

Parent  
Information  
Session and  
Q and A on  
Girls Wrestling  
and the  
Movement to  
#SanctionPA

# Presentation Outline

- ▶ Background on the PA Girls HS Wrestling Task Force and SanctionPA
- ▶ Current Data on Girls HS Wrestling across the US and PA
- ▶ Why SanctionPA
- ▶ PA State Sanctioning
- ▶ What Counts as an Official Team
- ▶ Q and A

# SanctionPA

- ▶ PA Girls HS Wrestling Task Force
  - ▶ Comprised of various groups and stakeholders across wrestling in PA
    - ▶ ADs, coaches, parents, wrestlers, PWCA, NWCA, PAUSAW, WLAG, etc.



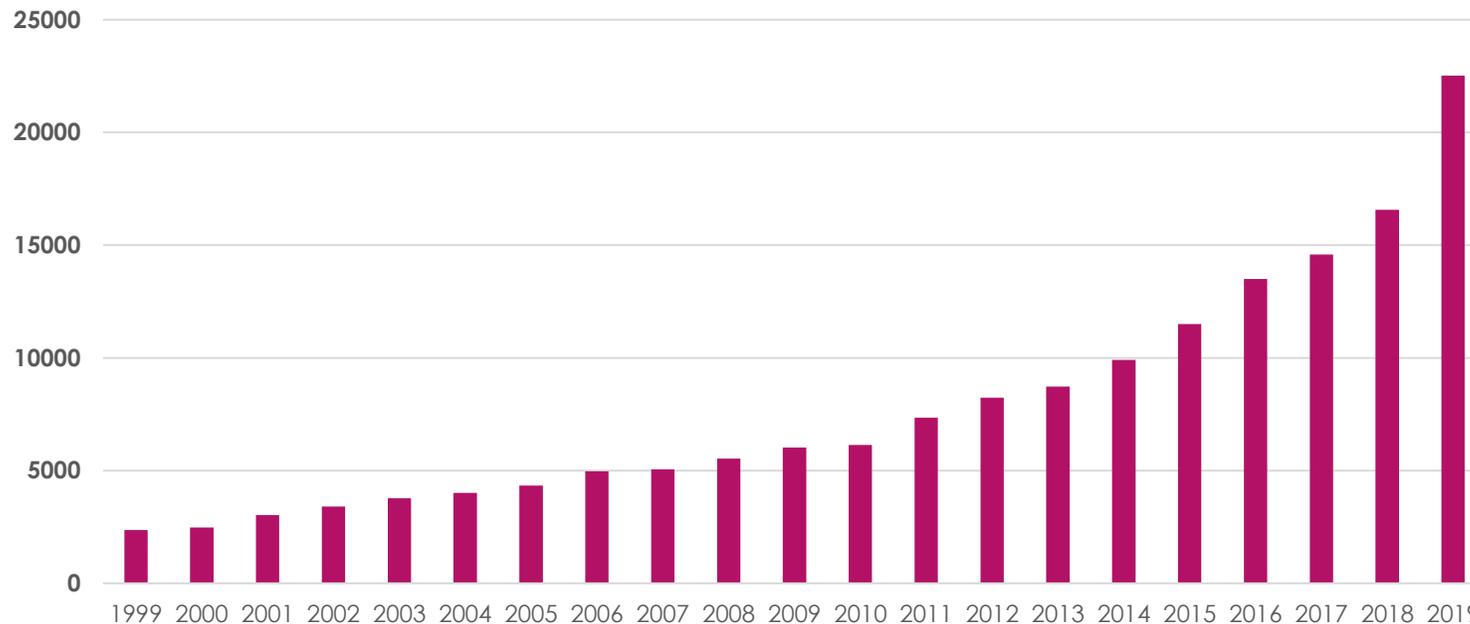
# SanctionPA

- ▶ Goals of SanctionPA
  - ▶ Educate coaches and administrators on girls wrestling
    - ▶ Informational Packet
    - ▶ [www.sanctionpa.com](http://www.sanctionpa.com)
  - ▶ Work with individual schools to form official girls teams
  - ▶ Provide resources to schools and coaches to develop girls teams
  - ▶ Work with the PIAA Wrestling Steering committee and state office on sanctioning efforts
  - ▶ Help coordinate competition opportunities until sanctioning is achieved
  - ▶ Provide opportunities for girls to be able to reap the amazing benefits of the sport of wrestling
  - ▶ To get girls wrestling as an official PIAA Sport and have a PIAA State Championship

