



Growing Courageous Leaders

An overview of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Initiatives coordinated by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) and Massachusetts School Administrators' Association (MSAA)



Introduction

Last year, the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) developed a “Plan for Growth and Improvement,” intended to provide vision and leadership to the Association and its membership. One of the main objectives of this plan is to:

Utilize interscholastic athletics as the platform that promotes behavior change that supports the respectful treatment of all members of a school community.

Pursuant to this mission, a pilot training program was established for all athletes, coaches and athletic directors. This program included completion of the NFHS Implicit Bias Course, an MIAA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Pledge, and the establishment of an MIAA Discriminatory Incident Report Form.

The next phase of this comprehensive plan is currently underway with 13 regional trainings across Massachusetts. These two ½ day trainings will be held between March and May of this school year. The program delivered by Northeastern University’s Center for the Study of Sport in Society is designed to help school leadership teams (Superintendent, Principal and Athletic Director) be better prepared to set the tone and expectations of their athletic programs to prevent incidents of bias, harassment, and discrimination – and to respond effectively to incidents when they do arise.

Addressing incidents of hate and bias is a top priority and we cannot do it alone. The collaborative efforts of the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), Anti-Defamation League New England Region (ADL), the Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General, Northeastern University’s Center for the Study of Sport in Society, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), and the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS) have been vital in working to counter these behaviors together. The ultimate goal is to ensure that no one engaged in interscholastic athletics feels disrespected, unsafe, or unwelcome -- on or off the playing fields. We believe that a united leadership utilizing the platform of interscholastic athletics can permeate our schools, communities, and society.

The following pages provide information about the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives of the MIAA and Massachusetts School Administrators’ Association (MSAA). The information is intended to serve as a resource for state associations and includes a history of the initiatives, event programs, resources, partnerships and sample communications. For additional information please contact the MIAA/MSAA staff.



History

In February 2014, the Minority Inclusion Plan (MIP) was approved by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) and the Massachusetts Secondary School Administrators' Association (MSSAA, now the Massachusetts School Administrators' Association) Board of Directors. The plan had three major components:

1. Recruit staff to be more diverse and representative of those served by the organizations.
2. Restructure and revisit the MSSAA/MIAA plan and policies for minority inclusion throughout all areas of governance.
3. Create an Inclusion Committee to inform the membership on issues of diversity and equity.

Since the inception of this plan, the task has been to build an organization where diversity and inclusion are an important part of our culture and who we are. Three phases were established to move forward with this work.

Phase 1

Spring 2014 - hire an Assistant Director to lead implementation of the plan and recruit staff to be more diverse and representative of those served by the organization.

Phase 2

Fall 2014 – restructure and revisit the MIAA/MSAA plan and policies for minority inclusion throughout all areas of governance. The MIAA has over 20 standing sport and administrative committees with well over 500 active volunteer participants on these committees. Prior to this initiative, there were only eight members of color on the association committees. At present, there are over 40 people of color providing volunteer service to the association and efforts continue to seek minority candidates for committee service.

In addition, concerted efforts have been made to diversify student participation. Staff have actively recruited students from diverse backgrounds to participate in opportunities such as the MIAA Student Advisory Committee and numerous workshops and events that are sponsored during the school year.

Phase 3

Fall 2016 – Create an Inclusion Committee to inform the membership on issues of diversity and equity. The Inclusion Committee is comprised of school leaders and partner organizations. Since renamed the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee (DEIC), the DEIC strives to redefine what DEI means, how schools practice, monitor, and evaluate DEI programs and services, and to provide leadership trainings to increase the capacity to meet the DEI needs across the state. For the MIAA/MSAA membership, it means creating an equal opportunity for all students to participate in interscholastic athletics safely and without discrimination of any kind.



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee was formed to support all of the MSAA/MIAA constituents through the five pillars of Educational Athletics and serve in an advisory capacity for both associations. The committee meets regularly throughout each school year.



Mission Statement

The mission of the DEIC is to foster diversity among member schools, athletic administrators, coaches and student-athletes by promoting inclusiveness, awareness, and acceptance. The focus is to celebrate all differences by creating an association that is welcoming and engaging for all.

Goals

1. To promote diversity and encourage participation, interaction, and understanding in our ever-increasing diverse society.
2. To make leadership roles within the MSAA/MIAA accessible to all athletic directors, coaches, and students, including those who are racially, ethnically, culturally diverse, women, members of the LGBTQIA+ community, and persons with disabilities;
3. To challenge the members of the association to leverage differences as strengths.
4. To promote partnerships to assist in creating and implementing strategies that will promote our mission of inclusiveness, awareness, and acceptance;
5. Provide professional learning programming, resources which schools can access and utilize to help create a more inclusive space for students in their schools and communities.

The work of the DEIC is the heartbeat of the inclusion efforts of the MIAA and MSAA. Committee members have dedicated countless hours of their time and expertise to this vitally important initiative. The committee members bring a wide array of experiences, expertise, and connections to the inclusion table. As a collective, they are fully committed to making the climate and culture of all school communities a more welcoming environment for all. Providing a safe space for all where no student feels unsafe, threatened, or marginalized simply because of who they are is the overall goal of this group.



