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**UNDUE INFLUENCE RULE INTERPRETATIONS – A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS  
AND PARENTS**

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CIF Philosophy on Student Eligibility For Interscholastic Athletic Competition

The California Interscholastic Federation (CIF), as the governing body of high school athletics, affirms that athletic competition is an important part of the high school experience and that participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege. The privilege of participation in interscholastic athletics is available to students in public or private schools who meet the democratically established standards of qualification as set forth by the CIF Federated Council.

CIF Bylaws governing student eligibility are a necessary prerequisite to participation in interscholastic athletics because they:

1. Keep the focus on athletic participation as a privilege, not a right.
2. Reinforce the principle that students attend school to receive an education first; athletic participation is secondary.
3. Protect the opportunities to participate for students who meet the established standards.
4. Provide a fundamentally fair and equitable framework in which interscholastic athletic competition can take place.
5. Provide uniform standards for all schools to follow in maintaining athletic competition.
6. Serve as a deterrent to students who transfer schools for athletic reasons and to individuals who recruit student athletes.
7. Serve as a deterrent to students who transfer schools to avoid disciplinary action.
8. Maintain an ethical relationship between high school athletic programs and others who demonstrate an interest in high school athletes.
9. Support the Principles of “Pursuing Victory with Honor”

Undue Influence Rule Interpretations

The following is a review of the meaning and interpretation of the CIF Bylaw 510 - Undue Influence. This information is meant to give students and parents a guide to determining what is, and is not, a violation of CIF Bylaw 510 concerning undue influence; pre-enrollment contact, transfer based on athletic motivation and failure to disclose pre-enrollment contact. The NCS Commissioner of Athletics has the responsibility of determining if and when a violation of this rule has taken place. Transferring school may affect a student’s eligibility. When there is a violation of CIF Bylaw 510 an athlete can be ineligible for two calendar years and a school’s athletic program can be sanctioned. Questions and possible violations regarding undue influence, pre-enrollment and transfers based on athletic motivation should be directed to appropriate school personnel.

General Reminders

- Schools are held responsible for recruiting of athletes done by parents of other students, students, alumni, boosters, staff, etc.
- Recruiting is difficult to prove and sometimes difficult to define. Remember the premise on which the CIF 510 bylaw was founded – parents and families should be left alone to decide which school they believe is best for their child. No one associated with a school should try to influence them in any way. This is to protect the students from inducements or pressures to go to one school or another for athletic purposes. Schools are educational institutions first and as such should ALWAYS put academics before athletics. We hope parents and families choose a school based on what is best academically for their student

- and somewhere else down the list of priorities consider athletics.
- The CIF 510 Bylaw applies to private and public schools.
- When in doubt about an activity check with your athletic director or principal.

### General Outline of the Undue Influence Rule:

The purpose of the 510 form is for parents, students and school administrations and coaches to acknowledge **any** pre-enrollment contact. It does not mean that the pre-enrollment contact is recruitment, or a student is transferring based on athletic motivation. However, it is a violation when the contact is not reported. Not reporting the contact may result in up to a two-year suspension of athletic eligibility for an athlete and removal of a school from CIF membership depending on the severity of the violation. Undue Influence and Pre-Enrollment contact apply at all times prior to enrollment at a school regardless of the age of the student (pre-high school or high school age).

### How do schools report Pre-Enrollment contact on the CIF 510 Form?

On the CIF 510 Form – Pre-Enrollment Contact Affidavit the parents and student sign on the appropriate lines under Parents and Student Statement. The first statement is certifying that there has been no contact with any persons associated with the school and the second statement is certifying that the student has not participated on an outside team within the previous 24 months that is associated with the enrolling school. If the parent and student can certify that these two statements are both true then they sign statement #1 and #2 signature lines.

If the parent and student cannot certify that either of the two statements are true then they must sign #3 signature lines and attach a complete written statement disclosing and explaining the specifics of the pre-enrollment contact.

Examples of Undue Influence and Pre-Enrollment Contact (The examples below require acknowledgement by the student, parent, coach or school of pre-enrollment contact prior to enrollment if the student transfers. Contact can be reported using the 510 Pre-Enrollment Contact form.)