# Girls High School Wrestling across the United States

- Girls wrestling is the fastest growing sport in the country
- Participation numbers for 2020 are projected to be 28,000 (30% growth)

**US High School Girls Wrestling Participation  
1999-2019**



# Girls Wrestling in Pennsylvania

- ▶ High School
  - ▶ 100% increase of girls on HS teams in the past 5 years
  - ▶ 102 to 229 (NFHS)
  - ▶ Over 300 USA Wrestling membership cards
  - ▶ Over 130 PIAA member schools represented
  - ▶ All 12 PIAA districts represented
- ▶ 289 girls on Junior High teams
- ▶ Over 370 elementary girls participated in PJW qualifiers



# Why Form a Girls Team and Sanction PA?

- ▶ **Helps our PA girls take advantage of post-secondary opportunities**
  - ▶ Over 75 varsity college women's programs in the US
    - ▶ 5 of them are located in Pennsylvania!
      - ▶ East Stroudsburg, Gannon, Lackawanna, Lock Haven, Del Val
  - ▶ Many scholarship opportunities
  - ▶ Women's wrestling was given NCAA Emerging Sport Status for Division II and III
  - ▶ Wrestling ranks #2 across sports for producing first-generation college students

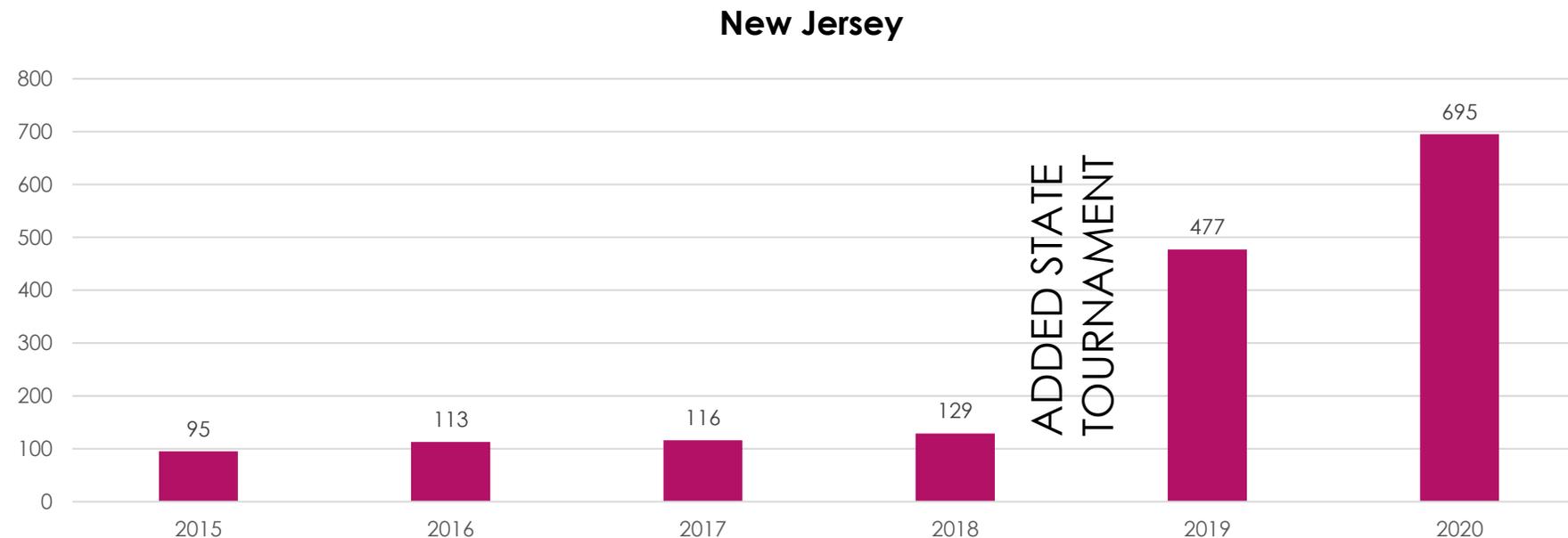


# Why Form a Girls Team and SanctionPA?

- ▶ **Closes the gap between Elem/JH and College/Senior Level, Provides an opportunity for our girls at all age levels**
  - ▶ 289 girls on Junior High teams
  - ▶ Over 370 elementary girls participated in PJW qualifiers
  - ▶ Women's wrestling has been in the World Championships since 1989 and in the Olympics since 2004
- ▶ **Allows girls to wrestle girls**
- ▶ **Decreases safety and liability concerns in a combat sport**
  - ▶ Wrestling is currently the ONLY combat sport not separated by sex

# Why Form a Girls Team and Sanction PA?

- ▶ **Helps get PA closer to sanctioning** - Will help to work towards possibility of PIAA state championship
- ▶ **Increases number of girls participating in wrestling, will increase number of girls on team**
  - ▶ ALL states that have sanctioned saw participation numbers increase after sanctioning



# Why Form a Girls Team and Sanction PA?

- ▶ May receive more attention in the room
- ▶ More competitions against girls
- ▶ Will not need to rely on open tournaments to wrestle girls
- ▶ School will address registration fee for tournaments, transportation, and provide coaching for tournaments on school schedule