Programs

The MSAA/MIAA host two annual events that address current topics in racial and ethnic diversity; gender equity; inclusion of LGBTQ students, coaches and administrators; and inclusion of students, coaches and administrators who have disabilities.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Summit

The initial Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Summit was hosted in January 2018 at the College of the Holy Cross and reached more than 125 middle and high school students. Since that time, the program has grown to annually host over 300 student and adult attendees from across the state.



- **6th Annual MIAA/MSAA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Summit**
"Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can."
 January 20, 2023
 Program - https://msaa.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/January-24_2023_O.pdf
- **5th Annual MIAA/MSAA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Summit (Virtual)**
"Stand up and speak out. The courage to make our communities inclusive for all"
 January 21, 2022
 Program - <https://msaa.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/January-21-2022-O.pdf>
- **4th Annual MIAA/MSAA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Summit (Virtual)**
"Gen Z – Moving a New Dream Forward"
 January 19-21, 2021
 Program – https://msaa.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/January-19-21_-2021_O.pdf
- **3rd Annual MIAA/MSAA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Summit**
"To know is to understand – a plan for action"
 January 13, 2020
 Video - <https://vimeo.com/402272918>
 Program – https://msaa.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/January-13_2020_O.pdf
- **2nd Annual MIAA/MSAA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Summit**
 December 14, 2018
 Video - <https://vimeo.com/327974178>
 Program – https://msaa.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/December-14_-2018_O.pdf
- **Inaugural MIAA/MSAA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Summit**
"Exploring our differences"
 January 18, 2018
 Program – https://msaa.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/January-18_2018_O.pdf



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Symposium

The MSAA/MIAA hosted its first Inclusion Symposium in May 2017, which reached more than 80 school administrators, athletic directors, teachers, coaches and school personnel. Since that time, the program has continued to grow in size and is conducted annually for school administrators and school personnel who are engaged in DEI work.



- **6th Annual MIAA/MSAA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Symposium**
"Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can."
 May 5, 2023
<https://www.formstack.com/forms/?5237861-Sfl71py36e>
- **5th Annual MIAA/MSAA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Symposium**
"Call to Action: If not now...when?"
 May 12, 2022
 Program - https://msaa.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/WEB_DEI-Symposium-Program-2022.pdf
- **4th Annual MIAA/MSAA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Symposium (Virtual)**
"Using your voice, making the choice, being the change"
 May 13, 2021
 Program - https://msaa.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/May-13_2021_O.pdf
- **3rd Annual MIAA/MSAA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Symposium**
 May 1, 2019
 Program – https://msaa.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/May-01_2019_O.pdf
- **2nd Annual MIAA/MSAA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Symposium**
"The art of communication is the language of leadership"
 May 18, 2018
 Program – https://msaa.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/May-18_2018_O.pdf
- **Inaugural MIAA/MSAA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Symposium**
 May 19, 2017



Other Educational Athletics Programs

In addition to the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Summit and Symposium, workshop sessions focusing on respect and challenging hate and bias are regularly incorporated into other MIAA Educational Athletics programming. Below are examples of recent programs:

Educational Athletics Summit

This event took place on Friday, October 21, 2022. Approximately 300 attendees participated in this summit with the theme “Growing Courageous Leaders.” The Summit featured the concurrent workshop sessions described below.

Sportsmanship Summit

This event took place on Thursday, November 10, 2022. Over 900 student and adult leaders attended this summit at Gillette Stadium. Student breakout sessions for this event including the concurrent workshop sessions described below.

“They Called You What? Challenging Bias in Schools & Sports”

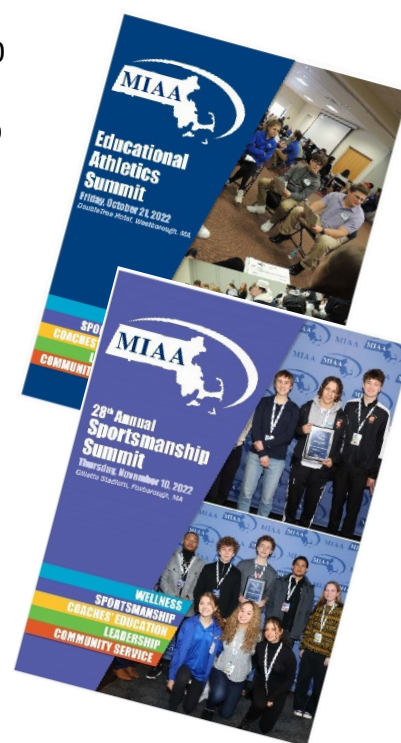
Presented by ADL New England

This engaging and interactive workshop will examine identity-based bias and its impact on targeted individuals and groups, and the school community. Challenging situations will be presented and discussed, along with best practices in responding to bias and supporting those who are targeted.

Unpacking Unconscious Bias

Presented by Northeastern University Center for the Study of Sport in Society

This workshop will allow participants a safe space to unpack unconscious bias and embrace an empathy lens of reflection that will allow them to better serve both their school and their community at-large in creating equity, access and inclusion.





