



2023-24 Annual Report

Greetings from the RIIL

Letter from the Chairman

As Chairman of the Principals' Committee on Athletics (PCOA), I am both proud and excited to serve our student athletes and the member schools who make up the Rhode Island Interscholastic League. The Principals' Committee on Athletics is the governing body of The Rhode Island Interscholastic League, and on behalf of the PCOA and our assistant chair, Ms. Candace Caluori, I am happy to welcome everyone involved in Rhode Island interscholastic sports to an exciting 2024/2025 school year. I am proud and humbled to look back over the past few years and see the tenacity and competitive spirit exhibited by our student athletes.

Our student athletes represent what is best about interscholastic sports. The dedication to their sport as well as their adherence to sportsmanship and clean competition, proves to be the tenant all can aspire to. The PCOA is committed to its mission of providing the foundation for educationally-based athletics. Through fair competition, and respect to our rules and regulations, our student athletes are learning lessons that will stay with them for life; teamwork, communication, perseverance and humility are life lessons that enhance our schools and our communities.

The RIIL is a dynamic, evolving organization, made up of our member schools, that keeps our student athletes at the forefront of what we do and why we do it. Through the dedication of our Executive Director Mr. Michael Lunney, and our Assistant director Thomas Marcello, as well as our wonderful office staff, we are able to provide outstanding opportunities for our schools and student athletes. On behalf of the Principals' Committee, Ms. Caluori and the more than 30,000 student athletes, I can tell you with confidence that our future is bright, and we are well positioned to deal with any issues that may arise. I want to thank our corporate sponsors as well as our media friends for their continued support. We are here to serve our schools and our athletes, and we welcome your feedback as well as your suggestions. With open and honest communication, we are able to move forward and accomplish our shared goals. I look forward to working with everyone and making our great organization even greater. Thanks for all you do for the students of Rhode Island, and I look forward to serving as your Chair, for what I know will be a great school year.

Thank You.

Daniel F. Warner

Chairman, Principals' Committee on Athletics



Greetings from the RIIL

Executive Director's Message:

As high school sports and activities begin across our great state, the Principals' Committee on Athletics, the Rhode Island Interscholastic League, and everyone involved in our member schools and communities look forward to the year ahead with great anticipation. Now, more than ever, participation in school-based sports and activities are a vital part of the educational development of students. Although there is certainly a place for the preparation and pursuit of winning at the high school level, the focus of school-based athletics must continue to be the growth and development of students for their next level of life. The lessons learned through participation in high school athletics and activities are the foundation for building good citizens, future leaders, and successful families.

One of the greatest values that sports teach is how to properly respond when adversity undoubtedly arises. Perseverance, resilience, determination, teamwork, and faith in the process are all tools that we all must utilize to overcome the obstacles that will stand in the way of another successful year in the classroom and throughout the high school sports and activities calendar in Rhode Island. The positive values taught will serve our student-athletes well as they become our future leaders later in life.

Every year brings its own set of challenges that must be overcome. Unfortunately, with the rise of social media and societal trends, there has been a general lack of civility in certain segments of our population. There is no place for this in school-based sports and activities. As we enter a new school year, let us renew our commitment to making school sports and activities the standard for civility, kindness, and common decency. With approximately 12,000 athletic events administered across our state each year, our member schools continually demonstrate how communities can come together and compete with integrity and sportsmanship and – win or lose - show respect for their opponents. Please support the efforts of School Administrators, Athletic Administrators, Coaches, Officials, and staff members who selflessly give of their time and talents to provide our students with these important opportunities to compete and learn.

I remain humbled, honored, grateful, proud, and appreciative to be part of such a special community of outstanding individuals. The proof that the long hours and family sacrifices are worthwhile is not measured by championships won; they are validated by the positive difference made in the lives of the student-athletes we are so fortunate to serve.

Best wishes for a successful school year!

Sincerely,



Michael P. Lunney

Executive Director

Rhode Island Interscholastic League



Governing Process of the RIIL

The legislative body of the League is the ***Principals' Committee on Athletics***, which consists of principals/assistant principals of the 74 member high schools. The Committee meets regularly. All meetings are open to the public and anyone who wishes may attend. Standing Committees are appointed by the Chairperson of the Principals' Committee on Athletics with the approval of the Principals' Committee on Athletics. Standing Committees are established for each sport. Sport committees are established to address issues of general concern to the RIIL membership, alignment and to plan programs/activities for the members. The following administrators served on the Principals' Committee on Athletics during the 2023-24 school year:

Daniel F. Warner, *Chairperson*, Principal, Block Island School

Candace Caluori, *Assistant Chairperson*, Principal, Toll Gate High School

Patricia Aull

Middle School Administrator

Toby Gibbons

Principal, Pilgrim High School

Thomas Barbieri

Principal, Cranston High School East

Michael Green

Associate Principal, West Warwick High School

Scott D. Barr

Principal, Classical High School

Robert McCarthy

Principal, Central Falls High School

Adolfo Costa

Principal, Cumberland High School

Chip McGair, Ph.D.

Principal, South Kingstown High School

Keith Cory

Athletic Director, Portsmouth High School/ RIIAAA

Daniel Richard

Principal, St. Raphael Academy

Susan Craven

Principal, Tiverton High School

Michael Sollitto, Ed.D.