# PA State Sanctioning

## ▶ PIAA

- ▶ The Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association, Inc. (PIAA) is a non-profit corporation and a voluntary membership organization. The members of PIAA consist of almost all of the public junior high/middle and senior high schools, some of the Charter and Private junior high/middle Schools, and many of the Charter and Private senior high Schools in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Generally stated, the function of PIAA is to develop and enforce rules regulating interscholastic athletic competition, which are authorized or adopted by the member schools.
- ▶ By-laws and rule-making decisions are made by the member schools
- ▶ PIAA has been working collaboratively with Task Force

# PA State Sanctioning

The Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) current rules require a minimum of 100 schools to have officially recognized girls wrestling programs before considering a proposal to add girls wrestling.

School Board at individual schools approve girls wrestling as an official team



At least 100 schools form official girls teams



PIAA considers motion to sanction girls wrestling as an official sport

# What Counts as an Official Team

- ▶ Get the team approved by the School Board
  - ▶ Usually this means speaking with the coach/AD who take the idea to the Superintendent/Assistant Superintendent and get it on the Board agenda
- ▶ NO MINIMUM NUMBER OF GIRLS
- ▶ Follow PIAA eligibility guidelines

# Q and A: Will my daughter's season be any different once a team is formed?

## **Schools will have lots of options when they form a team...**

- ▶ Coaches:
  - ▶ Can use same coaching staff as the boys, can add assistant position, can add volunteer position, or can add entirely new staff
- ▶ Practices:
  - ▶ Can use the same practice space, same mats, and practice at the same time
  - ▶ Can practice at different times
  - ▶ Can practice separately but in the same space at the same time
- ▶ Competitions:
  - ▶ Can follow boys schedule, can add additional girls tournaments, can add additional boys tournaments, can add duals against other girls teams
  - ▶ Can wrestle other girls teams, boys teams, enter PIAA events, enter NFHS events, enter JV tournaments
  - ▶ Task Force is creating competition schedule

