

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MSHSL hires two new staff members

The Minnesota State High School League announces the addition of two new members to its fulltime staff. Tim Leighton will be the League's Media Relations Coordinator, and Jason Nickleby will serve as the Officials Coordinator.

Leighton, a familiar face on the high school sports scene, is an award-winning sports reporter who spent 25 of his 31 years with the St. Paul Pioneer Press covering high school sports in Minnesota and northwestern Wisconsin. He has also covered small college sports, University of Minnesota athletics, and professional sports in the Twin Cities.

"It is an honor and thrill to join the MSHSL team," Leighton said. "I have long been a fan of education-based athletic and fine arts activities. I have seen firsthand how the core values of the MSHSL's mission have paved the way for success and enrichment through athletic and fine arts activities."

Leighton's primary function will be to work with statewide media, write for the League's website and publications, and to assist with other league-sponsored programs. "I am confident my professional experience has fully prepared me for this new chapter in my life," he said. "I am excited to continue to work for and with the students, the member schools of the MSHSL, and school communities throughout Minnesota."

Leighton, a registered official with the League, has officiated state championship basketball games and currently serves as a member of the Officials Publication Committee representing Minnesota and the Section 5 states of the National Federation of State High School Associations.

Nickleby has wide-ranging educational experiences in addition to his coaching and officiating success. Throughout his nine years of teaching, he has written K-12 physical education and DAPE (Developmental Adapted Physical Education) curriculum, coordinated staff development programs, and mentored new teachers in Rosemount and Cottage Grove, MN. "I've had a lifelong interest in education-based activities as a player, coach and official," Nickleby said. "Working with the MSHSL staff to support officials while serving the students of the member schools of the League is humbling and exciting."

Nickleby, a registered MSHSL official in three sports, has officiated in the Prep Bowl, state basketball tournaments, and the first state championship baseball game at Target Field. He is a Division I football official and Division II and III basketball official. He will continue to develop video review concepts, increase clinic and camp opportunities for current and new officials, and expand the on-line and in-person rules meetings for officials.

"Working with assignors and clinicians throughout Minnesota as we continue to expand training experiences as an integral part of the League's official's program is exciting," Nickleby said. "Our opportunities to work directly with officials in all MSHSL activities are endless."

Leighton and Nickleby will begin with the MSHSL on March 30, 2015.