Superintendent, Burrillville Schools / RISSA

Mark DeCiccio

Principal, Bishop Hendricken High School

Kristin Ward

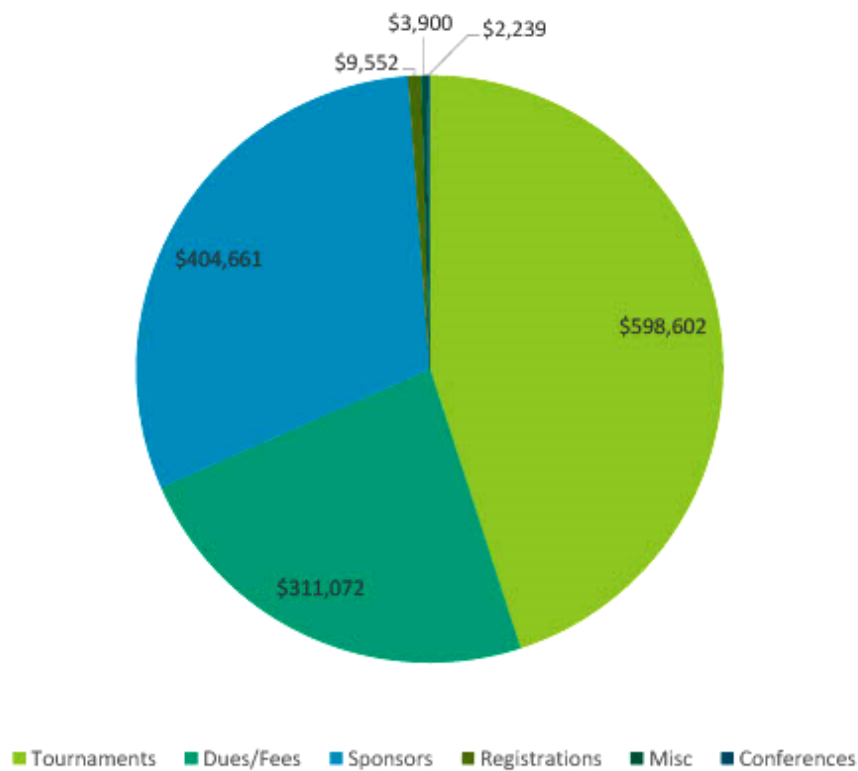
Assistant Principal, Cranston High School East

Robert DiMuccio

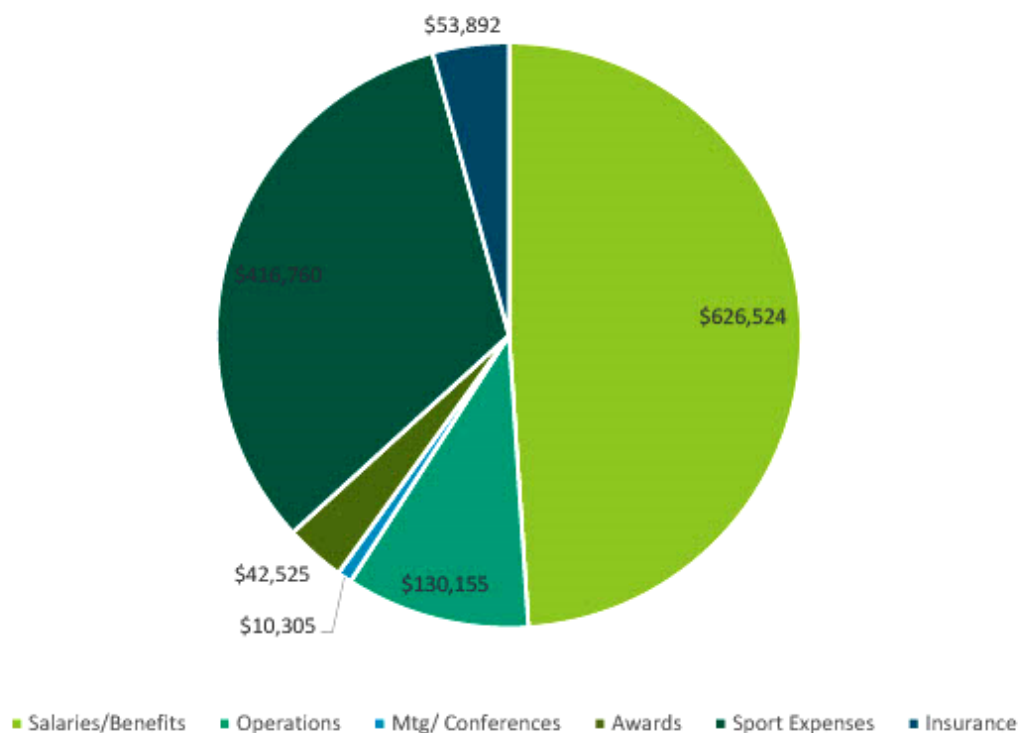
Assistant Principal, Central High School

Financial Report

Revenue 2023-2024



Expenses 2023-2024



Services to Member Schools

The Rhode Island Interscholastic League is a service organization providing its member schools with publications, training opportunities, recognition programs, tournaments, rules interpretation meetings and other services that assist in the administration of interscholastic sports.

♦ Athletic Rules and Regulations

Provides guidance, support and interpretation of the by-laws, rules and regulations for the RIIL.

♦ Recognition

The RIIL recognizes and congratulates the accomplishments of numerous athletes, teams, coaches, athletic directors and school administrators.

♦ Official Pay Program

Through the RefView Program, the RIIL assists school Athletic Directors and Business Offices in the assignment and payment of game officials.

♦ Coaches Education

The RIIL annually conducts virtual preseason coaches' rules interpretation meetings in the fall, winter and spring, reviewing current sport rules and providing presentations on such topics as concussions, heat acclimatization and injury prevention.

♦ Computer Management Program

Tool that will upgrade and improve information for all RIIL fans. In addition, it will streamline all RIIL management functions for school Athletic Directors and coaches, which include the RIIL's creation of online portals for tracking coaches certification and transfers in 2022-23.

♦ Support the Needs of the RIAAA

Every two years, the RIIL and the RIAAA conduct an extensive and objective process of aligning teams in all sports. This process serves to provide competitive balance among all teams in all sports.

♦ Tournaments

The League supervises and administers state tournaments in 31 athletic events, as well as esports, for its member schools.

♦ Student Leadership Conferences

The League sponsors numerous opportunities for student-athletes to take part in an assortment of leadership workshops, sportsmanship activities and community service initiatives.

♦ RIIL WEBSITE/SOCIAL MEDIA

We continue to upgrade and improve the riil.org website, which features a new homepage, online statistics, links to RIIL initiatives and resources for coaches, officials, student-athletes and parents. RIIL Director of Multimedia Content Carolyn Thornton is an experienced journalist who oversees the league's Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and Threads pages, as well as the RIIL Blog. These social media platforms allow the RIIL to inform parents and student-athletes about important RIIL initiatives, provide real-time updates on RIIL tournaments and other league-sponsored events and share the accomplishments of member schools.

♦ RIIL/NFHS Network

The RIIL has partnered with the NFHS Network to stream tournament events and promote a school broadcast program. The RIIL/NFHS Network Sport has produced internet broadcasts for most sports during the past eight years of operation. The NFHS Network School Broadcasting Program gives all of our schools and communities the opportunity to highlight our programs and our athletes. During the 2023-24 school-year, 37 schools were utilizing automated Pixellot cameras, which enable schools with limited broadcasting resources (people, equipment, time, etc.) to produce live events.