Discriminatory Incident Reporting Policies and Procedure

A subcommittee of MIAA/MSAA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee, MIAA Sportsmanship Committee and MIAA Game Officials Committee members developed a proposal of Discriminatory Incident Reporting Policies and Process for association member schools. On October 27, 2021, the MIAA Board of Directors unanimously approved the following proposals for immediate implementation:

MASSACHUSETTS INTERSCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Pledge

As a student-athlete of a Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association member school, I agree to abide by all guidelines regarding the use or exhibition of discriminatory practices.

I PLEDGE TO:

1. Help create and foster a safe environment within the school community, which includes the reasonable use of social media.
2. Consistently model respect and tolerance by exhibiting an example of good sportsmanship and positive behavior, including language (body and spoken), gestures, signs, and behaviors.
3. Not harass my fellow students, with those who use abusive language, signs, gestures, or overtures. I will not cover up for them or lie for them if any are broken.
4. Hold myself, my fellow student-athletes, and our community responsible and accountable for their actions.
5. Seek information and assistance in dealing with my own or my fellow student-athlete's negative behaviors, problems, or concerns.
6. Do open and honest with my coach and other school personnel when the best interest of myself, my fellow student-athletes, and my school are being jeopardized.
7. Thrive to create a school without hate.
8. Support the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Sportsmanship and Game Officials Committee's policy/programs within the MIAA (insert High School) and all school functions.

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

EDUCATIONAL ATHLETICS
MIAA | 33 North Main | Franklin, MA 02038 | 508-643-7907

1) Pilot for Winter 2021-22 Season: NFHS Implicit Bias Course and the MIAA DEI Pledge

In order to gain a better understanding of actions, language and behavior which can be interpreted as discriminatory in nature and to confirm their commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, all student athletes, coaches and athletic directors must take the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) free online course entitled [Implicit Bias](#) and take the [MIAA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Pledge](#). School administrators (coaches and athletic directors) must take the course and pledge every school year, prior to the start of the academic year. Student-athletes must take the course and pledge every year as well, and they must do so prior to the start of their athletic season.

2) Pilot for Winter 2021-22 Season: MIAA Discriminatory Incident Report Form

When an incident involving discrimination, harassment/bullying or retaliation occurs, it must be reported using the MIAA Discriminatory Incident Report Form by a participating school's athletic director or designee.

The completed [MIAA Discriminatory Incident Report Form](#)* must be promptly shared with the school principal as well as the principal and athletic director of the opposing school(s).

The administrations of both schools must notify the MIAA within 24 hours of becoming aware of the incident and the school of the alleged offending party, must complete an investigation of the incident within a reasonable time and must forward an investigative report* summarizing the investigation's findings and any and all actions taken.

**This report form and the investigative report completed by a member school shall not include any individual identifying information or any other information that would be a violation of any data privacy laws and/or requirements.*

The intent of this initiative is to educate and support students, track data, and assure that discriminatory behavior is being addressed by member schools at the local level.

The Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI), Sportsmanship and Game Officials Subcommittee will continue to develop Discriminatory Incident Policy and Procedure for review by the Board of Directors and potential future implementation.

Since adoption of this program, MIAA staff has followed up on all incidents that are submitted via this form. The goal is to provide support and resources whenever helpful to member school leaders who are dealing with and addressing incidents of discriminatory behavior. Through this work, MIAA staff has been able to share exemplary efforts of school administrators to follow up and address incidents as a model for others. The partnership with member schools in utilizing this form continues to help the association to gather data that will inform future practice and provide the best support possible for member schools.

Sample Message to Member Schools from MIAA Executive Director

Last year we developed a Plan for Growth and Improvement, intended to provide vision and leadership to the Association and its membership. One of the main objectives of this plan is to:

Utilize interscholastic athletics as the platform that promotes behavior change that supports the respectful treatment of all members of a school community

Our Vision and Leadership begins with a clear proclamation of our core values and beliefs, where the cornerstone of our existence shall be to promote the development of the personal and interpersonal growth of our membership so they may learn the key attributes inherent in lives well lived.

I would like you to share with you an excerpt from The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People that addresses living an effective life based on principles.

Principles are guidelines for human conduct that are proven to have enduring, permanent value. They're fundamental. They're essentially unarguable because they are self-evident. One way to quickly grasp the self-evident nature of principles is to simply consider the absurdity of attempting to live an effective life based on their opposites. I doubt that anyone would seriously consider unfairness, deceit, baseness, uselessness, mediocrity, or degeneration to be a solid foundation for lasting happiness and success. Although people may argue about how these principles are defined or manifested or achieved, there seems to be an innate consciousness and awareness that they exist. Covey, (p. 43).

Now take a moment to consider interscholastic athletics as the platform that promotes behaviors that support the respectful treatment of all members of a school community and the absurdity of attempting to live a life well lived based on the opposites of the following:

- Help create and foster a safe environment within the school community, which includes the responsible use of social media.
- Consistently model respect and tolerance by setting an example of good sportsmanship and positive behavior, including language (body and spoken), gestures, signs, and overtures.

