am very proud to introduce  
7 the next executive director for the WIAA,  
8 Ms. Stephanie Hauser.

9 Ms. Hauser will bring with her a  
10 tremendous amount of experience in the work of  
11 education and athletics, including big and small  
12 schools, as well as six years as assistant director  
13 for the WIAA.

14 Ms. Hauser has a tremendous amount of  
15 energy and passion for education-based athletics, and  
16 we look forward to her leadership at the WIAA.

17 MS. HAUSER: Thank you so much for  
18 this opportunity to take the torch from Dave and  
19 carry it forward on behalf of this organization.

20 I'm honored to provide my service to  
21 continue making a positive difference in the lives of  
22 so many students.

23 Dave, thank you so much for your  
24 leadership as the executive director over the past  
25 12 years. Thank you for choosing to add me to your



1 team six years ago as well.

2 As you conclude your career with the  
3 WIAA, please take -- take some time to reflect on the  
4 positive outcomes, especially, of your first ever  
5 global pandemic, and know this final year, above all,  
6 should be a lasting source of pride and  
7 accomplishment for you.

8 Our staff under your leadership, as  
9 well as all of your support, has provided  
10 opportunities for students when they so desperately  
11 needed it.

12 For your dedication to education-based  
13 athletics in the State of Wisconsin throughout your  
14 career, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

15 Once again, let's please give Dave a  
16 round of applause.

17 The WIAA is an incredible organization  
18 that has provided a service to our members for 125  
19 years. My goal is to leave no doubt in anyone's mind  
20 that that service always has been and always will  
21 continue to be the main objective of the WIAA.

22 Our staff has strived to provide the  
23 highest quality of service to our member schools, to  
24 their educational leaders and their education-based  
25 athletic leaders, to the student athletes, to their





1 parents, to your communities, to our partners in the  
2 media, our partners in the medical profession, and a  
3 list of groups that our service touches upon  
4 continues on and on.

5                   How will we know if we are meeting  
6 your expectation of service? Well, we need to ask  
7 you the right questions. By asking you, by listening  
8 to your feedback, and by having collaborative two-way  
9 conversations with our members, we will be able to  
10 continue to provide the type of service that  
11 continues to make things better for all of our  
12 students.

13                   Without a doubt, there can be  
14 challenges ahead of us. Quite possibly, we are  
15 facing the biggest challenge in the history of the  
16 WIAA, but, remember, with each of these threats  
17 brings new opportunities for our membership.

18                   The global pandemic that we have  
19 experienced this past year has taken away so many  
20 meaningful events in the lives of our students; their  
21 proms, graduations, field trips, and their athletic  
22 events, and much more.

23                   As each of you reflects on this past  
24 year with your leadership in your schools, you're  
25 going to ask yourselves, "What have we learned from



1 this? What will we do better moving forward because  
2 of what we've learned? How are we going to help our  
3 students recover from this loss?"

4 Yes, we will all continue to deal with  
5 lingering -- lingering challenges moving forward.  
6 But, if nothing else, this past year has provided us  
7 the opportunity to shout from the mountaintops that  
8 we are back and we are excited about being back.

9 We believe we'll be stronger because  
10 of everything we've learned this past year about  
11 ourselves.

12 The importance of student  
13 participation and what that means to their  
14 connectedness to their schools; the correlation  
15 between student participation and athletics and  
16 activities and their mental and emotional wellbeing.

17 Our -- our abilities as leaders to  
18 problem-solve and do things differently than we ever  
19 have been doing them before by using what we've  
20 learned in addition to the willingness to listen,  
21 learn, and grow, we will become a stronger membership  
22 because we've embraced the challenges together.

23 I recently received a beautiful gift  
24 from Wada [ph], and it will probably hang on my new  
25 office wall. Dave hasn't packed up and left yet



1 so... We're not rushing, we're waiting. But it's  
2 not hanging on my wall yet. We're going to wait.

3 It has a beautiful quote from  
4 Socrates. "The secret of change is to focus all of  
5 your energy not on fighting the old, but on building  
6 the new."

7 "Change" can be a scary word. It  
8 contains a degree of the unknown. And we all know  
9 too well this year that uncertainty can be very  
10 difficult to navigate.

11 But if there ever were a doubt that  
12 our schools and that the WIAA has the ability to  
13 navigate through uncertainty, this past year has  
14 solidified that we are capable of so much.

15 Our focus will most certainly be on  
16 building the new and moving education-based athletics  
17 together forward.

18 So as I stand before you today as  
19 someone who's embarking on a new chapter in their  
20 professional career and distinctly explain how I'm  
21 feeling about this next step, I'm very respectful of  
22 the past, but I'm very enthusiastic for the future.

23 I'm honored to serve this membership  
24 and to continue to get back on the road of  
25 education-based athletics -- athletics that have



1 enriched my own life so fully.

2 In closing, please allow me to share a  
3 few items for you about the type of leader that I  
4 strive to be every day. I borrowed some thoughts and  
5 paraphrased some thoughts from a positive teacher  
6 pledge from John Gordan [ph].

7 I will strive to stay positive even in  
8 the most challenging conversations. My office door,  
9 my computer, and my phone will always serve as a  
10 welcomed opportunity for you to share your feedback  
11 with me, and I would ask that you have the same  
12 open-door policy and approach for our staff.

13 Every day I will smile, I will laugh,  
14 and I will encourage all of those who work to enrich  
15 the lives of students every day. I will not fear  
16 failure, but I will accept it as the inevitable, and  
17 I will vow to use it as a learning experience to get  
18 better, not bitter.

19 I have a vision for the WIAA, and I  
20 believe that we will move forward together and will  
21 be stronger than we ever have been before, and I  
22 truly believe that the best is yet to come.

23 My final wishes for you as you finish  
24 the last weeks of this incredibly bumpy school year  
25 is that things go so smoothly and that everyone





1 agrees with your decisions.

2 Thank you for joining us today. For  
3 those of you traveling, please be safe. Take care.

4 MR. RUSSELL: One announcement I do  
5 have. If you have not done so already, please  
6 remember to pick up your scholar athlete metals as  
7 you leave this morning.

8 Are there any other announcements?  
9 Any other announcements?

10 (No response.)

11 MR. RUSSELL: Thank you again, and we  
12 appreciate everybody coming to this annual meeting.

13 This meeting is adjourned. Drive  
14 safe.

15 (WIAA meeting adjourned at 9:51 a.m.)

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CERTIFICATION PAGE

I, Leah J. Hopewell, RPR, Notary Public  
in and for the State of Wisconsin, do hereby certify;

I hereby certify the foregoing is a  
full, true, and correct transcript of my shorthand  
notes so taken from a digital recorder and thereafter  
reduced to computerized transcription under my  
direction and supervision.

I further certify that I am neither  
counsel for nor related to any party to said action,  
nor in any way interested in the outcome thereof; and  
that I have no contract with the parties, attorneys,  
or persons with an interest in the action that  
affects or has a substantial tendency to affect  
impartially, that requires me to relinquish control  
of an original deposition transcript before it is  
certified and delivered to the custodial attorney, or  
that requires me to provide any service not made  
available to all parties to the action.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto  
subscribed my name this 9th day of June, 2021.

Leah J. Hopewell, RPR  
Notary Public - State of Wisconsin  
My Commission Expires November 5, 2023