Overview of 2023-24 School Year



The Rhode Island Interscholastic League's annual Principals' Breakfast, held October 6, 2023 at Gaige Hall on the Rhode Island College Campus, was highlighted with a special ceremony honoring the commitment to excellence demonstrated by the state's high schools and their coaches. Immediately following the breakfast, principals and athletic directors from all of the RIIL's member high schools were presented with banners recognizing them as **NFHS Honor Roll schools**. The RIIL is the first state high school association in the country to have all of its member schools earn this distinction, which was achieved by meeting the requirements established by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) School Honor Roll Program.

In 2022, the RIIL modified its existing coaching requirements to align with new standards established by the NFHS School Honor Roll Program, which places stronger emphasis on health and safety. Establishing a new professional development pathway for high school coaches through this program, a coach can become a nationally-certified NFHS Level 1 Coach by completing "Fundamentals of Coaching" along with three free courses on the NFHS Learning Center: "Concussion in Sports," "Sudden Cardiac Arrest" and "Protecting Students from Abuse." When a school's coaches complete these courses, the school then earns Level 1 status through the School Honor Roll program.

In addition to the RIIL staff and representatives of the Principals' Committee on Athletics, NFHS Director of Educational Services Dan Schuster traveled from Indianapolis to participate in the banner ceremony.



Overview of 2023-24 School Year

DEVELOPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF GREAT SPORTS OFFICIALS



"Without officials, there are no games, so we all need to do our part to attract, sustain and grow the next generation of game officials. With that in mind, the RIIL is excited to work with RefReps to provide an online officiating curriculum specific to NFHS playing rules that is interactive, engaging and available to our member high schools."

- Mike Lunney, RIIL Executive Director

With the nationwide shortage of officials continuing to impact high school sports, the RIIL aims to do its part in addressing the shortage of officials in Rhode Island by partnering with an officiating education company called RefReps (www.refreps.com).

RefReps provides a comprehensive Sports Officiating Education curriculum for more than a dozen sports. The RIIL believes this provides a viable opportunity for the league's member schools to offer Sports Officiating education to students during their curricular day as an elective course.

Rhode Island vs. Connecticut at 2nd annual Jiggs Cecchini Holiday Basketball Challenge

The Rhode Island Interscholastic League and the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference teamed up for the second annual Jiggs Cecchini Holiday Basketball Challenge. The one-day event is named after Robert "Jiggs" Cecchini, the former longtime boys basketball tournament director and former chairperson of the CIAC Boys Basketball Committee, as well as a former coach, athletic director and principal at Suffield (CT) High School. Held on December 14, 2023 at Mohegan Sun Arena, it featured 4 games - 2 boys games and 2 girls games. Teams participating from the RIIL were: the La Salle Academy and Barrington boys teams and Moses Brown and North Kingstown girls teams.



Overview of 2023-24 School Year



RIIL ADDING GIRLS WRESTLING WEIGHT CLASSES FOR 2023-24 WINTER SPORTS SEASON



Jerry Silberman/risportphoto.com

The RIIL provided additional participation opportunities for girls during the 2023-24 winter sports season. Girls Wrestling weight classes were offered for the first time in league history as female wrestling was integrated into the existing Dual Meet Schedule as well as In-State Tournaments offered by member schools during the regular season. At the RIIL State Meet, girls had the opportunity to compete in 12 weight classes exclusive to females with a chance to earn entrance into the 59th New England Championship. It marked the first time girls weight classes were offered at the RIIL State and New England Championships.

OPERATION CLEAN COMPETITION (OCC)

Educating our community on the dangers of Appearance and Performance Enhancing Substances (APES) and Nutrition & Dietary Supplement Safety: Funded through

a grant from the Rhode Island Foundation, Operation Clean Competition continued its outreach to middle schools, high schools, colleges and universities across the state. During year 11, a total of 75 OCC programs were delivered through a combination of in-person and virtual presentations, reaching more than 4,000 student-athletes, youth, teens, college and university students and adult influencers. The free programs were delivered by OCC educational partner, the Taylor Hooton Foundation. Additional resources were also made available to member schools through the website: operationcleancomp.com and the creation of an OCC Toolkit on the RIIL website. We promoted the OCC program on local radio stations, on the NFHS Network and on our social media platforms through PSAs featuring RIIL Executive Director Mike Lunney and University of Rhode Island Women's Basketball Coach Tammi Reiss.



Overview of 2023-24 School Year

RIIL Announces Addition of Middle School Sports Beginning 2024-25

The RIIL announced that, starting in the fall of 2024, it would be offering school-based sports opportunities to middle schools that voluntarily wish to become RIIL member schools. It marks the first time in RIIL history that the league would offer middle school sports.

"I am thrilled to announce a significant development in our organization that will undoubtedly enhance the overall educational experience for middle school students in Rhode Island," said RIIL Executive Director Michael P. Lunney. "This decision stems from discussions over the past few years between the current provider of Middle School sports (RIPCOA) and the RIIL. RIPCOA has made the decision to stop their offerings at the conclusion of the 2023-24 school year. I want to personally thank and commend everyone involved with RIPCOA, especially Executive Director Patti Aull, for her leadership and commitment to providing outstanding middle school sports in Rhode Island for so many years."



Educational school-based athletics provide student-athletes with the opportunity to engage in healthy competition, develop valuable life skills and build camaraderie with their peers. Middle School sports serve as an avenue for physical activity, a platform for personal growth and the reinforcement of essential values such as teamwork, sportsmanship and perseverance.

"We believe that by extending our sports programs to the middle school level, we can contribute to the holistic development of students, both academically and athletically," Lunney said. "The inclusion of middle school sports also aligns with our mission to create a supportive and inclusive environment that encourages participation, diversity and the pursuit of excellence."

At its January 2024 meeting, the PCOA unanimously approved the appointment of Patricia Aull to the PCOA Board. The PCOA also unanimously approved the appointment of Ted Quigley as Middle School Sport Director. As part of its extensive planning and preparation for the 2024-25 school year, the RIIL invited all Rhode Island middle school administrators to participate in an online survey to gather input that would be instrumental in shaping the Middle School sports program to meet the unique needs of the middle school community. In addition, the RIIL hosted an Open House informational meeting at the RIIL Office on February 28, 2024 to provide an opportunity for middle school administrators to learn more about the RIIL Middle School sports initiative, ask questions, and engage in meaningful discussions with the RIIL team.



