



**Alabama Girls High School
Wrestling Task Force**

Campaign to Sanction High School Girls Wrestling in Alabama Launches

Montgomery, AL (April 9, 2020) – The Alabama Girls High School Wrestling Task Force announces the launch of SanctionAL, a grassroots effort to work towards getting high school girls wrestling approved as a sanctioned sport in Alabama. The SanctionAL campaign includes advocacy efforts, education resources, promotional materials and collaboration with schools.

For the past five years, girls wrestling has been the fastest growing high school sport in the country. Alabama is working to support the growth of girls' wrestling across the state, recognizing that currently all 8 AHSAA district areas have girls wrestling within their area schools. While there are 23 state high school associations sanctioning a girls' wrestling state championship, Alabama does not yet have an official state tournament and has not sanctioned girls wrestling as a sport.

The Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA) current policy requires a minimum of 40 schools to have officially recognized girls wrestling programs before considering sanctioning the sport. The SanctionAL campaign is working to provide educational information and resources to help grow opportunities for girls wrestling and help to promote the addition of schoolgirl's wrestling programs.

Activities of the SanctionAL campaign include:

- Educate wrestling coaches and school administrators on girls wrestling;
- Work with individual schools to form official high school girls wrestling teams;
- Provide resources to schools and coaches to develop girls teams;
- Work with AHSAA Coaches committee and state office on sanctioning efforts and the creation of a AHSAA State Championship;
- Help coordinate competition opportunities for girls until sanctioning is achieved;

Quotes:

“We have a strong wrestling community in Alabama that is rallying around girls' wrestling so we can increase opportunities for girls and women. Girls wrestling is the fastest growing high school sport in the nation and our state is seeing the same increase in popularity. Now is the time to embrace girls wrestling in Alabama.” - - **Julie Lassere, Alabama USA Wrestling and chairwoman, Alabama Girls High School Wrestling Task Force**

“This is a great opportunity for young women in Alabama to be able to wrestle against their own gender. It’s time we get to the forefront of the national movement. The time is now to make a push, with sustained effort, to sanction girls wrestling in Alabama.” - - **Toney Pugh, chairman, Alabama National Wrestling Hall of Fame and member, Alabama Girls High School Wrestling Task Force**

“Officially recognizing the sport by schools and the state athletic association makes a huge impact on the growth of girls wrestling in that state. Data shows that girls would prefer to wrestle and compete against girls. In those states that recently added an official state-association sanctioned girls state championship have seen growth as high as 400% following sanctioning, and every sanctioned state saw a marked increase in their female wrestling participation numbers.” - - **Sally Roberts, founder and CEO, Wrestle Like A Girl**

About The Alabama Girls High School Wrestling Task Force

The Alabama Girls High School Wrestling Task Force is comprised of wrestling leaders in the state of Alabama. Additionally, the task force is supported by local and national organizations, including Wrestle Like a Girl, Alabama USA Wrestling, National Wrestling Coaches Association, AL Chapter of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame, National High School Coaches Association, and Alabama Wrestling Coaches Association. Learn more about the SanctionAL campaign at ALgirlswrestling@gmail.com

Facebook and Twitter @ALgirlswrestling

###

Media Contacts: Dawn Harrison (205)913-7799, Harrisonfamily7@yahoo.com