- Not enable my fellow student-athletes who use abusive language, signs, gestures, or overtures. I will not cover up for them or lie for them if any rules are broken.
- Hold myself, my fellow student-athletes, and our community responsible and accountable for their actions.
- Seek information and assistance in dealing with my own or my fellow student athlete's negative behaviors, problems, or concerns.
- Be open and honest with my coach and other school personnel when the best interest of myself, my fellow student-athletes, and my school are being jeopardized.
- Thrive to create a school without hate

Addressing incidents of hate and bias is a top priority and we cannot do it alone. The collaborative efforts of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), the attorney general's office, the Northeastern Center for the Study of Sport in Society, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), and the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents are working to counter these behaviors.



Regional Trainings

Addressing Hate and Bias in School Athletics – A Call to Action

(April 2022)

MIAA/MSAA collaborated with the Office of the Attorney General, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS), and Northeastern University's Center for the Study of Sport in Society to plan for regional trainings for MIAA member schools. These trainings will be designed to address hate and bias in school athletics. An initial call to action was established on April 5, 2022 and was conducted virtually. The following message was shared with MIAA member schools for the call to action:



Dear Colleagues,

The Attorney General's Office, the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education, the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association, and the Massachusetts School Administrators' Association invite you to ***Addressing Hate & Bias in School Athletics: A Call to Action*** on **Tuesday, April 5th @ 9:00AM – 10:00AM**.

Work to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion in both academic and school settings is a long-standing and ongoing project for many of us. But hate-based incidents across the state over the last few months have presented an acute need and a clear opportunity for all of us to come together to redouble our efforts to ensure that our schools and athletic programs provide a safe and healthy environment for young people. Join us to make this commitment and learn about new resources to support this effort.

The **invitation is included below**, and you can **register [here](#)**. Please feel free to forward this invitation to any of your colleagues. We will follow up with additional information shortly.

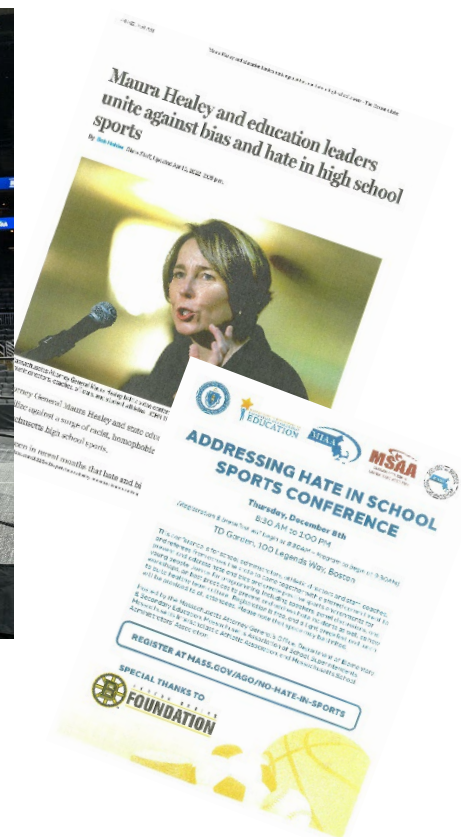
We look forward to seeing you on April 5th @ 9am. Thank you for all you do.



Addressing Hate in School Sports - Kickoff Event (December 2022)

MIAA partnered with the Attorney General's Office, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS), the Massachusetts School Administrators' Association (MSAA), the Anti-Defamation League and Northeastern University's Center for the Study of Sport in Society in hosting a conference entitled **"Addressing Hate in School Sports"** at the TD Garden on Thursday, December 8, 2022.

The conference was attended by over 400 school administrators, athletic directors, staff, coaches and game officials from across the state. MIAA/MSAA Executive Director Bob Baldwin, along with Governor-elect Maura Healey, spoke during the morning session and provided a commitment from both offices to addressing this issue. The day was also highlighted by Assistant Director Mike Rubin's panel discussion on the Associations' efforts to address hate and bias in sports. Session topics included "Experiences from the Field", "Recognizing Bias and Best Practices to Address Hate", and "Positive and Inclusive Sports Environment." This event served as an important next step in the partnership initiative with the participating organizations. Regional trainings will now be conducted across the state in 2023 by Sport in Society to provide more in-depth training and equip school and athletic program leaders with the tools they need to empower and support their students and to prevent and address hate.



Please see the links below for information and resources from the event:

[Conference Worksheet](#)

[Video Remarks by MIAA/MSAA Executive Director Bob Baldwin](#)

[Addressing Hate in School Sports landing page](#)

[Attorney General's Office Press Release](#)



Addressing Hate in School Sports – Regional Trainings (March 2023)

Through the MIAA partnership with the Attorney General’s Office, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS), the Massachusetts School Administrators’ Association (MSAA), the Anti-Defamation League and Northeastern University’s Center for the Study of Sport in Society, **regional trainings** are now being offered for school leaders. The focus of these free trainings is to empower school and athletic leaders with the skills and tools requisite to build safe space communities through a deeper understanding of how unconscious bias, toxic speech, and other micro-aggressions, specific to interpersonal incidents of violence, can be identified, responded to, and eradicated. The goal is for all school and athletic leaders to leave the training with concrete tools that can be immediately implemented to prevent and address hate and bias in sports within school districts.