Overview of 2023-24 School Year

RIIL Divisional Basketball Championships return to the AMP

For the first time in 20 years, the RIIL Boys & Girls Divisional Basketball Championships returned to the Amica Mutual Pavilion in 2024. Seven championships – Boys Divisions I, II and III and Girls Divisions I, II, III and IV – were played March 4-6 at the AMP in Downtown Providence.

“We are excited that the Road to the Ryan Center for the Credit Union State Championships will also now include a stop in Providence at the AMP for the RIIL Boys & Girls Divisional Championship games,” RIIL Executive Director Mike Lunney said at a press conference announcing the development. “Through a coordinated effort between the RIIL, [AMP General Manager] Larry Lepore, [Rhode Island Convention Center Authority Executive Director] Dan McConaghy and their staff over the last couple of years, we worked through some significant logistical challenges,” “Ultimately, thanks to everyone’s persistence and especially thanks to the support of our friends at Amica Mutual, we’re happy to say that the RIIL Boys and Girls High School Basketball Division Championships are coming back to Providence.”

From 1981 to 2004, the Providence Civic Center was the home of the RIIL Boys and Girls Division Basketball Championships. In its return to the AMP, the 2024 Divisional Finals were played over a three-day period beginning on March 4 with the title games for Girls Division IV, Girls Division III and Boys Division III. The Girls Division III and Boys Division III championship games were played on March 5, followed by the Girls Division I and Boys Division I finals on March 6.



Overview of 2023-24 School Year



More than 220 Rhode Island high school students and chaperones representing 31 schools attended the RII/KyleCares Teen Mental Health Summit, Friday, January 12, 2024 at Gaige Hall on the Rhode Island College campus. This important workshop - that the RIIIL offered free of charge to students from member schools - stressed the importance of focusing on one's emotional well-being through self-care, encouraging those students who are struggling with their mental health to seek help and guiding them on the best ways to do so.



"I LOVED THE FACT THAT THE CONFERENCE WAS SO POSITIVE AND SO MINDFUL AND PRO-MENTAL HEALTH. EVERY PLACE I WENT I FELT SAFE, AND I FELT SEEN."

-RHODE ISLAND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT ATTENDEE



Overview of 2023-24 School Year

RIIL “TRAFFIC SAFETY IS A TEAM SPORT” PROGRAM

Through a grant from the R.I. Department of Transportation, the RIIL joined RIDOT in its mission of achieving zero traffic fatalities in the State of Rhode Island through highway safety awareness. Student-athletes, coaches and other members of the RIIL community were encouraged to take an online Traffic Safety Pledge, and messages delivered on RIIL social media and at RIIL events focused on Occupant Safety, Impaired Driving, Speed and Distracted Driving. Students also assisted with creating traffic safety PSAs that included bilingual messaging.



UNIFIED SPORTS

The RIIL and R.I. Special Olympics began a partnership to establish a Unified Basketball League in 2010, followed soon after by a Unified Volleyball League. Unified Basketball has since grown to include 36 high school teams, while there are 22 high school teams competing in Unified Volleyball. Unified Sports® in RIIL member schools, creates an inclusive environment where everyone benefits. Unified Sports® combines people with intellectual disabilities (called athletes) and without intellectual disabilities (called partners) on sports teams for training and competition. The athletes experience new social opportunities and make new friends they



may not have otherwise. The partners describe their mentorship role as being equally rewarding. Many parents and siblings also find that Unified Sports® offers a new way to spend time together and meet other families. Using sports to help break down barriers that have historically kept people apart, Unified Sports® promotes meaningful inclusion and acceptance of people with intellectual disabilities in the community. In fact, 93% of partners say they gained a better understanding of their teammates through Unified Sports®.

Overview of 2023-24 School Year



For the second year in a row, Lincoln High School was crowned the champion of the RIIIL Spirit Challenge, presented by Navigant Credit Union.

Beginning on March 1st, students, fans, alumni and community members across Rhode Island has the chance to show their school spirit and support their favorite schools through this social media event hosted on the RIIIL's X (formerly Twitter) account (@RIIL_sports). The RIIIL Spirit Challenge featured a bracket comprising all RIIIL member high schools. Each match-up was conducted via X polls, with the school that picked up the most votes advancing to the next round. Early-round matchups featured two days of voting, and later rounds lasted just one day.

Last year's finalists in each regional bracket received first-round byes. Lincoln, which also went on to be crowned the overall winner of the 2023 RIIIL Spirit Challenge, and Johnston each received first-round byes in the North Region. Chariho, which finished second overall to the Lions last year, and Bishop Hendricken received first-round byes in the South Region. St. Raphael Academy and Classical High received the Central Region's first-round byes, and Middletown and Rocky Hill Country Day automatically advanced to the second round of the East Region bracket after finishing as last year's finalists that pod.

After two weeks of voting through the X polls, Lincon (North), Achievement 1st Providence (Central), Pilgrim (South) and Rocky Hill Country Day (East) emerged as the regional pod winners. Lincoln and Rocky Hill Country Day then won their "Final Four" matchups and went head-to-head for the championship, where Lincoln prevailed once again, receiving 59.2 percent of the votes in its title match with the Mariners.

2024 Gymnastics Awards Recognized Sport's Pioneers in R.I. High School Gymnastics

Awards presented to this year's gold medalists at the Midge Palmer Individual Championship Meet of the RIIIL Gymnastics Championships were given in honor of six pioneers of Rhode Island Gymnastics - Mike Franco, Richard Stapleton, Elaine Lyden and the late Ann Morris and Jackie Court.

"We need to remember the pioneers that did this for us to have the opportunities to compete because not one of them ever had the opportunity to compete like you do," longtime Coventry coach Lolita Lipa said at the start of the gymnastics awards ceremony.



Overview of 2023-24 School Year

Lincoln leads nearly 2-ton Peanut Butter Express collection effort for RI Food Bank

The RIIL's 10th annual Peanut Butter Express collection drive to benefit the Rhode Island Community Food Bank, concluded with Lincoln High School once again setting the gold standard. In total, the statewide community service initiative resulted in a delivery of 3,640 pounds of peanut butter to the Food Bank.

In addition to serving as presenting sponsor of this initiative, Bank Rhode Island (BankRI) actively participated by placing collection bins at all 22 of its branch locations. The Bank's customers and employees gave generously, resulting in 1,318 jars of peanut butter, which surpassed last year's total by nearly 300 jars.

