

Dr. Karissa Niehoff began her career in Connecticut public education and athletics in 1988. Across her career she was a teacher of Physical Education, Health Education and Latin; K-12 Wellness/Exercise Science Department Coordinator; high school athletic director; middle school assistant principal and high school principal. Prior to becoming a school administrator, Dr. Niehoff was a coach of multiple varsity sports, advisor to student council and peer educator student groups, and President of the CT Association of Health, PE, Recreation and Dance. She led multi-year district professional development initiatives and served in many capacities for the Connecticut State Department of Education. In 2010 she was named Executive Director of the Connecticut Association of Schools-Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference. In August, 2018 she assumed the position of Chief Executive Officer of the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Dr. Niehoff's work in education and athletics extends beyond the public school realm. She served for four years on the Education Committee of the United States Olympic Committee, acting as U.S. delegate to International Olympic Academies in Greece and Canada and representing the USOC at numerous national conventions, conferences and educational programs. Dr. Niehoff was co-founder and Dean of the "Passing the Torch" Academy For Youth Sport Leadership, a USOC initiative to promote leadership and the spirit of Olympism within the realm of youth sport. In 1996, she was the field hockey program leader at the International Youth Camp during the Atlanta Olympic Games. She was a member of USA Field Hockey's Board of Ethics for 10 years. Prior to becoming CEO, Dr. Niehoff served the NFHS as a member of the NFHS Board of Directors, chair of the NFHS Foundation Board of Directors, chair of the Student Services and Field Hockey committees, and a member of the Strategic Planning and Essentials task forces.

As CEO of the NFHS, an organization serving 51 member state associations and nearly 20,000 high schools, Dr. Niehoff has worked to elevate the recognition and respect for education-based programming and the breadth of work of the NFHS and its member state associations. She serves on the boards of directors for USA Basketball and USA Field Hockey; and works closely with leadership at the NCAA, USOPC, multiple youth and professional sports organizations, as well as leaders from government, education institutions and the corporate community. She has brought collaborative ideas to life; sponsoring multiple national consortiums focusing on significant issues transcending sport and the performing arts.

Dr. Niehoff has received numerous state and national accolades for her achievements and impact on education, interscholastic athletics and the arts, and leadership development.

Dr. Niehoff earned a Bachelor of Science in Health and Physical Education from the University of Massachusetts, a Masters in School Health Education from Southern Connecticut State University, a Sixth Year degree in Educational Leadership from Central Connecticut State University, and a Doctorate in Educational Leadership from the University of Connecticut. Dr. Niehoff is the first woman selected to lead the NFHS, and among the few women in U.S. history to serve as CEO of a national sport organization.