The regional trainings (two days) will be held on Friday and Saturday, or Saturday and Sunday, dates between March and May 2023. Trainings will be held from 9:30am to 3:30pm (with a break for lunch) on both Friday and Saturday/Saturday and Sunday, as applicable. Trainings will be held at the following dates and locations:

1. March 10th and 11th: MIAA Office (Franklin)
2. March 17th and 18th: College of the Holy Cross (Worcester)
3. March 17th and 18th: Endicott College (Beverly)
4. March 17th and 18th: Stonehill College (Easton)
5. March 24th and 25th: Babson College (Wellesley)
6. March 24th and 25th: Berkshire Community College (Pittsfield)
7. April 1st and April 2nd: Upper Cape Tech
8. April 28th and 29th: UMass Lowell
9. April 28th and 29th: UMass Amherst
10. May 5th and 6th: Bridgewater State University
11. May 5th and 6th: Berkshire Community College (Pittsfield)
12. May 12th and 13th: MIAA Office (Franklin)
13. May 12th and 13th: Endicott College (Beverly)



Attendance at these trainings is free for school district staff. Due to capacity restrictions, each school district is guaranteed up to three seats at its local regional training. These trainings incorporate a “train-the-trainer” model, such that attendees will be equipped to bring the programming back to their schools and train others. To best utilize this model, **it is strongly encouraged that each school district’s superintendent, high school principal, and athletic director, participate if possible.** While each district is guaranteed up to three seats at a regional training, additional space may be available, capacity permitting to accommodate additional staff from a district who are interested in attending this regional training.

Sample Association Communications

Joint message sent by Executive Directors to the memberships of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA), Massachusetts School Administrators Association (MSAA) and Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS)



Addressing Hate in School Sports Joint Statement from the MIAA and M.A.S.S.

We are all deeply troubled by the dis-regulated behaviors that continue to occur in interscholastic athletics, our schools and in our communities.



We know you join us in taking very seriously our responsibility to help instill in student athletes a commitment to behaving with the utmost respect and dignity.

Over the past two years in particular, our country has begun a profound reckoning on race and racism. Many of our schools and districts are grappling with these topics and striving to be more diverse, equitable, and inclusive. MASS and the MIAA are committed to engaging deeply in this work, too – so that we can make a difference in eradicating racism and all other forms of bias and hatred.

One of the greatest benefits of interscholastic sports is the opportunity to meet and interact with students from other communities and backgrounds. It is essential that students and adults approach those interactions with respect and civility. We believe we have a significant opportunity to begin placing greater emphasis on some of our other core responsibilities – particularly educational athletics, which includes sportsmanship and diversity, equity, and inclusion.

On December 8, over 400 district leaders (superintendents, principals and athletic directors) participated in the Addressing Hate in School Sports Conference hosted by the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office at the TD Garden. We are ready to initiate the next phase of this comprehensive plan with **13 regional trainings across Massachusetts**. The two ½ day trainings will be held on Friday and Saturday dates between March and May of this school year.

To be successful, a district training, comprised of a team of Superintendent, High School Principal, and Athletic Director that lead with one clear message regarding norms and expectations for behavior all sports programs, is imperative. The program delivered by the [Northeastern Center for the Study of Sport in Society](#) is designed to help this leadership team be better prepared to set the tone and expectations of your program to prevent incidents of bias, harassment, and discrimination – and to respond effectively to incidents when they do arise.

An email with the link to register for these trainings will be sent to you the week following February vacation. As superintendent for your district, you will be responsible for formally registering up to three district staff—preferably yourself, your High School Principal, and your Athletic Director—for attendance at one regional training. We are grateful for your leadership in encouraging your district's staff to prioritize attendance at these important trainings.

Let's begin the task of eradicating hate and bias to ensure that no one engaged in interscholastic athletics feels disrespected, unsafe, or unwelcome -- on or off the playing fields. We believe that a united leadership utilizing the platform of interscholastic athletics can permeate our schools, communities, and society.

Tom Scott
M.A.S.S. Executive Director

Bob Baldwin
MIAA/MSAA Executive Director

Sample Association Communications

Sent to MIAA (principals and athletic directors) and MSAA (PreK-12 administrators) memberships



We are excited to enter into the next phase in our quest to eradicate hate and bias through the platform of interscholastic athletics. This part of the initiative will allow school and athletic leaders to dive deeper and learn how to effectively apply best practices in their own districts through **13 Regional Trainings provided by the [Northeastern Center for the Study of Sports in Society](#).**

Each two-day training is scheduled to take place over a Friday *and* Saturday, or Saturday *and* Sunday, from 9:30am to 3:30pm each day (with a one-hour break for lunch). The training dates and locations are listed on the attached Q&A. Because of capacity restrictions, each district is guaranteed up to three seats at its local regional training. We strongly encourage participation by each district's superintendent, high school principal, and athletic director, if possible.

"We don't have the time and energy to spend a Friday and a Saturday in a training..."