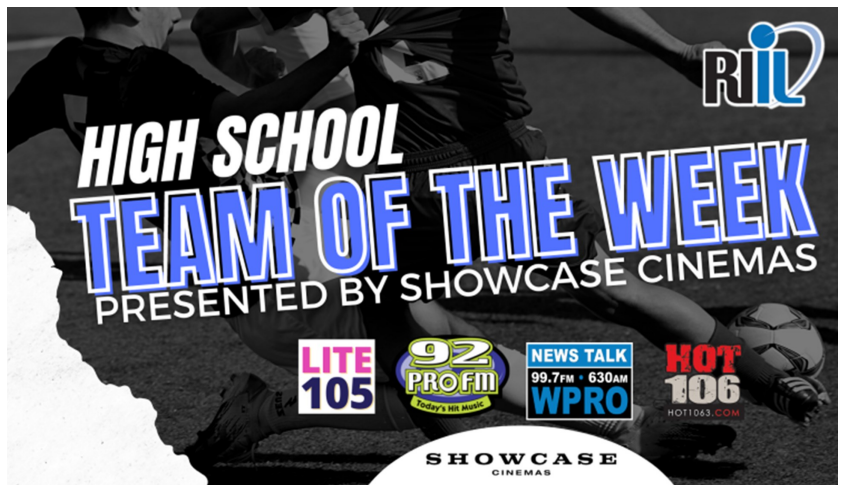
Along with Lincoln High School taking top honors, Bay View Academy and Toll Gate High School placed second and third, respectively. The RIIL concluded the drive at its RIIL Leadership Training Workshop, held earlier this month at Camp Fogarty, encouraging students who attended to bring along a jar of peanut butter.

"To consider the amount of peanut butter this drive generated in 2024 – let alone since inception – is truly remarkable, and demonstrates how dedicated our young people are to making a difference in their community," said Will Tsonos, BankRI's President and CEO. "Alleviating hunger is a cause we all can get behind, and BankRI is proud to be a partner of RIIL's Peanut Butter Express."



SHOWCASE CINEMAS TEAM OF THE WEEK, TOGETHER WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

SHOWCASE Cinemas continued as the presenting sponsor of Team of the Week, recognizing outstanding efforts and contributions RIIL student-athletes are making on and off the playing fields. Chosen winners selected from a pool of nominations weekly, recorded radio shout-outs played on air on Hot 106, 92.3PRO-FM and Lite Rock 105. Winning storylines ranged from teamwork, support, unity, fundraising and awareness efforts for charities and many more.



Overview of 2023-24 School Year

RIIL Leadership Training Workshops

Working with league partners R.I. Army National Guard and iHeart Media, the RIIL offered two RIIL Leadership Training Workshops during the 2023-24 school year at Camp Fogarty in East Greenwich. The Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 workshops were both very well-attended with approximately 100 student-athletes representing many RIIL member schools participating in each workshop, which consisted of a variety of leadership, teamwork and fitness challenges.



STUDENT AMBASSADORS PROGRAM

Student-athletes were encouraged to represent their schools as RIIL Student Ambassadors. Ambassadors received information about various leadership opportunities and were asked to spread the word about RIIL initiatives with their school communities.

2023-24 Awards & Recognition

RIIL Educator Spotlight, presented by BankRI

As part of a new “Educator Spotlight,” presented by RIIL partner BankRI, the achievements of dedicated individuals in the community who are both coaches and educators were recognized during the months of November, December, January, February, March, April, May and June.



HENRY CABRAL

WILLIAM M. DAVIES CAREER & TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

TEACHING:

Physical Education / Health Teacher for nearly 30 years, first for the Bristol-Warren School Department and now at William M. Davies since 1999.

COACHING:

Has been coaching since 1995 both at the high school (Mt. Hope and Davies) and youth level. Currently in his fifth season as Davies' head football coach. Has also coached high school baseball, softball, girls basketball and girls soccer.

“ Early in my teaching and coaching career I was able to work with several teachers and coaches who had a positive impact on me. They instilled a sense of community and many core values that I have tried to pass along to my students and players over the years. I was fortunate to have strong mentors along the way, and I am hoping that I provide the same experience to my student athletes as they did for me. RIP & thank you, Coach Ven & Coach Gaskin. ”



ERIN TERRY

EAST GREENWICH H.S.

TEACHING:

Special Education Teacher since 2006.

COACHING:

Has been coaching since 2000, the last 16 years as East Greenwich Girls Cross Country Coach. Recognized as R.I. Girls XC Coach of the Year multiple times by the NFHS and RITCA. Avengers have captured the RIIL Team State Championship twice (2019 & 2022) and the JV Championship four times (2017, 2019, 2021, 2022).

“ I love being able to interact with different students and work with excellent educators in my co-taught classes. Meeting new students each year energizes me and inspires me to continue to grow and improve as an educator. ”

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BILL BARRASS

BARRINGTON HIGH SCHOOL

TEACHING:

Has been teaching social studies for nearly 30 years, first in N.Y. and Mass., before joining the Barrington Public School System in 2003. Has been at Barrington H.S. since 2012, where he now teaches freshman World History, sophomore US History, and AP World History.

COACHING:

Has also coached since the mid-1990s and has served as the head boys track and field coach at Barrington since 2003 and cross country assistant coach since 2006.

“ I recognize that I am very, very fortunate to live, work, and coach in a great community like Barrington. My work as a teacher and as a coach here could not happen without the support of this district and community. The students who I work with in the classroom and on the track and field are motivated and want to succeed, and it honestly is a pleasure being here every day. ”



BIANCA PARENTEAU

CENTRAL FALLS HIGH SCHOOL

TEACHING: ELA Teacher and Coach
Now in her fifth year teaching ELA at the high school level, she served as curriculum coordinator prior to her new role as an ELA Coach.

COACHING: Cheerleading coach
Now in her fifth season as head coach of the CFHS cheerleading team. Revived the Warriors' competition cheer team last season.

“ Being a teacher allows you to be a role model for students, an advocate and someone that can hopefully inspire their students. However, being a coach brings in another layer of community where I get to meet so many more students that I might have not had the chance to meet unless they were in my ELA classes. I love the relationships I have been able to build among students and faculty alike in the building and it makes me feel truly welcomed into the CF Community. ”

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LOLITA LIPA ROBERTS

COVENTRY HIGH SCHOOL

TEACHING: Physical Education and Health Teacher at Coventry H.S. for 27 years. Also now the Department Head & Curriculum Coordinator since 2022.

