



**To:** Board of Education

**From:** Matt Cunningham

**Re:** Athletics Update

**Date:** February 4, 2026

**MHSAA Scholar-Athlete Award**

Senior student-athlete Miles Dell has been chosen as one of 120 finalists for the MHSAA Scholar-Athlete Award. The MHSAA received over 1,500 applications for this award and will announce the 32 winners later this month - Class B will be announced on February 10.

For 37 years, the MHSAA and Farm Bureau have honored the best student-athletes in Michigan based on achievement and leadership in athletics and activities, as well as responses to short-answer and essay questions.

**MITCA Regional Coach of the Year**

The Michigan Interscholastic Track Coaches Association (MITCA) has named Girls Track and Field Head Coach Jessica Rickli as a 2025 Division 2 Regional Coach of the Year.

MITCA is a coaching organization with a membership of approximately 1,200 Track and Field and Cross Country Coaches.

**MHSAA Announces Expansion of Personal Branding Activities (PBA) for Student-Athletes**

On January 27, the MHSAA announced an expanded policy that allows student-athletes to capitalize on PBA activities as long as those activities are individual opportunities for individual students, while not disrupting competitive equity that would result from the creation of group activities, including collectives and other pay-for-play opportunities now the norm at the collegiate level. These activities include social media endorsements and promotions, personal appearances, photo sessions or autograph signings; modeling, advertising, merchandise, sports cards or apparel sales; and the use of the student's name, image or likeness in marketing materials.

PBA activities must be consistent with MHSAA rules and school policies. A student-athlete may not capitalize on PBA based on athletic performances, awards/recognition, team



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participation or competition outcomes. A student-athlete also may not involve school names, logos, mascots, trademarks or other obvious identifiers, uniforms or other intellectual property, and PBA activity may not occur during school attendance or any MHSAA event (including practice) and cannot take place on school property or be promoted on school media channels.

Schools, including coaches and other employees, are not allowed to solicit, arrange, negotiate or promote PBA activities on behalf of their student-athletes. Doing so may put that school's MHSAA membership in jeopardy, in addition to rendering that student-athlete ineligible for MHSAA athletics.

Messaging about the new policy has been shared with coaches and the athletic community, and requests that anyone with questions reach out to the athletic director for further assistance. A link to the [MHSAA's Overview and FAQs](#) was also shared.

Go Bulldogs!

Respectfully,

Matt Cunningham, Athletic Director  
Chelsea School District