# Q and A: Can a girl remain on the boys team after a girls team is formed?

- ▶ Yes! A school can keep her on the boys team
- ▶ PIAA By-law allows this when the girls team would not adequately meet her needs
  - ▶ Appropriate to consider this option when girl would be competitive on boys varsity
  - ▶ Needs approval from Principal
- ▶ Must remain on one team throughout the season – cannot switch back and forth between teams during the season
  - ▶ Can change team membership between seasons
- ▶ If this may apply to your daughter, we recommend speaking to the coach and your daughter on the best option

# Q and A: Does this include Junior High?

- ▶ When sanctioning is discussed, it is referred to at the High School level
- ▶ Most schools are beginning with the formal addition of high school teams
  - ▶ More variability in experience at high school level
  - ▶ More girls are losing opportunities at the high school level

# Q and A: Do clubs count? Can we join with other schools?

- ▶ A club would count as a team if it is school-affiliated
- ▶ If have multiple high schools within district, we would encourage you to form separate teams
- ▶ For practices, schools must follow PIAA guidelines if don't have separate girls teams.
- ▶ Club practices outside of school-affiliated practices are allowed.

# Q and A: What will the weight classes be?

- ▶ Once girls wrestling is sanctioned, we would anticipate that the PIAA would adopt NFHS weight classes
  - ▶ These weight classes often start at a lower weight than the boys.
- ▶ Until girls wrestling is sanctioned, the weight classes that girls wrestle in will be based on the event they're entering
  - ▶ If entering a PIAA sanctioned tournament during the regular season, then the girls will follow the current boys weight classes
  - ▶ If you are competing against another girls team in a dual meet, you are allowed to set your own weight classes or even use a Madison system. You can also have multiple matches at one weight (e.g., there are 6 105-pound girls so you have 3 matches at 105 pounds).

# Q and A: What concerns do schools have about starting a team?

- ▶ Whether there will be enough girls that will come out for the team
  - ▶ Recruiting is key
- ▶ Budgeting
  - ▶ Can develop a cost-friendly model
- ▶ Competition opportunities

# How SanctionPA is Working with Schools

- ▶ Educate coaches and administrators on girls wrestling
  - ▶ Informational Packet
  - ▶ [www.sanctionpa.com](http://www.sanctionpa.com)
- ▶ Work with individual schools to form official girls teams
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# How You Can Work with Your School