Brené Brown describes the behaviors and cultural issues that leaders identified as getting in the way in organizations around the world in her book *Dare to Lead*, "***rather than spending a reasonable amount of time proactively acknowledging and addressing issues, we spend an unreasonable amount of time managing problematic behaviors.***" We must take advantage of this proactive opportunity to embed a culture of right behavior in our school and district through the platform of interscholastic athletics so we don't have to react to next crisis.

Because we only have room for 130 district/school leadership teams, we expect these slots to fill up very quickly. We are asking that Superintendents register on behalf of principals and athletic directors. Please notify your Superintendent of your interest and availability to attend a regional training. Please see the attached Addressing Hate in Sports – Regional Trainings – Q&A.

On behalf of the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office, Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education, Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association, and Massachusetts School Administrators' Association, we thank you for your partnership in this effort.



Sample Association Communications

Press release sent by Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General to the MIAA (principals and athletic directors) and MSAA (PreK-12 administrators) memberships



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
ONE ASHBURTON PLACE
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02108

(617) 727-2200
(617) 727-4765 TTY
www.mass.gov/ago

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 5, 2022

MEDIA CONTACT:
Jillian Fennimore
(617) 727-2543

AG HEALEY HOSTS VIRTUAL CALL-TO-ACTION TO ADDRESS HATE AND BIAS IN SCHOOL ATHLETICS

Partnering with School Leaders to Provide Additional Resources to Help Ensure a Safe and Healthy Environment for Young People in Massachusetts; In-Person Conference and Regional Trainings Planned for Later this Year

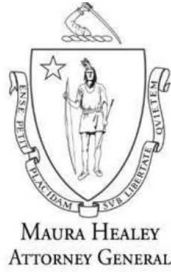
BOSTON – In effort to foster diversity, equity, and inclusion in both academic and sports settings, Attorney General Maura Healey today announced she is partnering with state leaders to help prevent and address hate and bias incidents in school athletic programs in Massachusetts.

AG Healey announced the partnership today during a [virtual event called “Addressing Hate & Bias in School Athletics: A Call to Action.”](#) that her office hosted in collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association, and Massachusetts School Administrators’ Association. The event provided a robust discussion and resources for school administrators, athletic directors, coaches, and referees.

In recent months, a rise in reported hate-based incidents across Massachusetts has presented an acute need and a clear opportunity for school and state leaders to come together and redouble efforts to ensure that schools and athletic programs provide a safe and healthy environment for young people.

As part of the event, AG Healey announced a [new collaborative project](#) to expand programming around preventing and addressing hate and bias incidents in school sports, including an in-person conference planned for the start of the 2022-2023 school year, and regional trainings to be conducted by Northeastern University’s Center for the Study of Sport in Society.

“Sports can be a powerful tool for bringing people together, but in recent months we’ve seen too many examples where the hate and bias that infects so much of our culture has made its way into our locker rooms and onto our playing fields,” said **AG Healey**. “At the end of the day, there is nothing more important than investing in the health and well-being of our young people. I want to thank our partner organizations and school leaders who are ready to build positive change throughout the state.”



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
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BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02108

(617) 727-2200
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www.mass.gov/ago

“School sports are important to students’ physical and mental health and are a great way to build a sense of community, but only when teams, locker rooms and competitions are safe and welcoming places for everyone,” said **Elementary and Secondary Education Commissioner Jeffrey C. Riley**. “This has been a challenging year in many ways, and I’m glad to see so many leaders convene around this important issue.”

“There is no more important responsibility of our schools than providing a safe and supportive environment for our students to grow as responsible citizens,” said **Tim Piwowar, President of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents**. “Hate and bias have no place in our schools and community, and it is our collective responsibility to set appropriate expectations for our students.”

“The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association is positioned to play a significant role in growing the courageous leaders of tomorrow,” said **Robert Baldwin, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association**. “Utilizing interscholastic athletics as a platform that proactively promotes behaviors that instill respect for self, team, opponents, officials, rules and the game itself prioritizes our core responsibility – particularly educational athletics, which includes sportsmanship and diversity, equity, and inclusion.”

Today’s event provided attendees with information on current resources available to schools, including the AG’s new [School Sports Guidance](#). Following today’s event, the AG’s Office and its partnering organizations will host an in-person conference for school administrators, athletic directors, coaches, and referees, including panel discussions and workshops on best practices around creating a positive school environment and reporting hate and bias incidents. In addition, regional trainings across the state will be conducted by Northeastern University’s Center for the Study of Sport in Society to provide more in-depth training and equip school and athletic program leaders with the tools they need to empower and support their students and to prevent and address hate.

“We, at the Northeastern University’s Center for the Study of Sport in Society, applaud Attorney General Maura Healey for her leadership and unwavering commitment to stop the promulgation and proliferation of hate wherever it exists in our Commonwealth and beyond,” said **Dan Lebowitz, Executive Director of The Center for the Study of Sport in Society at Northeastern University**. “Sport is an impact engine of inclusion. It has the power to elevate conversation, inspire individual and collective change agency, and create true, sustainable change. AG Healey, her office, and all the committed stakeholders in this initiative, see and embrace sport as a pathway to positive youth engagement, social-emotional development, and the collective community inherent in teamwork. Hate and hurt have no place in sport, and we



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remain grateful to AG Healey for her responsive proactivity in creating such an intentional program of hope and healing. We are honored to contribute and be part of the team.”

