

A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER

HELP IS ON THE WAY



In the aftermath of our survey on transfer rules, one of the most valuable things we received were the comments made by our member schools. They covered a wide variety of topics, but in evaluating the three options we presented to them on potential changes to our current rules, many, many respondents expressed frustration with an option that was not included in the survey, the situation involving valid residence change. Those who expressed their feelings on that subject made an excellent point and I believe we can try and do something about it.

CIF Bylaw 206, allowing immediate eligibility for all sports upon executing a valid residence change by the student and their family, has been around for a long, long time. It makes sense. A family of four lives in Irvine, they move to Riverside due to a new job for the Father, Mother or both, it is reasonable to expect that their high school student would have unlimited athletic eligibility. I think we can all agree with that concept, and as a result, I believe it is a rule that would be very difficult to adjust, especially on a state-wide level.

However, as we are all aware, certain valid changes of residence being presented to our schools and to our office, are not in line with the scenario presented above. We see all kinds of permutations involving moves made by students and their families in their effort to escape the limitations on their eligibility contained in CIF Bylaw 207, Sit-Out Period. This is a dangerous situation for our member schools because if a student and their family have not executed a valid residence change, per the standards contained in CIF Bylaw 206, the student is ineligible, and the school forfeits all games that the student has participated in. None of us wish to see that happen.

Currently, in certifying valid residence changes, our member schools are guided by a long list of items in the Blue Book that parents can produce to prove that a valid residence change has taken place. This is where it gets problematic because that list has too much flexibility in it. What specific items that parents must provide is not standardized, how many documents, what information is included in those items, etc., is completely up to the individual member school to accept, or to request additional evidence, to make sure it is truly a valid move.

Therefore, it is time that we put in place a uniform requirement for a valid change of residence to be certified by the new school. We are currently developing a form/check list that will require parents to submit specific documents to their new school for a valid residence change to be approved. For example: real estate documents verifying a change of residence and a minimum of 12 months on any new lease, bank/credit card statements/driver's license with the new address, proof of utilities at the new address and termination of utilities at the former address, etc. Our schools will give this form/check list to parents and unless every item on it is provided to the new school, the valid residence change will not be certified by the new school.

That is what I mean by saying that help is on the way. By including this new form/check list in the transfer process, we can set a clear standard for all valid residence changes moving forward.

Thank you very much for your help and support and good luck always.

All the best,

Rob Wignel

