

A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER

NIL



NIL stands for Name, Image and Likeness, and NIL has rapidly changed the landscape for student-athletes and schools, first at the NCAA level, and now, in the high school environment. The discussions on NIL, which allow for student-athletes to be financially compensated by entities that use their names, photos, etc., began many years ago when Ed O'Bannon (Artesia High School), a UCLA Basketball All-American, spoke out about student-athletes being left behind and exploited by those who profited from their name, image and likeness. Another former UCLA student-athlete, Ramogi Huma (Bishop Amat High School), intensified that effort by forming a nationwide association committed to obtaining rights for student-athletes in this area.

After many years of slow progress, this issue finally got the attention of legislators in various states, and ultimately the United States Congress, and the doors were opened for student-athletes to begin to be compensated for the use of their name, image and likeness.

As student-athletes get more involved with signing NIL deals and they become more prevalent at the high school level, it is incumbent on everyone involved in education-based athletics to be aware of the relevant rules that apply to this situation.

First, there are two long-standing CIF Bylaws that define what NIL means for high school students and they are as follows...

CIF Bylaw 212.C – Violations in CIF Sponsored Competition

CIF Bylaw 212.C.(3) states, "Wearing a school team uniform or any identifying school insignia appearing in any advertisement, promotional activity or endorsement for any commercial product or service."

CIF Bylaw 212.C(4) states, "Lending his/her name and team affiliation for purposes of commercial endorsement. Any appearances by students for nonprofit organizations must be approved by the Board of Trustees concerned. This provision is not intended to restrict the right of any student to participate in a commercial endorsement provided there is no school team or school affiliation."

"NOTE: 212.C(3) and (4) above also includes advertisement, promotional activity, endorsement or affiliation of league, CIF Section(s), or CIF State."

In addition, in the Do's and Don'ts Chart included in CIF Bylaw 510 on page 114 of the 2022-2023 CIF Southern Section Blue Book, we have the following language...

**COMMISSIONERS MESSAGE NO. 2 - NIL
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“Do - Promote/advertise products as individuals, not affiliated with a high school. Represent businesses as individuals, not affiliated in any way with a high school.”

“Don’t - May not promote/advertise products representing a high school. May not wear any high school uniform, apparel or any item identifying a student with a high school.”

The purpose of this message is to ensure that our member schools and our student-athletes understand the current rules related to NIL and steer clear of any situation that would violate these rules. Like you, we do not want to see any circumstance where the eligibility of student-athletes is compromised due to violations of CIF Bylaws.

I hope this information is useful to you going forward. If you have any questions, or I can help you in any way at all, do not hesitate to contact our office. We stand ready to assist you with any interpretations or clarifications in understanding NIL for high school students.

Thank you very much for your continued help and support, it is truly appreciated.

All the best,

Rob Wignel