For more information on the AG’s project on addressing hate and bias in sports and to sign your school up for upcoming programs and trainings, [click here](#).

Statements of support

Senator Jason Lewis, Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Education:

“Every student athlete in the Commonwealth should feel safe and supported on their team and in their school, and there should be zero tolerance for any incidents of hate or bias. I appreciate the leadership of Attorney General Healey, Commissioner Riley, and others who have joined together to help amplify this important message.”

Representative Alice H. Peisch, House Chair of the Joint Committee on Education:

“The Commonwealth and the rest of the nation have seen a noticeable increase of racist, homophobic, and antisemitic incidents in school athletics over the last few years. Recent school-based incidents involving hate and bias, both on and off the field, demonstrate that there is still work to be done in strengthening diversity, equity, and inclusion in our education system. Addressing this issue has been a consistent goal of the Legislature, as evidenced by the recent passage of legislation pertaining to genocide education. I am fully supportive of the efforts being undertaken by school administrators, athletic directors, and coaches from across the state, and I look forward to working closely with my legislative colleagues on continuing to prioritize actions to eliminate hate and bias from our schools.”

Tanisha Sullivan, President of NAACP Boston:

“When the NAACP Boston launched Take the Lead with our professional sports teams in 2017, it was with the belief that athletes and the sports community have an important role to play in stomping out hate and bias and promoting the American values of justice and equality. Following that lead, and to build stronger school communities, it is critically important that we invest in education and supports to ensure that our youth athletes and programs are also serving as champions of anti-hate and bias in our school communities.”

Iván Espinoza-Madrigal, Executive Director of Lawyers for Civil Rights:

“We are grateful for the Attorney General’s leadership in ensuring equity and fairness in school athletic programs. Hate and bias have no place in sports.”



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Robert Trestan, Anti-Defamation League New England Regional Director

“The need for a statewide call to action to end hate, bias and hazing in youth sports could not be greater. Leadership and education remain the pathway to eliminating hate from the locker rooms, fields, gyms and arenas.”

Patience Crozier, GLBTQ Legal Advocates and Defenders Senior Staff Attorney

“Everyone should have a place in school athletics. Through sports, youth learn essential life skills like teamwork and collaboration and, most importantly, they have fun. LGBTQ students experience high rates of bullying in schools, and this bias-based bullying leads to higher rates of anxiety and depression. Our school communities - coaches, teachers, administrators, adult caregivers, and student-athletes- must work together to foster inclusion and safety in athletics. Too often lately, we’ve heard disturbing reports of anti-LGBTQ and racial bias and bullying in local locker rooms. We’re grateful to see this initiative. Together, we can do better, raise awareness, and send a collective message that hate and bias have no place in Massachusetts’ school sports.”

Kimm Topping, The Safe Schools Program for LGBTQ Students Program Manager

“We are proud that Massachusetts is a leader in creating safe and supportive school communities for all students, and yet LGBTQ students in our state continue to experience disproportionate risk. We must be intentional in upholding the anti-discrimination policies and best practices that our state has created to protect all students, particularly those experiencing marginalization. We hope that today’s collaboration will ultimately create new resources that will allow districts to be even more proactive in protecting students through training, technical assistance, and ongoing education.”

Anh Vu Sawyer, The Southeast Asian Coalition of Massachusetts Executive Director

“Hate and bias against members of our communities too often spills into our schools and even our school sports teams. We are grateful for the work of the Attorney General’s Office to provide resources to schools and athletic programs to address hate incidents and ensure a supportive and inclusive environment for all kids.”

Sample Association Communications

Sent to MIAA (principals and athletic directors) and MSAA (PreK-12 administrators) memberships



Addressing Hate & Bias in School Athletics: A Call to Action

March 18, 2022

Dear Colleagues,

The Attorney General's Office, the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education, the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association, and the Massachusetts School Administrators' Association invite you to ***Addressing Hate & Bias in School Athletics: A Call to Action*** on **Tuesday, April 5th @ 9:00AM – 10:00AM**.

Work to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion in both academic and school settings is a long-standing and ongoing project for many of us. But hate-based incidents across the state over the last few months have presented an acute need and a dear opportunity for all of us to come together to redouble our efforts to ensure that our schools and athletic programs provide a safe and healthy environment for young people. Join us to make this commitment and learn about new resources to support this effort.

The **invitation is included below**, and you can **register [here](#)**. Please feel free to forward this invitation to any of your colleagues. We will follow up with additional information shortly.

We look forward to seeing you on April 5th @ 9am. Thank you for all you do.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob Baldwin'.

Dr. Robert Baldwin
Executive Director



Partnerships



Anti-Defamation League

MIAA staff collaborated with staff from the **Anti-Defamation League New England Region** on plans to provide a **resource toolkit** for school administrators, athletic directors and coaches in responding to bias incidents in school sports. This resource was distributed to attendees at the MIAA Sportsmanship Summit, and distributed electronically in the [MIAA Executive Director's Update](#). This 27-page guidebook entitled ["School Sports and Bias: Best Practices and Resources for Athletic Directors, Coaches and School Administrators"](#) is available to download from the ADL Website and is posted on the MIAA/MSAA Diversity, Equity & Inclusion webpage.