#### Some Examples of Pre-Enrollment Contact

1. A student returns to a school of attendance after transferring away from the school (Return to Previous School).
2. Potential athlete attends open gym or open field and then transfers to the school hosting the open gym or open field.
3. Student shows up at a school that the student is interested in attending and speaks to a coach, athlete, athletic director, administrator or any other school personnel.
4. Prior to enrollment at School A the student plays in an athletic contests with students at School A.
5. Prior to enrollment at School A the student is coached by a parent, coach, teacher or any other person associated\* (\*See Bylaw 510) with School A.
6. A potential athlete communicates with the coach of a school prior to enrollment.
7. A student participates in a shadow visit **and** meets with potential coaches to discuss the specific athletic program.

#### Some Examples of Undue Influence

Below are examples of undue influence by a person or school to influence the enrollment of a student at a school. Each section commissioner is given the responsibility to evaluate what is and is not undue influence. These examples offer some guidelines to potential violations.

1. Members of a school booster club seek out and discuss with a potential athlete, or discuss with the parents, the possibility of the student attending their school
2. A school offers an invitation for an individual to attend a school athletic function, regardless of the age of the student.
3. A school offers an invitation for an individual to attend a high school game, regardless of the age of the student.
4. Invitation(s) to junior high school athletic team or a team comprised of junior high

- school age students to participate in pre-game or half-time activities.
5. A school offers a discounted ticket price or a free ticket to an individual or targeted group of potential athlete(s) of junior high age to attend an athletic event.
  6. A coach tries to convince a current athlete to not transfer to another school. (*Note: It is acceptable for an administrator to discuss with a student thinking about transferring to another school the options of the student and how the student's athletic eligibility may be affected.*)
  7. School uses athletic team/competition pictures, team/coach accomplishments, etc. to advertise their school for purposes of visitation and/or enrollment. (*Note: Such advertisements may use athletic pictures if the advertisement uses at least the same number or more pictures of other non-athletic activities at the school.*)
  8. A student moves into a school's attendance area B and wishes to start summer activities with the school prior to enrollment at the school. *Note: When a potential transfer student approaches a coach regarding the athletic program at their school the only appropriate response is "I can't talk to you about our program or attendance to our school. You must see the principal." Enrollment in a school is defined as actual attendance at a school or participation in an athletic contest. When parents or students who are transferring schools ask if they can participate in summer activities NCS staff have responded that as long as you have submitted your request to attend the school and have met with a guidance counselor to secure your class schedule for the coming year you are allowed to participate in summer activities without jeopardizing eligibility at the new school. The contact must be acknowledged on the CIF 510 Form.*
  9. Coach for school B talks to a student at School A about joining a club team after a game involving School A and B. Student transfers to School B.
  10. A potential transfer student calls or approaches a coach at a potential enrolling school and asks about the athletic program. The coach outlines the entire program including off-season conditioning, open gyms/fields, offense, defense, etc. *Note: When a potential transfer student approaches a coach regarding the athletic program at their school the only appropriate response is "I can't talk to you about our program or attendance to our school. You must see the principal."*

### Prima Facie Evidence

Prima facie evidence is "sufficient evidence" of undue influence or recruiting by a school to which the student transfers, or, that the student enrolled in that school in whole or in part for athletic reasons. Examples are listed below. When prima facie evidence exists the student is ineligible but has the opportunity to present sufficient proof to the satisfaction of the section commissioner that rebuts or disproves the prima facie evidence.

#### Examples of Prima Facie Evidence

1. A student transfers to School B where the School B coach is also the coach of the new student's club team.
2. A student transfers to School B after playing on a club team where some or all of the members of the club team also attend School B.
3. A student transfers to School B where the coach of school B has given private or group lessons to the student prior to actual attendance to the school and within the previous 24 months.
4. A student transfers to School B where a former coach of school B coached the student on either an outside or school team within the previous 24 months.
5. A student transfers to School B where someone associated\* (See CIF Bylaw 510) with School B has participated with or coached the student within the previous 24 months.

