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**For Immediate Release**

BROOKLYN CENTER, Minn. --- In response to Executive Order 20-41 issued today by Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, the Minnesota State High School League, under direction of the League's Board of Directors, has declared, effective immediately, all activities and athletics that occur during the spring season have been cancelled for the 2019-2020 school year. The decision of the League is aligned with

recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Minnesota Department of Health and is in support of practices that focus on community health and safety.

“As a parent of a high school senior, I understand the tremendous impact of this pandemic,” said board president Bonnie Spohn Schmaltz of Eden Valley-Watkins. “As a speech coach, team members that I have coached since seventh grade won’t see their final season culminating with the opportunity at the state tournament, including my daughter. Knowing these costs, I’m proud of the sacrifices competitors and coaches throughout the state are making to keep others safe.”

The cancellation applies to all forms of student participation in any League activity, athletics and fine arts. The section and state tournaments for each of the League’s spring activities are also cancelled. This cancellation applies to Adapted Bowling, Adapted Softball, Badminton, Baseball, Clay Target, Golf, Lacrosse, Music, Robotics, Softball, Speech, Synchronized Swimming, Tennis, Track and Field and Visual Arts. League activities and athletics for the spring season have been suspended since March 15.

“I can understand how heartbreaking the cancellation of the spring sports and activities season is for our students,” said board member Troy Stein, the activities director at Edina High School. “Many of our students and families spend the entire year preparing for their season. Sports and activities are about so much more than the competitions and performances. They provide students with a sense of accomplishment, purpose and belonging. They also provide the community an opportunity to gather and rally around their school. Without that, I think it is fair to say we all feel a sense of loss.”

The League will continue to communicate with and assist member schools during the cancellation of these athletics and fine arts activities. The League’s Board of Directors

will hold its regular Board Meeting on Friday, April 24 via digital communication to further discuss ways to work with member schools as they complete the academic year and look toward next year.

“This difficult decision was one we had hoped we would not need to make.” League Executive Director Erich Martens said. “Our activities and athletics offer so much to so many students and their school communities, and we thank all who work to provide these amazing opportunities for students. We also value the incredible benefits of strong and supportive connections between students and their coaches and advisors, and our hope is that these will continue even during this time when they are not able to participate or meet face to face.

“Our work will continue in providing leadership and guidance for our member schools and will soon turn to the summer and planning for a return to participation this fall. At this time, everything we can do to slow the spread and impacts of COVID-19 will help ensure the health of all, and will most certainly increase the chances that programming for students can return.”

The League strongly encourages all students, coaches, advisors, officials and administrators to adhere to all aspects of the current Stay At Home order and participate fully in all recommended safety practices, including social distancing, hand washing, covering coughs and sneezes and limiting unnecessary contact with others. With the increasing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on individuals, communities, and states, and in full support of the recommendation of the CDC, the MDH and all Executive Orders by Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, all Minnesotans must actively work to slow the spread of COVID-19

Here is background information and the timeline of decisions and declarations:

- **March 12** --- The League cancels the adapted floor hockey state tournament and announces the cancellation of the consolation rounds of the girls basketball state tournament. The League also issues a directive that the remaining championship rounds of the girls basketball state tournament will be conducted with a specific number of spectators.
- **March 13** --- The League cancels the remainder of the girls basketball state tournament. All boys basketball section tournament games are cancelled as is the state tournament scheduled to take place March 18-21. The section Speech tournament events for the week of March 15-21 are postponed indefinitely. In a communication to member schools, the League shares participation limitations that extend to April 6 that limit participation to practice and tryouts only.
- **March 15** --- In accordance with Emergency Executive Order 20-02 issued by Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, the League updates participation limitations that there will be no participation in any athletic or fine arts activities through March 27. The League’s previous directive prohibiting scrimmages, contents and competitions will continue through April 6.

- **March 17** --- The League issues updated spring participation limitations to guide participants, administrators and coaches during the suspension of activities.
- **March 25** --- Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz issues a Stay At Home order and closes Minnesota schools until May 4. The League alerts member schools that all spring activities are suspended.