

CHAPTER 3.

PANEL: HIGH SCHOOL ESPORTS STATE OF THE UNION

SAMANTHA ANTON AND JAMES O'HAGAN

Samantha Anton serves as Chief Operating Officer for the North America Scholastic Esports Federation, who is working to ensure all students possess the knowledge and skills needed to be society's game changers: educated, productive, and empathetic individuals. The Federation's core values are intertwined through all aspects of education and play: learning, opportunity, community, diversity, and respect.

NASEF develops and provides educational opportunities through esports, competitive team-based video gaming. Opportunities include middle school and high school curriculum, including English Language Arts and Career Technical Education, organized league play, project-based challenges, and support in community development. Student opportunities extend beyond gameplay to learning and challenges in the business, artistic, and entrepreneurial aspects of the esports ecosystem.

James O'Hagan is a leader in connecting and promoting esports

in education. He has had a role in starting and growing esports teams in two large urban school districts. He actively promotes esports as being a medium to something more for students beyond the games. His podcast, *The Academy of Esports* delves into topics surrounding esports and education and connecting into powerful ideas to increase student agency, motivation, and college and career pathways. James is a doctoral candidate at Northern Illinois University in the field of instructional technology and an active rugby player.

The High School Esports State of the Union panel reviewed the traceable history of high school esports, the impact of organized play, and the launch of the #esportsEDU community. The panel rounded off with a review of the current state of high school esports.