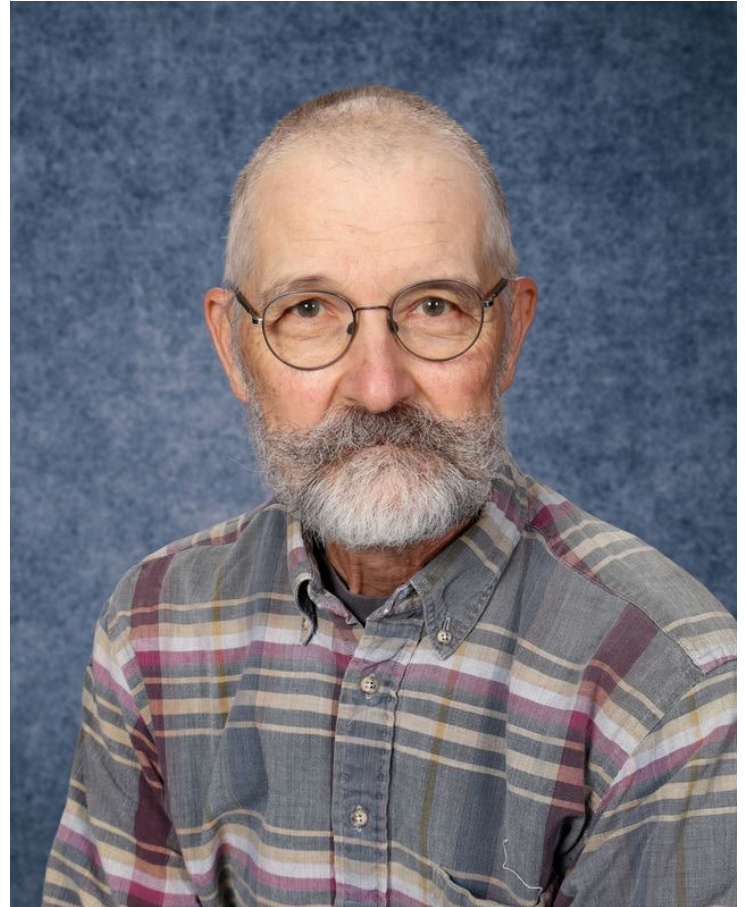




## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Date: October 8, 2025  
Contact: Taryn Retzlaff  
NSAA Phone: 402-489-0386

**LINCOLN, NE — The Nebraska School Activities Association is proud to recognize Mr. Mark Ellis of McCool Junction Public School as this week's Above and Beyond Award nominee.** For more than 35 years, Mark has served as a trusted driver, transportation director, maintenance helper, and game-day staple for the McCool Junction community. His steady presence and quiet commitment have made him an essential part of the school's operations and culture.



Mark has spent decades transporting students safely—not just to and from school, but also to countless activities and events. Whether he's behind the wheel for a regular route or driving the football team to an away game, Mark consistently builds strong relationships with students and families, offering encouragement, reliability, and care. Many students over the years will tell you that when they think about their school experience, they think about Mark—because he has truly been there through it all.

In addition to his work in transportation, Mark also runs the clock at football games—a role he's held even longer than his driving duties—and for many years ran the clock at home basketball games as well. His commitment to school events goes far beyond the job description. He is a familiar face in the

press box, at the wheel, and behind the scenes, always doing his part to make sure things run smoothly for students and staff alike.

Mark also coordinates the school's daily and activity routes with great care, ensuring that students are where they need to be, when they need to be there. He brings the same thoughtful attention to detail and calm dependability to his scheduling that he does to everything else he touches.

During the pandemic shutdown, when school buses sat idle and students stayed home, Mark didn't. He spent his time helping around the school grounds, doing odd jobs and projects to keep things looking sharp and well cared for. No one asked him to—he just saw the need and stepped in, which is who he is at his core.

Mark Ellis embodies everything this award stands for—consistency, service, kindness, and quiet leadership. His legacy at McCool Junction is built on decades of showing up, pitching in, and making life better for students, coaches, and staff. He is not just a bus driver or a game clock operator—he is a beloved member of the school community who makes McCool Junction a better place every single day.

The NSAA is proud to honor Mr. Mark Ellis for going above and beyond. His dedication, humility, and heart represent the very best of Nebraska schools.

**The NSAA's Above and Beyond Program is designed to recognize the hidden gems of communities across Nebraska.**  
[Click here to nominate someone today!](#)

