

A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER

THE STATE OF OFFICIATING



In my 16 years working for the CIF Southern Section, I have learned many things about officiating. Last week, we all learned even more about the current state of officiating in our section when the CIF Southern Section Council did not approve the proposal from the Officials Fees/ Relations Committee for a three-year agreement for official's fees, beginning next school year. There are reasons why this proposal was defeated and some of those were expressed at last week's meeting. Also, we are surveying our Council Representatives to get more information from the leagues who voted against the proposal. Once the survey is complete, we will forward the results to the Official's Fees/Relations Committee for their consideration in an effort to formulate a proposal for the CIF Southern Section Executive Committee, who now has the responsibility to approve an official's fees structure for 2016-17, and perhaps beyond next year, at their upcoming meeting on May 11.

Against this backdrop, we are also experiencing a shortage of officials in certain areas and specific sports within our section. This shortage of officials is of great concern to all of us because a much larger burden is put on our official's associations to cover all of our games, and on our schools, who have to accept less officials than they have originally requested and are forced to change schedules to make sure that all of our contests have certified officials.

In an effort to address this shortage of officials, it is necessary to examine the roles of our member schools and our official's associations in this situation to hopefully make some progress in the time ahead. In discussions with our schools and our official's associations, here are some factors they have identified that have a direct influence on the shortage of officials...

SCHOOLS: (FEEDBACK FROM OFFICIAL'S ASSOCIATIONS)

- Lack of administrative support at contests, especially with safety and security of officials
- Disrespectful coaches, unruly parents, students and fans
- Inconsistent payment
- Poor communication regarding schedule changes and/or cancellations of contests

OFFICIALS: (FEEDBACK FROM SCHOOLS)

- Lack of quality and consistency in officiating assignments
- Lack of accountability of officials
- Abuse of power – Ejections, technical fouls, yellow cards, etc.
- Politics and power struggles within the official's associations

What can be done, and must be done, by our schools and our official's associations? We must make every effort to work together to recruit new officials, make sure they are trained appropriately and then treat them properly so we will be able to retain them after their first year and for the years after that. It is everyone's responsibility to ensure that we can not only meet this challenge facing us, but overcome it, as our student-athletes deserve our best effort in this area. I hope I can count on all involved to make it happen!

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

All the best,

Rob Wignel

