



# **HISTORY OF THE CALIFORNIA INTERSCHOLASTIC FEDERATION SOUTHERN SECTION (CIFSS)**



107th historical “tidbit.”  
Dr. John S. Dahlem

## **HISTORY OF THE CIF-SS PUBLIC PRIVATE COMMITTEE**

The CIF-SS Executive Committee at their meeting of April 16, 2008, directed Commissioner Jim Staunton to create a committee to address the Century League Proposal for creating separate team playoffs for public and private schools. Dr. John Dahlem was assigned the task of creating this committee and reporting back to the Executive Committee and the CIF-SS Council.

A mission statement, along with a premise statement, for the committee were written:

### **Mission Statement**

**“To create an open dialogue between public and private high schools in the CIF Southern Section to address perceived or real concerns regarding competitive equity and to develop solutions for those concerns through CIF Southern Section Blue Book changes or clarifications.”**

### **Premise Statement**

**“The CIF Southern Section has since its inception has enjoyed an amiable relationship between public and private high schools on the playing field and wants to see that positive relationship continue to promote competition and sportsmanship.”**

In preparing for the initial committee meeting it was historically found that this was not the first time the Executive Committee or Council had considered the concerns of public and private schools. The first reference to a private school

within a public league was the inclusion of Harvard Military School in the Suburban League for football competition in 1915. In 1928, The Prep League was established solely for private schools to compete only against each other. The CIF Southern Section “Monthly Bulletin” of January 1942 mentions the problems of public school students transferring to private schools. During the 1950’s and early 1960’s several private schools were accused of undue influence and recruitment of student athletes. In 1972, a special committee was formed to consider separate public and private school play-off formats. In the following years several private schools were sanctioned for violations of CIF-SS rules regarding transfers.

Prior to the first meeting an information folder was created that included the following documents:

**PUBLIC/PRIVATE FORUM INFORMATION FOLDER**

- Century League Proposal to the CIFSS Council dated February 1, 2008.
- Legal Opinion from Kronick Moskovitz Tiedemann & Girard dated March 24, 2008.
- Legal Opinion from Margaret A. Chidester & Associates dated April 10, 2001.
- Copy of presentation made to CIFSS Council Meeting by Patrick Murphy, Mater Dei High School dated April 24, 2008.
- Copy of presentation notes made to CIFSS Council Meeting by Charles Tilley, Loyola High School dated April 24, 2008.
- Information on Private and Public High Schools playing each other throughout the United States by John Dahlem.
- Public and Private School Athletic Competition in California – “It Can Be Done” by John Dahlem.
- NFHS Survey results regarding membership - 2007.
- NFHS Private/Public December, 2005.
- NFHS Private Coach in Public World, 2007.
- “WIAA Bulletin” dated May 2, 2008
- Historical – “New York Times” - October, 1915.
- Historical – 1915, Russell, Plutko
- Historical – “CIFSS Bulletin” - May, 1972.
- Historical – “CIFSS” Bulletin - June, 1975.
- Historical - 1991 Memorandum by Stan Thomas.
- Historical – 1991 Area Placement of Parochial Schools in Orange County by Stan Thomas.
- Statistics – Public vs. Private Schools Championship Comparison, February 15, 2008.
- Statistics – 1996-2007 Private School Champions.
- Statistics – Revenue Sports
- Commissioner’s “Newsletter” - March, 2008.
- Newspaper article “New Jersey Star Ledger” - December 3, 2007
- Newspaper articles “Los Angeles Times” dated March 5, 2008
- Newspaper articles “County News” dated April 24, 2008.
- Newspaper article Public/Private, 2008.
- District of Columbia Unlevel Playing Rules - February, 2003.
- Central Section CIF Attendance Boundaries for Private Schools.
- Data - Public/Private Transfers, Hardships and change of address
- Data – 2004-2008 Boys/Girls Basketball Playoff Teams Semi-Finals all divisions
- Competitive Anomalies – North Coast Section
- TV Revenue for Public and Private Schools

The Agenda for the first meeting was set:



***Public and Private High School Committee Meeting***  
***Wednesday, May 14, 2008***  
***10:00 a.m.***

***Agenda***

1. Introduction of Committee Members
2. Direction of the Committee: The CIF Southern Section Executive Committee at their meeting of April 16, 2008, directed Commissioner Jim Staunton to create a committee to address the Century League Proposal for creating separate team playoffs for public and private high schools
3. Mission and Premise of the Committee
4. Review of Materials in Public/Private Forum Information Folder
5. Additional Requests for Statistics or Documentation
6. Thorough Review of the Century League Proposal and Rationale for the Proposal
7. Develop a List of Perceived or Real Concerns regarding Equity Issues between Private and Public High Schools, i.e. Coaches' Salaries, Facilities, Recruitment of Student Athletes, Boundaries, Shadowing or Other Unfair Advantages
8. Discussion: Possible Solutions to Concerns
9. General Discussion
10. Other:
11. Homework/Research Assignments for Committee Members
12. Adjournment

Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 20, 2008, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., Large Conference Room, CIF Southern Section Office

One of the all-time great meetings in the history of the CIF-SS took place this day with agenda item #7 featured. The ***“angst”*** of the public schools was clearly present and it was a “no holds barred meeting” with everyone having the opportunity to express their feelings, both personal and professional. It got very heated and many years of frustrations surfaced. To the credit of “all” present, everyone in that room wanted a solution to a festering problem and a better CIF Southern Section.

Members of the first Public Private Committee (photos below \*)

- |                    |                                 |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| • Dick Billingsley | Oak Park High School            |
| • Alan Clinton     | Servite High School             |
| • Collen Cross     | Garden Grove High School        |
| • Mark Cunningham  | University High School          |
| • Eleanor Dykstra  | Valley Christian High School    |
| • Mark Edgemon     | Upland Christian High School    |
| • Tom Fox          | Villa Park High School          |
| • Mark Groff       | St. Bonaventure High School     |
| • Dave Hess        | Ventura High School             |
| • Pat Lee          | St. John Bosco High School      |
| • Monty McDermott  | St. John Bosco High School      |
| • Steve Miller     | Bishop Montgomery High School   |
| • Jason Negro      | Trabuco High School             |
| • Scott Raftery    | CIF-SS Office                   |
| • Gary Smidderks   | Los Angeles Baptist High School |
| • John Dahlem      | Chairperson                     |

From that first “heated meeting” several themes were evident:

- Public schools had many concerns over what they considered to be an uneven playing field.
- Not all private schools are same and most of the concerns voiced by the public schools centered around 15 or so of the larger private schools.
- A lack of knowledge on how private schools operate. Private schools must recruit to stay in open. The public concern is that recruitment is not solely based on athletics.
- The public private angst may continue forever, but there are solutions to improve the situation.

In the following meetings, the committee discussed the numerous areas of concern brought by the public schools dealing with competitive equity. The committee discussed possible solutions and CIF-SS Blue Book changes that would help alleviate the angst. The committee reaffirmed repeatedly that **COMMUNICATION, OPEN DIALOUGE, EDUCATION** and a **PROACTIVE APPROACH** are the foundation of all possible solutions.

Defined areas of concerns, the actual situation and possible solutions:

<b><u>CONCERN</u></b>	<b><u>ACTUAL</u></b>	<b><u>POSSIBLE SOLUTION</u></b>
<b><i>Define the problem</i></b>	The angst seems limited to a small number of large private schools who are playing at the highest competitive divisions.	Look for solutions relative to those schools. Have a dialogue with those schools on an individual basis.
<b><i>Publics and Privates are different entities</i></b>	Publics must take who walk in their door. Privates must recruit "students" to exist.	Educate both private and public schools on how the other entity conducts their business.
<b><i>Salaries</i></b>	Privates are not bound by district stipend schedules.	Blue Book bylaw on disclosure of salaries.
<b><i>Facilities</i></b>	Many feel that privates have more money to spend on facilities and greater capabilities of raising funds. Privates can build facilities without State DOE interference.	The committee felt that this was a non-issue. Many publics have outstanding facilities and most privates have average or limited facilities.
<b><i>Attendance Boundaries</i></b>	Privates are not bound by attendance boundaries.	The Committee felt that attendance boundaries would not work in the CIFSS due to number of schools and area served. Enforce transfer rules especially as they relate to juniors and seniors.
<b><i>Competitive Anomalies</i></b>	Oaks Christian and St. Bonaventure dominance in Northern area. Long Beach Poly in Moore League.	Blue Book bylaw on competitive anomalies.
<b><i>Recruitment</i></b>	Both private and public schools unfortunately recruit. Privates must <b><u>recruit</u></b> students to exist, but they can not <b><u>recruit</u></b> student <u>athletes</u> .	<u>Enforce rules</u>  <u>Clarify "shadowing"</u>  <u>Education for everyone on "prior contact" and "undue influence"</u>  <u>Clarify advertising</u>  <u>Clarify summer programs</u>  <u>Use of Public/Private Open Forum committee to visit schools</u>  <u>K-12 schools must be reminded that those K-8 students do not belong to the high school yet and the school must follow all prior contract rules.</u>