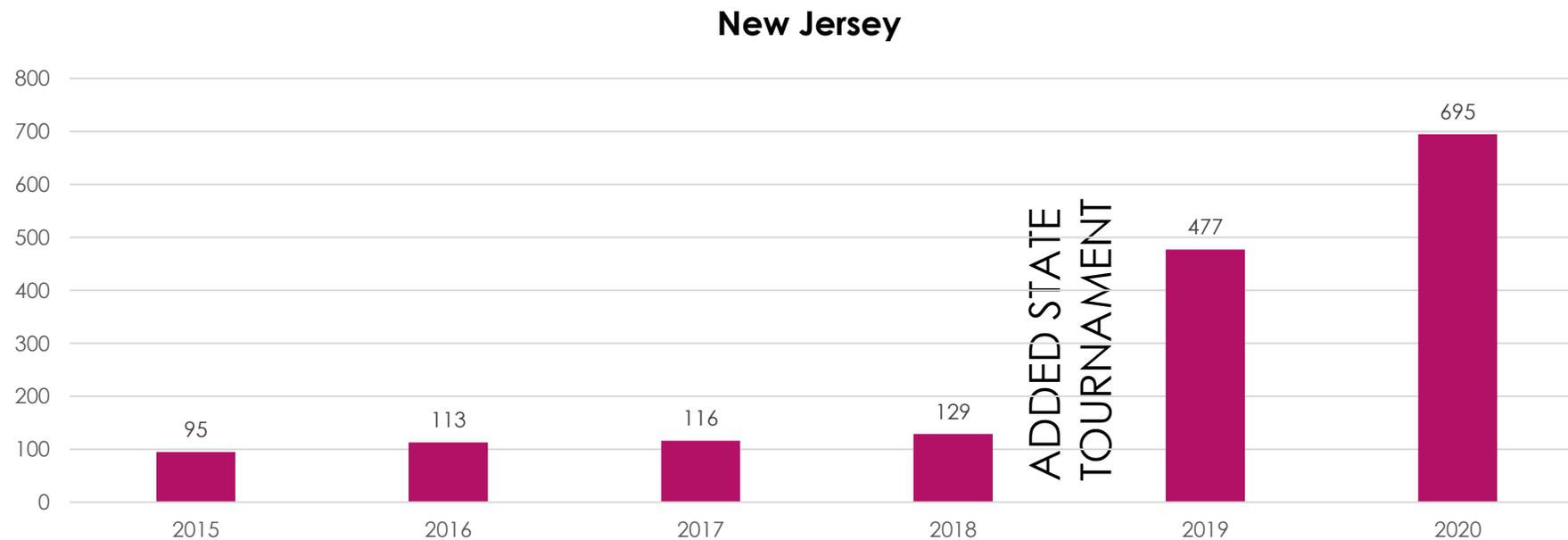
- ▶ RECRUIT – help bring additional girls into the sport and school team
- ▶ Express your hope for girls team formation to the coach and AD
  - ▶ Ask how you can work together and support their efforts
  - ▶ Collaborate
- ▶ Share resources and information
- ▶ If concerns expressed, address specific concerns with facts
- ▶ Fundraiser/sponsorship ideas
- ▶ Work with Booster Club
- ▶ COACH!

# Contact Information

- ▶ [www.sanctionpa.com](http://www.sanctionpa.com)
- ▶ Pat Tocci – [ptocci@nwca.cc](mailto:ptocci@nwca.cc)
- ▶ Chris Atkinson – [caymaccad@gmail.com](mailto:caymaccad@gmail.com)
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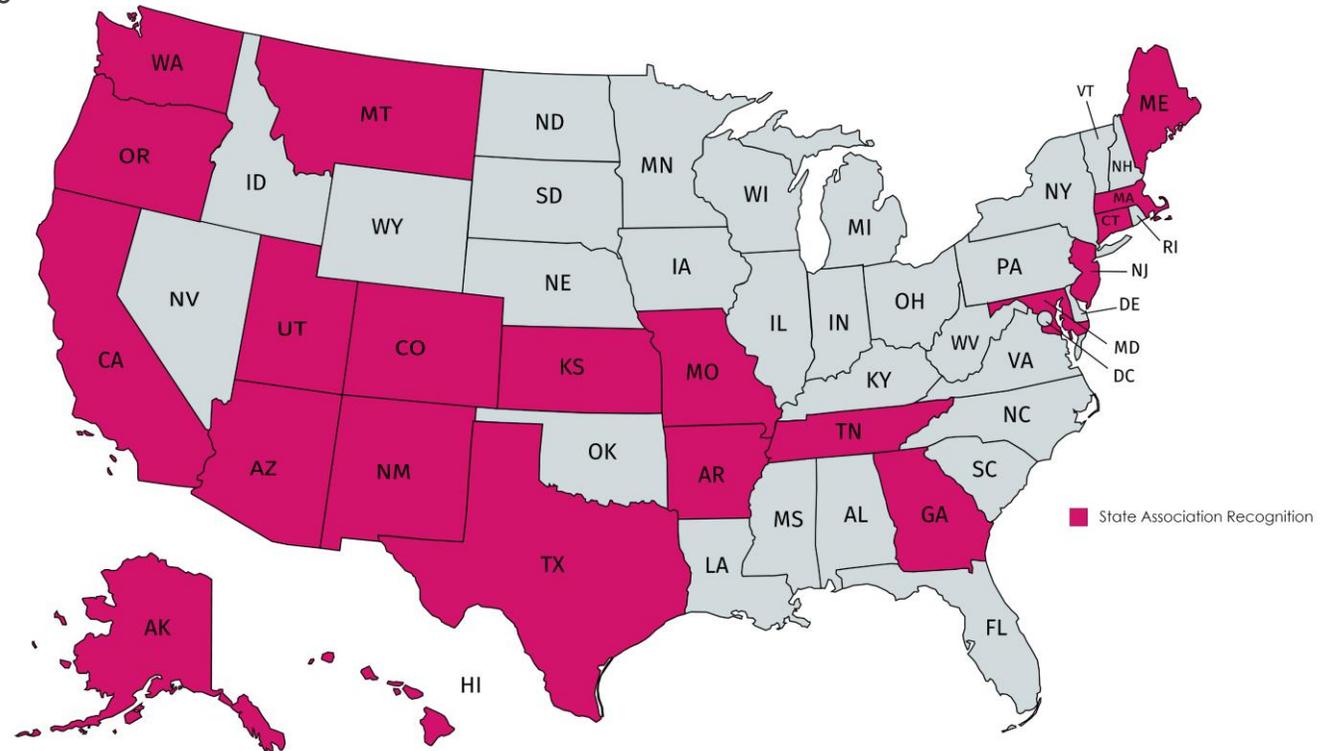
# Why Schools Should Consider Forming a Girls Team

