



NEWS RELEASE

“Building and Maintaining Positive Culture” Course Now Available on NFHS Learning Center

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Dan Schuster

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (October 27, 2025) — In an effort to help students benefit from a more positive experience in high school sports, the NFHS has launched a new course titled [Building and Maintaining Positive Culture](https://www.NFHSLearn.com), which is available for free on the NFHS Learning Center at www.NFHSLearn.com.

The course, which was created in partnership with the University of Washington’s Center for Leadership in Athletics, discusses healthy team culture characteristics such as trust, communication, transparency, support, care and others – all of which contribute to the overall satisfaction level for students.

The course also addresses challenges that coaches face in developing a positive culture and offers suggestions for mitigating those issues – noting that coaches must be both intentional and aware. The course helps coaches understand that they must communicate with students frequently, provide feedback, discuss goals, share concerns and celebrate growth.

"We are pleased to offer this new free course with our friends at the University of Washington," said Dan Schuster, NFHS director of educational services. "This course is an excellent resource for not just building a positive culture, but also sustaining it with your team, no matter the sport or activity. We are thrilled to provide this to people across the country."

After an introductory session, the second chapter defines culture, followed by a chapter on practices to build a positive culture, including an intentional approach, co-constructing expectations

and goals, utilizing routines, establishing and prioritizing relationships, incorporating student voice and autonomy, and building strong lines of communication.

The other major chapter addresses navigating tensions within a team, including overcoming challenges, lack of clear guideposts, a subset of voices, failure to adapt to seasonal or yearly changes, and working with disruptive team members.

The Center for Leadership in Athletics at the University of Washington is a national leader in academic programming in sport leadership, including its flagship graduate degree program in [Intercollegiate Athletic Leadership](#) and undergraduate courses in [sports and education](#); coach education and training, bringing [research-based curriculum](#) to sport organizations, schools and state associations; and research to practice initiatives, like the [Ambitious Coaching™ Research Project](#) and the [CLA Research Briefs](#).

Originally established as the NFHS Coach Education Program, the Learning Center has evolved from just two courses for coaches (*Fundamentals of Coaching* and *First Aid for Coaches*) to more than 100 online education courses, over 75 of which are free, and recently surpassed more than 27 million courses delivered.

NFHS Learning Center course offerings extend across 17 different sports with sport-specific courses and performing arts programs. The Learning Center also serves 51-member state associations, more than 19,000 high schools and more than 12 million students. In 2022, the NFHS earned accreditation through Cognia, which signifies its commitment to high standards and continuous improvement.

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About the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)

The NFHS, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is the national leadership organization for high school sports and performing arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and performing arts activities that help students succeed in their lives. The NFHS sets direction for the future by building awareness and support, improving the participation experience, establishing consistent standards and rules for competition, and helping those who oversee high school sports and activities. The NFHS writes playing rules for 18 sports for boys and girls at the high school level. Through its 50 member state associations and the District of Columbia, the NFHS reaches more than 19,900 high schools and 12 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 8.2 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; offers online publications and services for high school coaches and officials; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, speech and debate coaches, and music adjudicators; serves as

the national source for interscholastic coach training; and serves as a national information resource of interscholastic athletics and activities. For more information, visit the NFHS website at www.nfhs.org.

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