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## **Middle School Basketball Championships Set to Make Large Impact in Champaign-Urbana Area**

*Champaign, IL*—The Champaign-Urbana area will host the Illinois Middle School Basketball Championships for the third time this March 15–17, 2024. There are 178 boys and girls' teams representing 4<sup>th</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> grade in club and school divisions will compete for the championship at University of Illinois Campus Recreation's Activities & Recreation Center (ARC), the Champaign Park District's Leonhard Recreation Center and Martens Center, St. Thomas More High School, and St. Malachy Catholic School and JW Eater Jr. High, both in Rantoul.

"We are thrilled to bring our popular annual state tournament to Champaign-Urbana," states Bill Reinking, Executive Director of the State Basketball Championship. "The region is the perfect location as it allows for convenient travel for the hundreds of youth teams from Rockford, Chicago Metro, Springfield, Carbondale, and all points in between. Securing a facility such as the University of Illinois Activities and Recreation Center, with its 10 courts under one roof, is sure to provide our basketball families with a one-of-a-kind experience."

"It's exciting to continue to showcase up-and-coming basketball athletes at the Middle School Basketball Championships," explains Mark Brown, Director of Sports, Events, and Film with Experience Champaign-Urbana. "Basketball has a special place in our community, and we're honored to continue welcoming athletes and their fans to provide them a top-notch experience during the championships."

Brown estimates that the economic impact for the event will be \$2.1 million.

All 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade boys teams will compete at the Leonhard Center and St. Thomas More. The full schedule can be found on the website at <https://www.statebasketballchampionship.com/illinois>.

Spectators can purchase single day tickets for \$15 or 3-day passes for \$30–\$35. Tickets can be purchased online at <https://www.statebasketballchampionship.com/il-buy-tickets>. All games streamed live via BallerTV: <https://www.statebasketballchampionship.com/baller-tv>

For more information, contact Mark Brown at [markb@experienceceu.org](mailto:markb@experienceceu.org) or 217-351-4133.



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### **About State Basketball Championships**

In 2012, Bill Reinking founded the National Middle School Basketball Association (NMSBA) with the mission of producing state-wide competition for the best youth basketball teams per state. The resulting State Basketball Championships have since taken root as annual, season-ending events in eight states across the USA. While our tournaments continue to expand across the nation, our mission to assemble the best youth teams remains the same wherever we go. To achieve this, we partner with independent tournaments and leagues to create a network of Qualifier Events through which top teams earn their bid to State. Our unique qualifier model serves to promote 500 community-based sports organizations nationwide, while funneling the fiercest and most geographically diverse competition into each State tournament.

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