

It is a tremendous honor to be nominated for a position with the IHSWCA. I want to thank Tom Miller at Lafayette Jeff for nominating me for this position. For those of you who may not know me, I am entering my 6th year as Head Coach at Rensselaer Central High School where I also teach 9th Grade English. I am a 2018 graduate of Wabash College where I was also a part of the wrestling team.

My mission as the Head Coach at Rensselaer has always been to grow participation in the sport of wrestling by extending countless opportunities to our students, investing in their self-improvement, and being an ever-present leader for our student-athletes both on and off the mat. I believe that these three qualities are the guiding principles to what I hope we as an association can accomplish, if elected.

In the last year, we have seen an exponential growth in girls wrestling participation due to years of hard work and dedication by so many people. With this growth, we are encountering the need for additional coaches and support. Running a practice and showing technique is the easiest part of our job. I have been lucky enough to have several people in my network to lean on, call or text when I have coaching issues and questions, and a very supportive administration with a wrestling background. However, I realize that many young and new coaches do not have these types of resources and need additional support. One of my first goals would be to establish training resources and opportunities for new coaches to help them navigate the challenges that many of us face: weight certifications, tracking certified weigh-ins, how to deal with discipline issues, dealing with parents, etc. We know that athlete retention is one of the most crucial challenges our sport faces, but if we can improve our coaching retention first and give them the tools and resources to be successful, then I believe that will increase our overall participation.

While our sport offers great individual opportunities for both competition and training, I believe it is also crucial for the health of the sport to build a system generated around school-based clubs with an emphasis on more team opportunities. While I support academies, RTC's and other non-school training opportunities that will continue to help Indiana's best improve on a National scale, I believe the health of our sport is contingent upon our bottom line and the growth of wrestling within our less-populated areas where there is not immediate access to some of these great opportunities. I believe that along with educating our new coaches, we need to create a framework that encourages program-oriented opportunities both in-season and out-of-season. I believe these opportunities include, but are not limited to: increasing the number of Team State Qualifiers and/or implementing a Team State Regional prior to the Team State Duals, working towards implementing an IHSAA sanctioned Classed Team State Duals Championship, creating more local Elementary Dual opportunities, introducing our wrestlers to Freestyle and Greco through dual meets with their school-based club/team, and creating a MS Team State Dual series based on school-size with two levels much like what has been created with the MS State

Regional and State Finals. I believe that creating a team-based framework will allow us to build a stronger wrestling culture and community in our schools.

Some of the other things I am excited to hopefully work on implementing if elected is to help continue to establish an IHSAA Girls Wrestling State Tournament series, increase the number of IHSAA State Qualifiers from 16 to 24 per weight class, as well as support the IHSWCA in promoting education-based wrestling in our schools in any way I can.

I am so thankful and privileged to be nominated for this position. I love my kids, the sport of wrestling, and it would be a tremendous honor to serve you, our state and the IHSWCA in this role. Thank you!