- ▶ **Helps get PA closer to sanctioning**
- ▶ **Increases number of girls participating in wrestling**
  - ▶ ALL states that have sanctioned saw participation numbers increase after sanctioning



# Why Schools Should Consider Forming a Girls Team

- ▶ **Helps PA stay competitive nationally**
  - ▶ Currently 22 sanctioned states



# Why Schools Should Consider Forming a Girls Team

- ▶ **Helps our PA girls take advantage of post-secondary opportunities**
  - ▶ Over 75 varsity college women's programs in the US
    - ▶ 5 of them are located in Pennsylvania!
      - ▶ East Stroudsburg, Gannon, Lackawanna, Lock Haven, Del Val
  - ▶ Women's wrestling was given NCAA Emerging Sport Status for Division II and III
  - ▶ Many scholarship opportunities
  - ▶ Wrestling ranks #2 across sports for producing first-generation college students



# Why Schools Should Consider Forming a Girls Team

- ▶ **Closes the gap between Elem/JH and College/Senior Level**
  - ▶ 289 girls on Junior High teams
  - ▶ Over 370 elementary girls participated in PJW qualifiers
  - ▶ Women's wrestling has been in the World Championships since 1989 and in the Olympics since 2004
- ▶ **Increases sustainability of boys wrestling programs**
  - ▶ Boys wrestling growth has accelerated as the number of girls teams grew
  - ▶ 65 women's and 126 men's teams were added over the past decade
  - ▶ Between 2007 and 2019, NONE of the institutions that dropped men's wrestling had women's wrestling



# Why Schools Should Consider Forming a Girls Team

- ▶ **Allows girls to wrestle girls**
- ▶ **Decreases safety and liability concerns in a combat sport**
  - ▶ Wrestling is currently the ONLY combat sport not separated by sex
- ▶ **Addresses the issue of boys from Diocese schools wrestling girls and provides girls from those schools the opportunity to compete**
- ▶ **Increases local, state, and national level positive attention to school as well as boys wrestling program**