<b>Rule violations</b>	Violations of rules are proportionate to private and public membership.	Continue to sanction and punish violators of the CIF-SS rules. <b><u>Publish rule violators on the CIFSS website without naming students.</u></b>
<b>Transfers</b>	Statistically most transfers are from private to public or public to public. Some very high profile transfers go to private schools. Most valid change of residences are into public schools	Public/Private Open Forum Committee addresses schools with habitual high profile cases.  Enforce transfer rules.
<b>Financial aid, scholarships, grants</b>	Private schools can give financial aid. Concerns on who might pay for a private student's tuition.	Blue Book clarification on financial aid.
<b>Knowledge of rules</b>	Both public and private schools are inadequate in this area.	Continue to educate all members
<b>Communication between private and public schools</b>	Most public schools are unfamiliar with how private schools operate.	Blue Book bylaw on creation of Public/Private Open Forum Committee. The Commissioner or the Executive Committee could ask the Public/Private Committee to visit egregious schools.
<b>Privates win more CIF-SS Championships</b>	Privates win the same % of Championships as their total % of the membership...40% of the membership is private – they win 40% of the Championships. Concern that in some high profile sports there is an inordinate number of private schools in the semi-finals and finals.	Asses the statistics at the end of each play-off grouping cycle.
<b>Unpalatable attitude of elite schools and their parents</b>	Some schools definitely have a <u>poor perception</u> among their competitors.	Visit to those schools by the Public/Private Open Forum Committee. Schools and parents attend "Pursuing Victory with Honors" workshops.
<b>On-line schools</b>	Some schools have students not taking any courses on site and still playing a sport.	Clarify rules for on-line schools and the need to have students taking a certain percentage of their classes on campus.

What quickly became evident was the fact that both private and public schools were guilty of the same infractions and recruitment of student athletes was not just private school supposedly recruiting public athletes but also recruiting from other private schools.

During the next ten years the Public Private Committee met to deal with issues surrounding these contentious issues and is very proud of the progress that has been made to help ease the tensions.

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- Communication to the CIF-SS Council about the work of the committee. Vetting ideas for improved relations which in turn were forwarded to the Executive Committee, the Superintendent's Committee, the Private School Committee and the Athletic Administrator's Committee.
- Education including workshops held by members who have been educators/coaches in both the public and private schools.
- Advocacy to "league" private schools as best as possible with private schools during the releguing process.
- Advocacy of creating football only leagues where possible during the releguing process.
- Advocacy of creating "***competitive equity***" during the play-off season.
- Members of the Public Private Committee meeting with private leagues to discuss perceived angst by the public schools.
- Advocacy of the "sit-out-period" (SOP) to somewhat solve the lack of school boundaries by the private schools. The SOP period is at least a "punishment" for transferring schools without a permanent change of residence.
- Transparency of coaching compensation.

- Specific input to Guidelines to Understanding Bylaw 510 – Undue Influence (“Do’s & Don’t Chart/Questions & Answers):
  - Redefine Athletic Motivation.
  - Unified time schools can pass on information to feeder schools.
  - Knowledge of how to conduct an Open House.
  - Interpretation of Social Media and the use of media platforms.
  - Advertising guidelines.
- Clarification of private school scholarship guidelines to include percentage of students/athletes receiving aid and use of outside firms to determine financial need.
- Encouraged continued communication within the CSADA (Athletic Directors) membership.

Commissioner Rob Wigod stated:

**“Learning more about how public and private schools operate, along with an unwavering committee to following the CIF State Bylaws and the CIF-SS Bylaws at all times, can go a long way in helping everyone understand how to work together in a more positive way. That is what we have always done.”**

After ten years the Public Private Committee continues their quest for better understanding and more positive interaction between public and private schools. Current members of the Committee are:

**CURRENT PUBLIC/PRIVATE COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Ranier Wulf, Assistant Commissioner CIF-SS  
members)

(Photos of original

Dick Billingsley, Oak Park HS\*

Alan Clinton, Servite HS\*

Stephanie Contreras, Flintridge Sacred Heart HS

Mark Cunningham, University HS\*

Mark Edgemon, Upland Christian Academy\*





Tom Fox, Villa Park HS\*  
 Mark Groff, St. Bonaventure HS\*  
 Paula Hart Rodas, Leuzinger HS  
 Dave Hess, Ventura HS\*  
 Rich Imbriani, Cajon HS  
 Terry Mendoza, St. Joseph's HS  
 Steve Miller, Bishop Montgomery HS\*  
 Valerie Pentolino, St. Lucy's HS  
 Jim Perry, HBUSD  
 Brett Proctor, Alta Loma HS  
 Charlie Richards, Woodcrest Christian HS  
 Dr. Gary Smidderks, Los Angeles Baptist\*  
 Mike Solar, Alemany HS  
 Dr. John Dahlem, Chairperson\*

\*Original members present at the first "angst" meeting.

