Executive Summary: Recognized Student Organization Request for Girls Wrestling Coaching Stipend

This summary outlines a formal recommendation to officially recognize girls wrestling as a Recognized Student Organization (RSO) within the Meridian School District. To support this initiative, it is recommended the Board approve an additional 30% supplemental stipend (approximately $2,774 for the upcoming season) for Varsity Wrestling Coach Jamie McCarty to account for his expanded dual-program responsibilities. Additionally, if the program sustains its current growth, I encourage the Board to consider a dedicated assistant coach to oversee girls wrestling in future contracts, which would eventually replace this supplementary stipend.

Program Growth and Vision

The girls wrestling program at Stillman Valley High School has demonstrated clear growth, driven by a commitment to providing meaningful opportunities for athletes to develop, compete, and succeed.

- There are currently 8 girls registered to wrestle.
- With an additional 3 to 6 athletes expected to join, the program is projecting a potential roster of 11 to 14 wrestlers.
- Coach McCarty aims to build a high-quality instructional and competitive foundation now to support future female wrestlers as interest continues to grow.

Expanded Competitive Opportunities

To ensure female athletes receive comparable development opportunities to their male counterparts, the competition schedule has been heavily revised.

- Previous Season: The girls had 3 scheduled competitions, resulting in an average of about 8 matches per athlete.
- Upcoming Season: The new schedule features 10 girls-only competitions, alongside additional combined events.
- Target Matches: The program goal is to secure 25 to 35 matches per female athlete this season.
- This target is a major improvement from last year and aligns closely with the boys' expected 28 to 38 matches prior to regionals.
- The expanded schedule intentionally provides the mat time necessary for athletes to apply skills, build confidence, and arrive at the postseason prepared.

Increased Coaching Responsibilities
Historically, boys and girls competitions frequently overlapped, allowing the coaching staff to manage both groups at the same events. The intentional expansion of the girls program introduces new operational and supervisory requirements for Coach McCarty.

- The girls season begins two weeks earlier than the boys season.
- The schedule includes 10 separate girls-only competitions, 7 of which are primarily all-day events.
- The girls program will participate in a separate state series for the postseason.

Recommendation
I recommend the Board of Education consider the approval of a 30% stipend of the boys coaching amount for the girls wrestling coach for the 2026-27 school year. This provides immediate, fair compensation for the preparation, travel, and coaching required by the separate schedule, without immediately expanding district headcount. Additionally, this will support the momentum of the program growth while preserving the district's flexibility to evaluate future staffing needs.