



PRESS RELEASE

Contacts:

Samantha Bickel, samantha@interscholasticesports.org, 215-435-4113

Bill Thomas, info@interscholasticesports.org, 717-574-2923

For Immediate Release



January 9, 2024

Pa. High School Fall Esports State Championships Heading to Juniata College

Huntingdon County to host PIEA State Championships Jan. 13 and 14

HARRISBURG, Pa. – The Pennsylvania Interscholastic Esports Association (PIEA) is proud to announce that it will hold its in-person Fall High School Esports State Championships at Juniata College in Huntingdon, Pa on Jan. 13 and 14. This will be the first time that the PIEA has held a state championship event in the Allegheny Valley of Southcentral Pennsylvania, highlighting the growth of the PIEA and the impact esports has had on high schools throughout the Commonwealth.

The PIEA's Fall Valorant State Championships will be held on Saturday, Jan. 13, 2024, with the Fall Rocket League State Championships following the next day on Sunday, Jan. 14, 2024. Both events will begin at 11 a.m. and will be held within Terrance Hall on the campus of Juniata College, located in the rugged and scenic mountains of central Pennsylvania. Juniata's 110-acre main campus is situated in the town of Huntingdon and is truly a centralized location for PIEA's state championship event.

For Saturday's Valorant Semi-Finals, Lower Moreland High School (Montgomery County) will play the winner of the quarterfinal match between Greater Altoona CTC (Blair County) and Baldwin High School (Allegheny County), and South Fayette High School (Allegheny/Washington counties) will face the winner of the quarterfinal match between Garnet Valley High School (Delaware County) and Haverford High School (Delaware County). The Valorant quarterfinals will wrap up on Wednesday, Jan. 10.

South Fayette High School will also send a team for Sunday's Rocket League Semi-Finals, as they will meet B. Reed Henderson High School (Chester County). Forest Hills Jr./Sr. High School (Cambria County) will take on Biglerville High School (Adams County) in the other Rocket League Semi-Final game.

"With the continued growth of the PIEA in school districts and communities throughout all regions the Commonwealth, including more rural and smaller communities, we are excited to bring our state championship event to this part of Pennsylvania," said Samantha Bickel, the Executive Director of the PIEA. "Not only are we seeing esports programs flourish in high schools and middle

schools across the state, we are also working with universities and colleges like Juniata to connect esports players and enthusiasts to opportunities beyond high school.”

Juniata College’s Esports Program is one facet of the college’s inclusive, engaged, and vibrant community. The program supports a strong gaming community that includes nationally competitive varsity teams with designated esports facilities and coaching. Juniata also offers scholarships to esports athletes attending the college.

“There is a buzz and hype around the Commonwealth regarding esports and we are thrilled to partner with Juniata to make this event a huge success for these student athletes,” Bickel added. “Showcasing Pennsylvania’s top esports players and continuing to bridge their talents with opportunities in higher education will remain one of the PIEA’s top priorities.”

Currently, the PIEA has nearly 2,500 students participating in its statewide competitions, representing close to 400 teams. As of January 2024, the PIEA has nearly 200 schools in its network. PIEA-member schools hail from all corners of the Commonwealth, including 45 of the state’s 67 counties.

Earlier this season, the PIEA partnered with The Esports Company (TEC), a Pennsylvania-based technology company focusing on growing scholastic esports programs in communities throughout the region, to reach even more Pennsylvania students. TEC’s High School Series champions qualified automatically for the PIEA post-season this Fall, marking the first time the two leagues collaborated to bring a higher standard and stronger competition for Pennsylvania’s esports athletes.

“The future of esports in Pennsylvania is so bright,” said Bill Thomas, a founding Board Member of the PIEA. “We continue to grow the footprint of scholastic esports in communities all across the Commonwealth and with innovative partnerships like the one we have established with TEC, our hope is to have vibrant and transformative esports programs on every high school campus in the state.

“Stay tuned for more exciting news regarding PIEA and TEC’s partnership,” Thomas teased. “Both the PIEA and TEC have the same vision of putting students first and building an ecosystem that provides safe and reliable competitions that encourage teamwork, leadership, and academic success. The Fall State Championships is just the beginning.”

For more information about the PIEA Fall State Championships, please contact Samantha Bickel. And for more information about the PIEA, or to register for future competitions, visit PIEA at interscholasticsports.org.

###

About Pennsylvania Interscholastic Esports Association

The Pennsylvania Interscholastic Esports Association (PIEA) is one of the nation's first high school governing bodies solely focused on statewide esports programs and clubs. The PIEA is a member-driven scholastic organization providing oversight and a regulatory structure to high school esports in PA. It offers competitive esports programming for nearly 200 high schools across the Commonwealth that includes regular seasons, playoffs, tournaments, and state championships.

The mission of PIEA is to be a Pennsylvania esports advocate and resource for regulatory oversight and competition guidelines for interscholastic esports.