



February 17, 2017

Assistant Commissioner Phil Gardner Announces Retirement

Assistant Commissioner Phil Gardner announced his retirement to the IHSAA Executive Committee this morning effective July 1.

Gardner, 67, has served 27 years with the Association – 18 as a member of the Board of Directors and nine years as an assistant commissioner. He currently administers the sports of boys basketball, baseball and boys and girls cross country for the Association.

In those sports, Gardner has been responsible for the evaluation and assignment of tournament officials, the selection of host sites, and the interpretation of game rules and the IHSAA by-laws. He also has screened and processed athletic transfer reports, unsporting behavior reports, foreign exchange student forms. Additionally, he's interacted with high school principals, athletic directors, coaches groups and committees throughout the state.

"Phil Gardner has served the Indiana High School Athletic Association and the students of Indiana with distinction for over four decades," said Commissioner Bobby Cox. "Phil's dedication to education-based athletics and the purposes of the Association are exemplary. Personally, I greatly appreciate Phil's wisdom and guidance throughout his tenure with the Association and wish him, Ann and their entire family the very best in his retirement."

Gardner was hired as an assistant commissioner in 2008 after serving as a member of the Board of Directors and 14 years as principal at Wes-Del High School (1994-2008). He previously was principal at Cowan for seven years (1987-94). As a member of the Board of Directors, Gardner had one of the longest tenures in Association history having served continuously from 1990-2008. He was elected president of that group in 1995-96 and also elected chairman of the Executive Committee in 1999-00 and 2002-03.

Gardner began his professional career at Blue River Valley Jr.-Sr. High School in 1972 where he later served as assistant principal and athletic director from 1979 to 1987. Prior to his administrative duties there, he taught business, health and driver education and worked as the head coach for baseball (1972-79) and basketball (1974-79). In 1987, he was hired as principal of Cowan Jr.-Sr. High School and worked there for seven years before returning to Wes-Del in 1994.

During his 46 years in education, Gardner has been a licensed track and field official, held membership with the Indiana Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (IIAAA), graduated from the Indiana Principals Leadership Academy and served on the state's Division of Student Activities Board of Directors. He's held membership in the Indiana Association of School Principals which honored him in 2002 as the District 6 Principal of the Year. He also is a member of Phi Delta Kappa and was inducted in the Delaware County Athletic Hall of Fame in 2005.

He is a 1968 graduate of Wes-Del High School and earned his B.S. degree from Indiana State University in 1972. In addition, Gardner earned an M.S. degree in education in 1976 and an Ed.S. degree in secondary administration and supervision in 1981, both from Ball State University. He also attended Gaston High School his first two years before consolidation into Wes-Del. As a student, he lettered four years in basketball and baseball, three years in track and once in cross country.

Gardner and his wife, Ann, a retired teacher, reside in Pendleton. He has two adult children, Alicia and Doug, and two grandchildren.

Requests for a formal application for the vacated position on the IHSAA Executive Staff will be accepted through March 17, 2017. Inquiries should be directed to Commissioner Bobby Cox at bcox@ihxaa.org The interview process will begin later this spring, with the intention of the new assistant commissioner joining the staff on July 1, 2017.

About the Indiana High School Athletic Association, Inc. (IHSAA)

The IHSAA is a voluntary, not-for-profit organization that is self-supporting without the use of tax monies. Since its founding in 1903, the Association's mission has been to provide wholesome, educational athletics for the secondary schools of Indiana. Its member high schools - public, institutional, parochial and private - pay no annual membership fee or incur entry fees to play in the Association's tournaments. A state tournament series is conducted annually in 21 sports, 10 for girls, 10 for boys and one co-ed (unified track and field). A 19-person board of directors, elected by member school principals, governs the organization.

2016-17/29