Northeastern University Center for the Study of Sport in Society

Northeastern University's Center for the Study of Sport in Society is one of the world's leading social justice organizations. Through empirically-proven training and solution-based advocacy, the Center uses the power of sport to create inclusion, challenge the institutionalization of racism, prevent interpersonal violence, provide trauma support, and provide tangible skill-sets to circumvent the micro-aggressions of negative normative culture and instead create a new paradigm of empowerment, personal validation, leadership skill acquisition, workforce development, public service, community engagement and economic empowerment.

Northeastern University
Center for the Study of Sport in Society



Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS)

An MIAA staff member serves on the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (M.A.S.S.) Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (REDI) Standing Committee. The committee meets four times during the school year and this partnership enhances collaborative efforts between school superintendents, principals and athletic directors.

Franklin TV

In partnership with Franklin TV, a local cable access company, a program entitled **"Winning Ways with the MIAA"** was developed to provide a promotional overview of the regional trainings. This program can be accessed at the following link: <https://youtu.be/6kT6z3BOHfl>

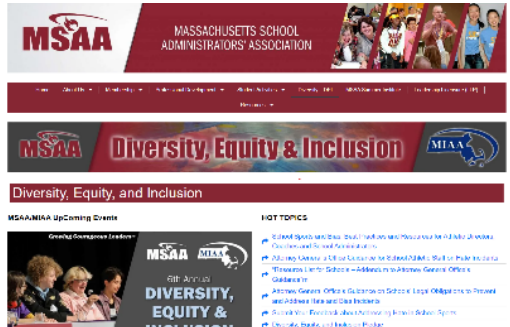


School DEI Contacts

In an effort to support the efforts of member schools, MIAA and MSAA sent a survey to build a network of outstanding teachers, advisors, coaches, and administrators who are engaged in DEI work at the building level. [Click here to access this survey](#). This network of school personnel, student groups and organizations receives information about upcoming DEI programs and initiatives sponsored by the associations.

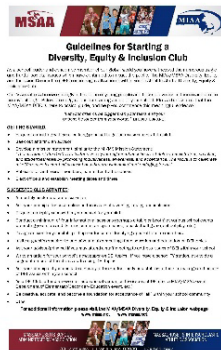


Resources



MIAA/MSAA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Webpage

<https://msaa.net/diversity-equity-inclusion/>



MIAA/MSAA Guidelines for Starting a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Club

<https://msaa.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Guidelines-Starting-DEI-Club.pdf>



ADL – A Guide for Responding to School Sports-Related Bias Incidents

<https://www.adl.org/resources/tools-and-strategies/guide-responding-school-sports-related-bias-incidents>

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE GUIDANCE for SCHOOL ATHLETIC STAFF on HATE INCIDENTS

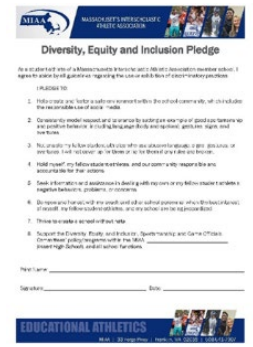


Attorney General's Office Guidance for School Athletic Staff on Hate Incidents

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/ago-guidance-on-for-school-athletic-staff-on-hate-incidents/download>

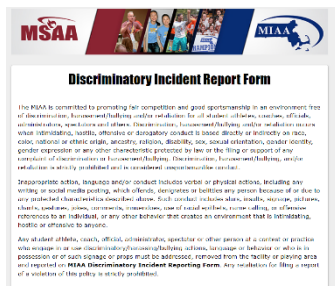


Resources



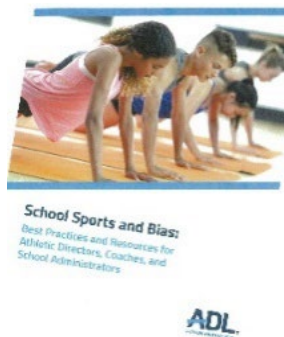
MIAA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Pledge

<https://msaa.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/DEI-Pledge.pdf>



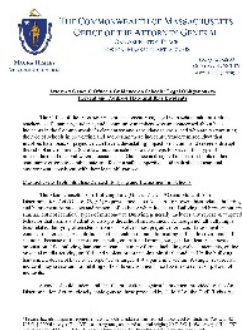
MIAA/MSAA Discriminatory Incident Report Form

<https://www.formstack.com/forms/?4569337-yMFd6ZAS68>



ADL – School Sports and Bias: Best Practices and Resources for Athletic Directors, Coaches, and School Administrators

<https://www.adl.org/sites/default/files/documents/2022-10/school-sports-and-bias-toolkit.pdf>



Attorney General Office's Guidance on Schools' Legal Obligations to Prevent and Address Hate and Bias Incidents/Resource List for Schools

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/si0p183zczda37g/LEGAL%20GUIDANCE.pdf?dl=0>