## **CIF Constitution and General Bylaws**

### **UNDUE INFLUENCE, PRE-ENROLLMENT CONTACT, FAILURE TO DISCLOSE**

**PRE- ENROLLMENT CONTACT AND ATHLETICALLY MOTIVATED TRANSFERS**

- a. The use of undue influence by any person or persons to secure or retain a student or to secure or retain one or both parent(s)/guardian(s)/caregiver of a student as residents may cause the student to be ineligible for high school athletics for a period of one year and shall jeopardize the standing of the high school in the CIF.
- b. Transferring and enrolling in a school, in whole or in part, for athletic reasons may jeopardize a student's eligibility.

**NOTE:** Undue influence is any act, gesture or communication (including accepting material or financial inducement to attend a CIF-member school for the purpose of engaging in CIF competition regardless of the source) which is performed personally, or through another, which may be objectively seen as an inducement, or part of a process of inducing a student, or his or her parent(s)/guardian(s)/caregiver, by or on behalf of, a member school, to enroll in, transfer to, or remain in, a particular school for athletic purposes.

**A. Pre-Enrollment Contact**

Any and all pre-enrollment contact of any kind whatsoever with a student must be disclosed by the student, parent(s)/guardian(s)/caregiver and the schools to the Section office on a completed CIF Pre-Enrollment Contact Affidavit (CIF Form 510). Pre-enrollment contact may include, but is not limited to: any communication of any kind, directly or indirectly, with the student, parent(s)/guardian(s)/caregiver, relatives, or friends of the student about the athletic programs at a school; orientation/information programs, shadowing programs; attendance at outside athletic or similar events by anyone associated\* with the school to observe the student; participation by the student in programs supervised by the school or its associates before enrollment in the school.

**B. Athletically Motivated Transfers**

Pre-enrollment contact or an athletically motivated transfer may be considered prima facie evidence ("sufficient evidence") that the student enrolled in that school in whole or in part for athletic reasons (See Bylaw 200) and cause the student to be ineligible for participation in high school athletics for a period of one year from the date of enrollment at the new school in all those sports in which the student participated at the former school.

Athletically motivated pre-enrollment contact of any kind by anyone from, or associated\* with, a school or its athletic programs to which a student may transfer or move into the attendance area is not permitted.

When a prima facie case ("sufficient evidence") of an athletically motivated move exists, the student shall be ineligible to represent the new school in interscholastic athletic competition for a period of one calendar year from the date of the student's enrollment in the new school in all those sports in which the student participated at the former school (See also "C." and "D.") unless sufficient proof is presented to the satisfaction of the Section Commissioner that rebuts or disproves the presumption that the move was athletically motivated.

**C. Failure to disclose Pre-Enrollment Contact**

A failure to disclose pre-enrollment contact may be considered prima facie evidence ("sufficient evidence") of recruiting or undue influence to attend the school and may cause the student to be ineligible for high school athletics and shall jeopardize the standing of the high school in the CIF. When there is failure to disclose pre-enrollment contact, the student shall be ineligible under the provisions of Bylaw 202 to represent the new school in interscholastic athletic competition for a period of one calendar year from the date of the student's enrollment in the new school unless sufficient proof is presented to the satisfaction of the Section Commissioner that rebuts or disproves the evidence of undue influence/recruiting for athletic reasons.

**D. Transferring to a School after Participating on a Non-School Athletic Team Associated with the School**

A transfer of a student from his or her current school of attendance with or without a corresponding change of residence to any high school where the student participates or participated, during the previous 24 months, on a non-school athletic team, (i.e. AAU, American Legion, club team, etc.) that is associated\* with (See definition in “A.”) the new school in the sports previously participated in shall be considered prima facie evidence (“sufficient evidence”) of undue influence/recruiting by the school to which the student transfers. Such transfers may be considered prima facie evidence (“sufficient evidence”) that the student enrolled in that school in whole or in part for athletic reasons.

A team associated with a school is one that is organized by and/or coached by any member of the coaching staff at, or any other person associated\* with (See definition in “A.”), that school; and/or, on which the majority of the members of the team (Participants in practice and/or competition) are students who attend that school.

