

# *Minnesota State High School League High School Girls' Varsity Wrestling Proposal*

## **Proposed Amendment to Bylaw [Bylaw #] – [Bylaw Name]**

The MN Wrestling Coaches Association along with member schools are requesting the addition of a Girls' Varsity Division as part of the winter wrestling season. At current time, we are requesting that girls be allowed to train and compete with the boys' teams during the regular season, but have the option of competing in a girl's only individual section and state tournament that would be run simultaneously with the boys post season individual tournaments. Girls would be eligible to stay a part of the boys' dual tournaments.

## **Submitted by: [Names, title, school representing]**

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## **Current Bylaw [bylaw reference]:**

There is not currently a girls' wrestling season.

## **Proposed Changes:**

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- Winter season, running parallel with the current MSHSL wrestling season
- 12 weight classes: 95, 106, 113, 120, 126, 132, 138, 145, 160, 170, 182, 220+ (These are suggested weight classes, but can be modified or adjusted)

## **Other States example of Weights Classes:**

o Texas (10 weight classes): 95, 102, 110, 119, 128, 138, 148, 165, 185, 215

o California (14 weight classes): 101, 106, 111, 116, 121, 126, 131, 137, 143, 150, 160, 170, 189, 235

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Girls will practice and compete with the boys team during the regular season.

## **Regular Season Dual and Tournaments:**

Girls will continue to compete with the boys during the regular season. The girls' wrestling season would follow the same competition system currently in place for the boys.

## **Post Season:**

The 2 girls' individual section tournaments will occur during the same week as the boys' individual section tournaments.

- Each school would be allowed to enter one girl per weight class.
- Tournament to use MSHSL seeding criteria.
- Top 4 finishers in each weight class will advance to state. The state tournament brackets will be 8 person brackets using the same seeding criteria as the boys.
- Team scoring will be kept, as there is no dual format.
- Brackets with five or less wrestlers will use the round robin format.
- Girls would only be able to compete in one section tournament (girls or boys)

The state tournament would run simultaneously with the boys' individual state tournament. The quarterfinal round would be completed in the morning session on the first day. On day two, the girls' rounds would mirror the boys' rounds throughout the day. Instead of breaking down to six mats, we would keep eight mats running until the State Finals which would be competed on four mats instead of the current three.

## **Rationale:**

- Girls' Wrestling continues to grow locally and nationally at a rapid pace.
- MSHSL Female Weight Certifications on boys' teams:
  - 2016/2017 -51 girls
  - 2017/2018 -73 girls
  - 2018/2019 -98 girls

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- 2019/2020 -153 girls
- Over 250 USA Wrestling registered female wrestlers in MN last season
- Participation in the MN USA Girls' Folkstyle Tournament is up 49% in three years.
- Over 21,000 female high school wrestlers currently in the US.
- Twenty-Nine states have sanctioned some form of Girls Wrestling as a high school varsity sport, including neighboring states of Wisconsin, Iowa, and South Dakota. Other states are currently meeting with state officials to further the sanctioning process.
- Missouri had 250 female high school wrestlers in the 2017-18 season before sanctioning. After sanctioning, Missouri increased to 950 female high school wrestlers in the 2018-19 season.
- Girls wrestling has been recognized as an emerging NCAA Sport with 41 NCAA Womens' Wrestling teams, 3 NAIA Womens' teams, and 8 NJCAA Womens' teams
- Augsburg University started a women's college wrestling team in the 2019-20 and claimed two individual national champions and the schools first ever female NCAA champion along with seven All-Americans and five Scholar All-Americans.
- Minnesota has hosted an unsanctioned Girls High School State Championship each of the past seven years.
- Minnesota is home to the only female USA Wrestling chartered Regional Training Center (Twin Cities Regional Training Center).
- The 2016 Olympic games yielded the first gold medal for United States Women's Wrestling Team.
- This is a very low cost options for schools

We are at a critical time for High School girl's wrestling within Minnesota. As mentioned earlier, girls' wrestling has increased at all levels from youth to high school involvement statewide. Girls are already wrestling at the high school level in Minnesota, and we want to provide a platform for growth in the sport to allow more girls to wrestle, and more specifically against their own gender. We need the opportunity for girls to showcase their talents within the state against like competition as they already have in national and international wrestling. It will also allow the opportunity for the girls to earn college scholarships in a booming sport.

