DWK
DANNIS WOLIVER KELLEY
Attorneys at Law

Website Copy

MATTHEW P. JUHL-DARLINGTON
Attorney at Law
mdarlington@DWKesq.com

Chico

SAN FRANCISCO
200 California Street
Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94111
TEL 415.543.4111
FAX 415.543.4384

LONG BEACH
444 W. Ocean Blvd.
Suite 1750
Long Beach, CA 90802
TEL 562.366.8500
FAX 562.366.8505

SAN DIEGO
750 B Street
Suite 2600
San Diego, CA 92101
TEL 619.595.0202
FAX 619.702.6202

CHICO
2485 Notre Dame Blvd.
Suite 370-A
Chico, CA 95928
TEL 530.343.3334
FAX 530.924.4784

SACRAMENTO
555 Capitol Mall
Suite 645
Sacramento, CA 95814
TEL 916.978.4040
FAX 916.978.4039

EAST BAY
2087 Addison Street
2nd Floor
Berkeley, CA 94704
TEL 510.345.6000
FAX 510.345.6100

FRESNO
1690 W. Shaw Avenue
Suite 220
Fresno, CA 93711
TEL 559.388.5802
FAX 559.388.5803

www.DWKesq.com

October 16, 2025

VIA EMAIL

Direct Investigations Office
California Department of Education
1430 N Street, Suite 5319
Sacramento, CA 95814-5901
email:CDEDI@cde.ca.gov

Re: **CDE Investigation Report**
Case Matter No. 2025-0123

To Whom It May Concern:

We write on behalf of the Tahoe Truckee Unified School District ("District" or "TTUSD") regarding the above-referenced matter. On or about July 3, 2025, the California Department of Education ("CDE") provided the District with notice of its intention to investigate a Complaint filed on June 27, 2025, by a former student in the District, ------("Complainant"), alleging concerns made at a Board Meeting held on June 25, 2025.

During the meeting, the District shared that it would remain in the Nevada Interscholastic Activities Association ("NIAA") and will not be joining the California Interscholastic Federation ("CIF") due to a need for:

- A comprehensive financial review of a potential transition.
- An in-depth analysis of the impact of missed class time on students.
- Investigating facility solutions for sports such as soccer and tennis, which would be impacted by a shift to winter sports seasons, creating challenges due to severe local winter weather.
- Thorough community engagement to ensure broad input and understanding.

The Complainant alleged, in part, that "By refusing to leave the NIAA, TTUSD is undermining the rights of transgender students and violating the very legal and ethical obligations that safeguard students in our state." The Complainant further requested that CDE investigate the issue.

On or about September 29, 2025, CDE provided the District with its Investigation Report, outlining its procedures and determination that the Complaint had merit. CDE then directed the District to comply with the following corrective actions, in accordance with Title 5, California Code of Regulations, section 4664(a)(6):

1. By November 30, 2025, the District must present to the Direct Investigations Office its plan for transitioning out of NIAA effective no later than the start of the 2026-2027 school year. This shall include a plan to transition to CIF or any other athletic organization that complies with California state law and specifically EC 221.5(f).

2. By April 30, 2026, the District must present to the Direct Investigations Office confirmation that it has transitioned out of NIAA effective no later than the start of the 2026-2027 school year.

The District understands it is being directed to join CIF. The District has had a longstanding relationship with the NIAA, due to District schools' sharing a close proximity with the Nevada border which allows for safer student travel to schools that compete in NIAA, compared with CIF schools. The District understands as well that, as a District in California, it is required to follow California law which is now in conflict with NIAA's policies. The District has been working closely with both NIAA and CIF to work through the transition, which **will cause a significant disruption to students in the District.** The District has been in ongoing discussions with CIF about submitting an application and understanding the scheduling differences between CIF and NIAA so the District can best prepare students for this change. (See Exhibit A, a true and correct copy of an email to CIF Commissioner Mike Garrison dated April 30, 2025, outlining the District's intent to join CIF).

However, the District schools' departure from NIAA would result in the following:

- Students and families would lose accessibility to participate in winter sports.

- The athletics program would incur increased costs.

- Students would experience a loss of instructional time due to increased travel distances for competitions.

- Long-standing rivalries would be forfeited, and established sports programs and community involvement, cultivated over many years for students and community, would be disrupted.

In fact, it was with student safety in mind that the District decided to join NIAA, as traveling to schools in California can be dangerous during the winter months, exposing students to potential road closures and hazardous conditions. Such dangers impact participation in sporting events and increase the likelihood of game cancellations due to weather conditions.

Further, the District understands that CIF has already begun scheduling games for the 2026-2027 school year. As only pending members of CIF, the District has not been part of those conversations. The District is concerned that joining CIF too late in the year will place the athletics program at risk for inappropriate league placement. District schools will be placed based on what's available versus the right alignment with the competitiveness of our athletic program, causing further disruptions.

For the reasons stated above, the District is respectfully requesting a continuance of the dates in the above corrective actions. The District requests the date in the first corrective action, currently set for November 30, 2025, be continued to **April 30, 2026**. This will allow the District to have sufficient time to continue meeting with CIF, communicate with NIAA, and create a thorough plan as to how that transition will work, and ensure that they are able to do so in a way that minimizes disruption to District students and allows them and the community to adequately prepare.

Turning to the second corrective action, the District respectfully requests a continuance of the current April 30, 2026 confirmation date to **December 31, 2026**. This will allow schools in the District to be part of CIF's discussions regarding athletic event scheduling before the 2027-2028 school year starts and follow the CIF application timeline. This will ensure a smooth transition and sufficient time to continue the District's ongoing collaborative discussions with CIF.

We appreciate your consideration and hope to hear from you soon. Should you have any questions, please contact me directly.

Sincerely,

DANNIS WOLIVER KELLEY

Matthew P. Juhl-Darlington

cc: Kerstin Kramer, Superintendent Chief Learning Officer, Tahoe Truckee USD
Annamarie Cohen, Executive Director of Student Services, Tahoe Truckee USD

Attachment: Exhibit A: Email to CIF Commissioner Mike Garrison, dated April 30, 2025

Exhibit A

Email to Mike Garrison - 4-30-2025

Dear Mike,

We appreciate all of your support! Attached you will find the TTUSD Letter of Intent to become a member school district of the Sac-Joaquin CIF Section and a spreadsheet with the information about each high school in our district and the sports offered. The spreadsheet has two tabs: one with the current sports and seasons as they exist with NIAA, and a tab with the sports aligned to the seasons as they are in CIF.

The TTUSD Athletic Committee is looking forward to meeting you during the week of May 12th. As you can imagine, they have a lot of questions. Here are something of things they are wondering.

- League status/Independent status: Can we have a full compliment of games?
    - How many non-league games will be allowed for consideration in playoffs?
    - How many league games can be accommodated for TTUSD given this late addition?
    - Is it possible for us to have our schedule in place for fall sports by the beginning of June? (who and where?)
    - Will football and volleyball have a full compliment of games for the season? Where does TTUSD need to augment?
    - Truckee High School has non-league games already scheduled with CIF Sac-Joaquin member schools:
    - Soccer is a big concern. This is a winter sport in CIF and a fall sport in TTUSD. We are concerned about the ability for our students to practice and for TTUSD to host home games due to potential winter conditions and too much snow on our fields.
- Truckee High does not currently offer Lacrosse, but is interested in adding this for Spring, is this a possibility?

Thanks again for all of your support and helps. We are looking forward to continuing the conversation.

Sincerely,
Kerstin

Attachments: TTUSD Sports by School Letter of Intent