<https://www.instagram.com/p/B7XB8giB4Dn/?igshid=13m2bhm9nedo8>



# Media



## Morning Call 2019-20 all-area wrestling: This season's top moments

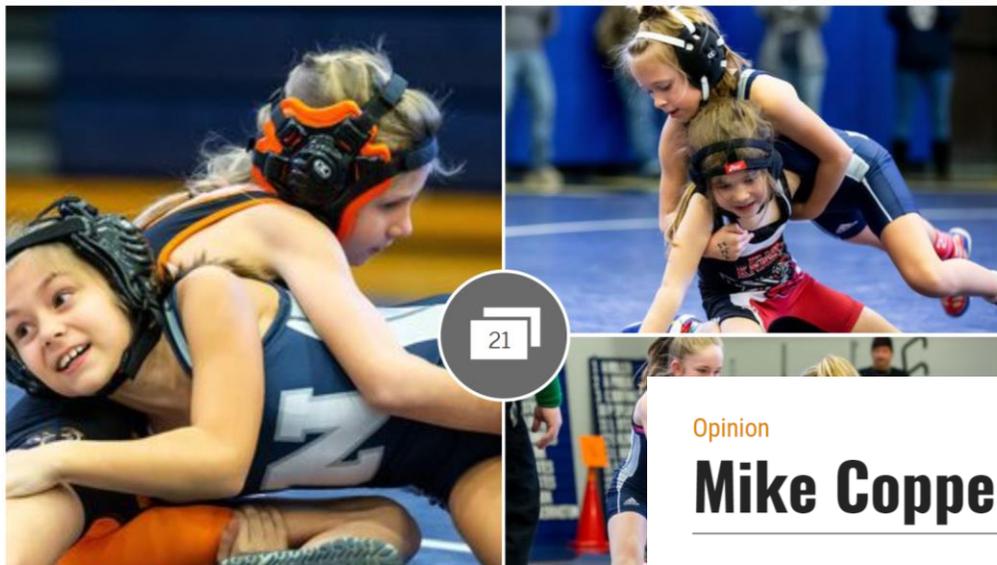
- 1. Parkland vs. Easton girls wrestling scene:** It was Senior Night for the Red Rovers on Jan. 15 at the 25th Street Gym, but a bunch of newcomers stole the stage. Four girls matches before the varsity event brought some of the loudest scenes of the season. It was special for both coaches to share the stage with them. Varsity wrestlers from both teams were among those cheering the most. A video of one of the matches had more than 33,200 views. Awesome! Girls wrestling in the Lehigh Valley is here to stay.

# Media

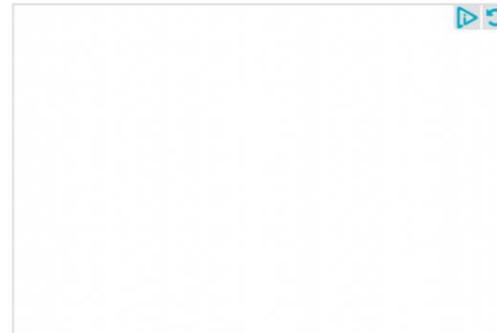
Pennsylvania High School Wrestling

## As McCaskey makes Pennsylvania girls' wrestling history, it's now a matter of when, not if, other programs follow

Posted Mar 18, 2020



Advertisement



Opinion

### Mike Copper: Movement to pin girls wrestling as PIAA sport

# Media

- ▶ 22 local and national articles
- ▶ 3 news media videos
- ▶ 1 national podcast
- ▶ Numerous likes, shares, etc. across social media platforms and across media outlets, including national media outlets

# Why Schools Should Consider Forming a Girls Team

- ▶ **Increases winter sport participation opportunities, moves school closer to Title IX adherence**
  - ▶ Girls have 6000 less participation opportunities than boys during the winter months
  - ▶ Adding wrestling increases winter sport options for girls by 25%
- ▶ **Diversify athletic department**
- ▶ **Supports district's mission**
  - ▶ Increase perception of school as an inclusive campus that leads by example
- ▶ **Increases strength of wrestling program, Athletic Department, and school community**



# Why Schools Should Consider Forming a Girls Team

- ▶ **Allows more flexibility to attend additional girls tournaments**
  - ▶ Girls can participate in other events without it counting against boys team competition points
- ▶ **Highly cost-effective for schools to add compared to other sports**
  - ▶ Can have the same coaches, already have practice space and equipment, can use same transportation, etc.