COACHING: The Coventry High School Hall of Famer has 35 years of coaching experience . . . Currently the Oakers' head Gymnastics coach, as well as coach of the Competitive & Football Cheerleading Teams, guiding them to multiple state titles . . . Also previously coached Girls Track & Field at Coventry H.S. and North Kingstown H.S.

“What continues to give me Oaker Pride is to watch my athletes reach their full potential from my influence in their lives. I currently have 6 former cheerleaders who have followed me in cheering for the NFL, 8 cheerleaders and gymnasts who have opened their own cheer and gymnastics gyms, and countless athletes who have continued in college athletics. The ripple effect is exciting to see and experience and hopefully will continue for many generations.”



CINDY BOWDEN

WYMAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

TEACHING: Grade 5 teacher at Wyman Elementary for 34 years

COACHING: Inducted into the R.I. Aquatics Hall of Fame in 2023, Bowden served as an assistant swim coach at North Providence H.S. from 1991-93, then head coach at Pilgrim H.S. from 1993-2005. Presented with an RIIL Distinguished Service Award in 2019, she has been a swim official since 2005 and has served as the RIIL's Director of Swim for the last 17 years.

“[Being a teacher and being involved in high school athletics] is very rewarding. I have the opportunity to work with swimmers, coaches, officials, parents & administrators. I like to see swimmers improve and programs develop.”

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ANTHONY PARRILLO

PONAGANSET HIGH SCHOOL

TEACHING: Currently in his 29th year as a Math Teacher. Math Department Chair for over 10 years. Former Math Team Advisor. A.P. Calculus Reader for over 10 years.

COACHING: Currently in his 29th year as a Baseball Coach, 25th as Head Coach. Also just completed his 2nd year as Girls Cross Country Head Coach. Coached Girls Tennis for 2 years. RIBCA Treasurer for over 10 years.

“ I always try my best to model the behavior I expect from my students and athletes. Be present, work hard, do your best and most importantly, have fun. ”



CHRIS LUPPE

WESTERLY HIGH SCHOOL

TEACHING:

Dean of Students for 7 years.
Social Studies Teacher for 27 years

COACHING:

Varsity Softball Coach at Westerly for 20+ years. Has guided the Bulldogs to four Division titles. Former Head Coach of Women's Basketball.

“ The highlight of my career was having a former student tell me that I was the only reason why he graduated from high school. ”

What does being a teacher and your involvement in high school athletics mean to you?

“It is who I am. I love being able to impact student lives in a positive way.”

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JACKIE ELMER

SOUTH KINGSTOWN HIGH SCHOOL

TEACHING: Taught chemistry at South Kingstown High School for 23 years.

COACHING: Began coaching the boys and girls volleyball teams at South Kingstown High School in 2009 and continues to serve as head coach of the boys team. Has guided the Rebels' teams to multiple Division I Championship appearances, including three Division I state titles with the boys team in 2009, 2016 & 2017.

“ The relationships built as a player and a coach are life long. I still remain close to many of the women I played with. The ties on the high school team are forever . . . This is one of the things I cherish most about coaching. The players are family and always will be. Best sport on the planet!! ”



2023-24 Awards & Recognition

The 2023-24 RIIL Student-Athlete of the Year program, presented by Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island, recognizes the outstanding efforts of senior student-athletes in Rhode Island high school athletic programs who:

- Excel in the classroom
- Excel during competition
- Participate in multiple school sponsored sports
- Demonstrate good citizenship in their school
- Demonstrate good citizenship in their community



Every RIIL member school is encouraged to nominate two student-athletes.
The 2023-24 nominees are below.

2023-24

Nominees



Student-Athlete of the Year Award

PRESENTED BY Blue Cross
Blue Shield
of Rhode Island

Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

Announcing this year's nominees, listed in alphabetical order:

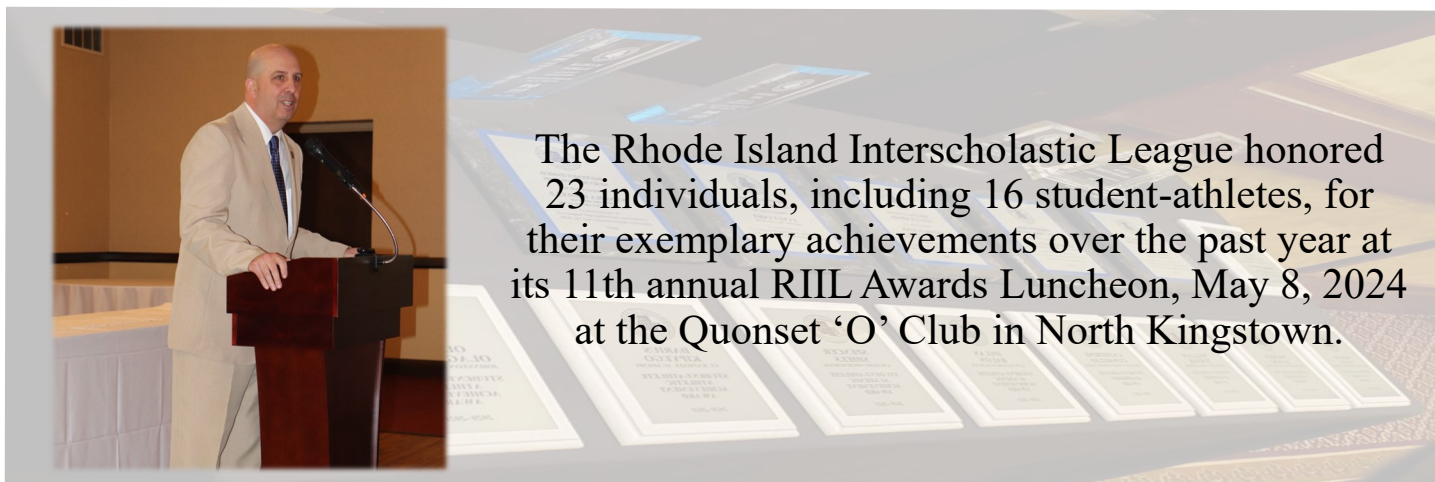
Adeline Areson, Toll Gate
Moises Augustin, Mount Pleasant
Emily Ballard, Chariho
Ryan Barrett, Prout
Adam Beaudry, Woonsocket
Isabelle Beitler, Cumberland
Adam Belhaouz, Central Falls
Emmy Belvin, Mt. St. Charles
Nicholas Bodycoat, Rogers
Ben Borkman, North Providence
Gabriel Bouyssou, Scituate
Braxton Bragg, Pilgrim
Thomas Breen, Classical
Riley Bromage, Pilgrim
Ella Brown, Lincoln School
Khamari Brown, St. Raphael Academy
TJ Buzard, Middletown
Christian Caceres, Juanita Sanchez
Madison Chase, Moses Brown
Sara Chiaverini, Davies
Lauren Cipriano, Lincoln
Keylynn Collardo, Times2
Anthony Colucci, Coventry
Julia Connelly, Rogers
Claydira Ramos Correia, Central Falls