When a prima facie case (“sufficient evidence”) of undue influence/recruiting exists, the student shall be ineligible to participate in interscholastic competition for one calendar year from the date of enrollment in the new school in all sports in which the student participated at the former school unless sufficient proof is presented to the satisfaction of the Section Commissioner that rebuts or disproves the evidence of undue influence/recruiting for athletic reasons.

**E. Transferring to a School Where a Former High School Coach has Relocated**

A student at any grade level who transfers to a new school within one calendar year of the relocation of his/her high school coach to that school with or without a corresponding change in residence shall be considered prima facie evidence (“sufficient evidence”) of undue influence/recruiting by the school to which the student transfers or may be considered prima facie evidence (“sufficient evidence”) that the student enrolled in that school in whole or in part for athletic reasons.

When a prima facie case (“sufficient evidence”) of undue influence/recruiting exist, the student shall be ineligible to represent the new school in interscholastic athletic competition for a period of one calendar year from the date of the student’s enrollment in the new school in all sports in which the student participated at the former school unless sufficient proof is presented to the satisfaction of the Section Commissioner that rebuts or disproves the evidence of undue influence/recruiting for athletic reasons.

F. A student shall become ineligible for CIF competition and shall be penalized according to Bylaw 213 for accepting material or financial inducement to attend a CIF-member school for the purpose of engaging in CIF competition, regardless of the source.

G. All transfer students shall submit a completed CIF Pre-Enrollment Contract Affidavit (CIF Form 510) with the appropriate transfer application(s) as required by their respective Section under Bylaw 207 and/or Bylaw 209.

*\* Persons “associated” with a school include, but are not limited to: current or former coaches, current or former athletes, parent(s)/guardian(s)/caregiver of current or former student/athletes, booster club members, alumni, spouses or relatives of coaches, teachers and other employees, coaches who become employed, active applicants for coaching positions, and persons who are employed by companies or organizations that have donated athletic supplies, equipment or apparel to that school.*

**NOTE:** CIF Form 510 is available through the local Section Office.  
(Revised May 2009 Federated Council)

*Question: Is it within the rules for the parents of an eighth grade student who is interested in attending a private school to contact the principal of that school to learn about the course of study, tuition charges, transportation and other school matters?*  
*Answer: Such a contact initiated by a parent would not be a violation of existing rules.*

<i>Question:</i>	<i>Is it legal for a member of a private or public school's booster club to initiate contact with the parents of an eighth grade student for the purpose of informing them about the school?</i>
<i>Answer:</i>	<i>A student's interscholastic athletic eligibility would be jeopardized by such action on the part of a booster club member.</i>
<i>Question:</i>	<i>A member of a booster club of a private school is contacted by the parents of an eighth grade student who is interested in information pertaining to the scholastic and athletic program at the private school. What may a booster club member do in response to such a request?</i>
<i>Answer:</i>	<i>The booster club member should advise the parent to contact the principal of the high school for information pertaining to the school.</i>
<i>Question:</i>	<i>Student "A" will graduate from the eighth grade in two weeks. Would it be a violation of the rule if the student was personally contacted by a private or public high school coach to play on a summer league basketball team?</i>
<i>Answer:</i>	<i>Such action by a public or private high school coach in personally contacting an eighth grade student to participate on a summer league basketball team would be in violation of the recruiting rule. However, if an eighth grade student contacts a senior high school coach to secure information pertaining to a summer league team, there would be no violation of CIF 510 rule. The coach should first determine if the student has enrolled for the upcoming school year. If not, the coach would refer the student to the principal so the student and family could initiate the enrollment process. Once the student is enrolled then the coach could discuss with the student involvement with the summer program.</i>
<i>Question:</i>	<i>What contact may a coach have with a parent contemplating enrolling children at his or her high school?</i>
<i>Answer:</i>	<i>The coach should refer ALL parent contact with reference to the high school athletic program and enrollment to the appropriate school administrator. Prior to enrollment, all parent contact must be handled by school administration, not members of the coaching staff.</i>
<i>Question:</i>	<i>What may representatives of a senior high school do as far as contact with junior high school students is concerned?</i>
<i>Answer:</i>	<i>NCS has developed guidelines for schools to follow concerning junior high school visitation and application of CIF 510. Please refer to Appendix A in this document.</i>