Aiden Cote, Davies
Griffin Crain, Bishop Hendricken
Owen Degan, Narragansett
Carter Deslauriers, North Smithfield
Alexia DiLorenzo, Johnston
Pierce Donnelly, Providence Country Day
Caitlin Dowling, Coventry
Konny Ezeama, Smithfield
Ethan Fadden, Mt. St. Charles
Shalom Feliz, Mount Pleasant
Rocco Ferolito, Mt. Hope
Kaitlyn Fleming, Burrillville
Eston Fowler, Cranston East
Eric Fusaro, Westerly
Sofia Galvis, Hope
Madison Gill, Barrington
Blaize Hatfield, Block Island
Claire Hook, Portsmouth
Leila Hopkins, Classical
Nicholas Iannetta, Blackstone Valley Prep
Emmanuel Ibidago, Shea
Mitchell Ivatts, Barrington
Ella Johnson, Exeter/West Greenwich
Bendu Kamara, Shea
Krista Kasbarian, Smithfield

Jayla Labossiere, Tolman
Eva LaRoche, East Providence
Logan Martins, Johnston
Grace Martone, La Salle
Jessica Mastrandrea, Prout
Wayne McNamara, Lincoln
Eryka Mercado, Juanita Sanchez
Tunmise Molokwu, Hope
Moises Morales, La Salle
Michelle Mota, West Warwick
Catherine Neville, East Greenwich
Madeleine O'Neill, Narragansett
Demetrius Outland, Central
Alison Pankowicz, Toll Gate
Joshua Pedus, West Warwick
Maura Pendergast, Scituate
Tyler Raimond, Burrillville
Julia Raymond, Woonsocket
Andrew Reall, Ponaganset
Teresa Remy, Middletown
Caroline Ricci, North Providence
Katie Richardson, Tiverton
Nolan Rogalski, Cumberland
Brayden Rouette, East Providence
Cora Ryan, Block Island

Cameron Saleh, North Kingstown
Elvis Santos, Times2
Katherine Santos, Central
Anabel Schiller, Lincoln School
Brody Shiels, South Kingstown
Kate Shields, Bay View
Ava Soch, Providence Country Day
Nicholas Spaner, Portsmouth
Tyler Stanton, Exeter/West Greenwich
Trent Sterner, North Kingstown
Alexandra Stoehr, Westerly
Rory Sullivan, St. Raphael Academy
Ailani Sutherland, Cranston West
Cade Thomas, East Greenwich
Sierra Thompson, South Kingstown
Peter Vachon, Cranston West
Samantha Vernancio, Cranston East
Erin VonHousen, Chariho
Averie Walton, Blackstone Valley Prep
Arden Wilkes, Mt. Hope
Gianna Wilson, Tolman
Jaina Yekelchik, Ponaganset
Eli Ziegler, Moses Brown
Kate Zonin, North Smithfield

2023-24 Awards & Recognition



The Rhode Island Interscholastic League honored 23 individuals, including 16 student-athletes, for their exemplary achievements over the past year at its 11th annual RIIL Awards Luncheon, May 8, 2024 at the Quonset 'O' Club in North Kingstown.

The RIIL Student-Athlete of the Year awards recognize the outstanding efforts of two seniors in Rhode Island high school athletic programs. These awards are given to student-athletes who excel in the classroom and during competition, who participate in multiple school-sponsored sports, and who demonstrate good citizenship in their school and in their community.



The captain of the boys basketball and volleyball teams each of his last two years, Wayne capped off his high school basketball career this winter by surpassing 1,000 points, guiding his team to the Division II Championship and being selected as the Gatorade Rhode Island Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Last spring, he also led the Lions to the Division II Boys Volleyball Championship. Ranked third in his class with a 4.989 weighted GPA, he served as Senior Class President and was a member of Future Business Leaders of America and the Ping Pong Club. Continuing his education at Brown University in the fall, he plans to study biology (premed) and hopes to incorporate economics into his studies through Brown's Open Curriculum. Wayne also hopes to make the basketball team as a walk-on.



A four-year letter-winner in cross country, indoor and outdoor track & field, Leila W.X. Hopkins has won a wide assortment of All-State, All-Class and All-Division honors in all three sports, including the high jump, triple jump and pole vault. Ranked fourth in her class of 271, she has achieved Summa Cum Laude from the Cum Laude Society and Magna Cum Laude on the National Latin Exam. She is president of the Senior Class, captain of the indoor and outdoor track teams and is both a math and Latin tutor. In addition, Leila is a competitive fencer, as well as the youngest member of Rhode Island Kung Fu Club, a Chinese cultural arts non-profit organization that performs in lion dance and martial arts shows throughout New England. She has committed to McGill Desautels Faculty of Management at McGill University for a double concentration in Finance and Mathematics. She will also continue fencing at the club level.

2023-24 Awards & Recognition



2023-24 DISTINGUISHED ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

EMILY BALLARD
CHARIHO HIGH SCHOOL

GRIFFIN CRAIN
BISHOP HENDRICKEN HIGH SCHOOL

ALEXIA DILORENZO
JOHNSTON HIGH SCHOOL

CHUKWUEMEKA "KONNY" EZEAMA
SMITHFIELD HIGH SCHOOL

ALEXANDRA STOEHR
WESTERLY HIGH SCHOOL

PETER VACHON
CRANSTON HIGH SCHOOL WEST

SAMANTHA VERNANCIO
CRANSTON HIGH SCHOOL EAST

ARDEN KATHERINE WILKES
MT. HOPE HIGH SCHOOL



2023-24 LEADERSHIP & SERVICE AWARDS

Presented by

BANKRI
BANKRHODEISLAND.COM

MAURA PENDERGAST
SCITUATE HIGH SCHOOL

ADELINE ARESON
TOLL GATE HIGH SCHOOL

NOLAN ROGALSKI
CUMBERLAND HIGH SCHOOL

ADAM BEAUDRY
WOONSOCKET HIGH SCHOOL

2023-24 Awards & Recognition





**2023-24
DISTINGUISHED
SERVICE
AWARDS**

JOHN ABBATE
BURRILLVILLE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

SUSAN CHANDLER
EXETER/WEST GREENWICH H.S. PRINCIPAL

ELAINE LYDEN
GYMNASTICS OFFICIAL

EMMA OFNER
LA SALLE ACADEMY ATHLETIC TRAINER

JAMEY VETELINO
WESTERLY ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

2023-24 Awards & Recognition



2023-24 SPIRIT OF SPORT AWARD

Keith MacDonald
Head Coach
Portsmouth H.S. Football



2024 NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL HEART OF THE ARTS AWARD



EVAN BOULAY
SECTION 1 AWARDEE
Rhode Island

2023-24 Awards & Recognition



LOCAL 51 SCHOLARSHIP

2024 Recipient

Brady Toner
Rogers High School



**2024 ALICE SULLIVAN
MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP
RECIPIENT**

CAITLIN KELLEY
SMITHFIELD HIGH SCHOOL



History of the RIIL

March 9, 1899: A meeting was held with delegates from Cranston High School, Hope High School, East Providence High School and Classical High School to state their ideas as to the advisability of forming a league. On a motion made and carried, the league was formed by the schools represented and officers were elected.

A committee was elected to draw up articles of agreement, and Article 1 named the association The Interscholastic League. In all, 15 articles of agreement were discussed by section and adopted.

The first recognized sport was baseball, and the member schools were asked to develop the schedule. On June 13, 1899, the Interscholastic League awarded Classical High School the Baseball Championship of the 1899 season.

September 29, 1899: Manual Training High School, Providence English High School and Pawtucket High School were admitted to membership. In addition, the committee approved a football season. The football schedule was approved, and the first football game was held on October 13, 1899 between Cranston High School and East Providence High School, with East Providence prevailing, 5-0. The Spalding Football Rules were adopted. East Providence High School was awarded the first Football Championship.



January 23, 1900: The Board of Directors moved and seconded that the sport of polo be accepted. Hope St. High School was awarded the first Polo Championship in 1900.

February 23, 1900: The Board of Directors voted to approve **five eligibility rules** to be applied to all League Athletics:

- No professionals were allowed to participate*
- The Board of Directors would investigate all eligibility matters*
- Five years of eligibility for each player*
- There was a transfer rule*
- Penalty for violations was forfeiture*

May 5, 1900: The league approved the Interscholastic Field Athletic Meet (track & field). Classical High School was awarded the first Field Day Championship.

January 1901: The Board of Directors voted mandating that all member schools submit a list of eligible athletes in all sports.

December 16, 1901: Woonsocket High School was admitted to the Interscholastic League.



History of the RIIL

December 2, 1902: The Board of Directors voted to allow the league to arrange for a hockey season. Hope St. High School was awarded the first Hockey Championship for the 1903 season.

March 1904: The Board of Directors voted to approve the National League Baseball Rules with the exception of the foul strike.

Initial League Issues:

- * Uneven competition
- * Lack of eligibility standards
- * Organization
- * Spectator riots, mob scenes....
- * Few suitable playing surfaces
- * No professional preparation for coaches
- * Officials were usually chosen from the crowd
- * If the home team lost – the visiting team was stoned out of town

1928: A group of high school principals became interested in forming an organization which would control and administer athletics as one of its objectives.

1932: The R.I. Secondary School Principals' Association was organized, defining its objectives as follows: *Its object shall be to raise the standards of the secondary schools of RI and to advance the professional interests of the members of this association.*

Committees were established: * R.I. Honor Society * Relations with the Office of the R.I. State Director of Education * Athletics

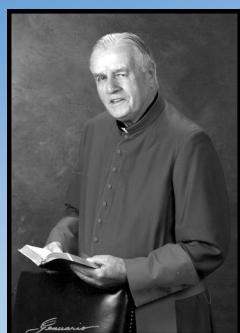
March 1932: The Interscholastic League was formally organized as it is today. It was organized to meet the expressed needs of high schools for a functional sports program that would be governed by a committee of principals.

1952: The RIIL joined the National Federation of State High School Associations.

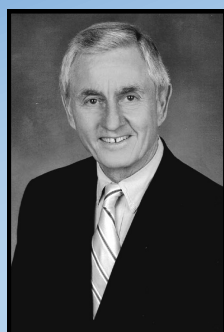
Today: Now in its 125th year of existence, the R.I. Interscholastic League is governed by the Principals' Committee on Athletics, and its 74 member schools.



R.I. Interscholastic League Executive Directors Past and Present . . .



Msgr. Robert C. Newbold
Executive Director, RIIL
1969-1994



Richard B. Lynch
Executive Director, RIIL
1994-2004



Thomas A. Mezzanotte
Executive Director, RIIL
2004-2020



Michael P. Lunney
Executive Director, RIIL
2020-present

RIIL Mission

Who we are: The Rhode Island Interscholastic League was established in 1899. It is a voluntary, private, incorporated, non-profit organization of principals who pledge their high schools and participants to follow the Rules and Regulations of the League. There are 73 public, private, parochial, alternative education and charter high schools that make up the membership. The RIIL sponsors championships in 31 sports and activities. More than 31,000 young men and women compete annually in thousands of competitions. The purpose of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League is to supervise and administer the athletic programs, contests, schedules and matters related to participating schools in the state of Rhode Island.

Core Beliefs and Values: Athletics is an integral part of education in our schools • Interscholastic athletics is a privilege that enhances the education of students • Leadership, responsibility, sportsmanship and scholarship are essential parts of athletics • Athletics is an enjoyable experience which fosters valuable life lessons • All member schools have the opportunity to be represented and are accountable to the standards of the RIIL • Fostering a professional relationship among its colleagues is a responsibility of the RIIL.

Vision: The RIIL is an organization with high standards for its member schools, student athletes, and constituencies. Through professional collegiality the League advocates and promotes the value of interscholastic athletics. The League provides athletic experiences that enable student athletes to reach their highest level of academic and athletic potential and prepares them to become responsible citizens.

Mission: The mission of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League is to provide its member schools governance, leadership and support for interscholastic athletics which gives student athletes opportunities to compete in an environment that stresses education, sportsmanship, integrity and safety.



Rhode Island Interscholastic League

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