



August 30, 2024

# MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER

## A Significant Year Begins...

As August comes to a close and the school year starts for all student athletes in the Southern Section, I want to officially welcome everyone back as we begin the 2024-2025 school year. This school year will be significant for a variety of reasons which are highlighted below:

## Competitive Equity Playoffs

With the passing of the amendments to CIF Southern Section Blue Book Bylaw 3519 and 3520 by a vote of 79-8 last year, a new era of playoff divisional grouping will begin starting this fall. In all sports but Cross Country, Swimming, Track & Field, and Wrestling, divisional placement will take place at the end of the season based upon current year records and results. Football will enter its fourth year using this system and has used the CalPreps rankings to determine divisions. This fall, Girls Flag Football, Boys Water Polo and Girls Volleyball will use Massey Ratings as the means by which rankings will be developed. Massey has been used for quite a few years by our office to assist in the development of our divisions and has proven very reliable in both Volleyball and Water Polo. Golf will be using iWanamaker and the CIF-SS Golf App to track scores and data for the purpose of ranking teams as well as individual golfers for post season play. The Southern Section has used iWanamaker during post season tournaments for the past two seasons. The CIF-SS Golf App will now be mandated for the regular season as well. Tennis will use the World Tennis Number (WTN) developed by the International Tennis Federation (ITF) to rank both teams and individual players. This ranking system is new to the Southern Section. However, we have worked hand in hand with representatives from the ITF to ensure simplicity in data collection and accuracy in results. We are very excited to see how all these systems perform and provide the best data possible to seed our post season tournaments.

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## Area Placement and Releaguings

Beginning September 13, 2024, the Area Placement and Releaguings process will start for the 2026-2030 Releaguings Cycle. Principals of all member schools in the Southern Section will be sent information and a form to be returned to our office that asks if their school wishes to remain in its current area or wants to move to a new area. These requests are due back to the office no later than October 11th, 2024. Based upon the requests made, there will be recommendations to schools and to the Executive Committee and Council for their approval. This Area Placement process will not be complete until March of 2025 at which time, the releaguings process may officially begin. Releaguings in each area must be completed by the end of spring with area releaguings plans due to the Southern Section office no later than June 19, 2025.

## Officials Fees Agreement

Meetings of the Officials Fees/Relations Committee have already begun regarding the adoption of the next three-year officials' fees agreement. Later this Fall, the leadership of each officials group will be invited to meet with the committee to discuss any potential fee increase as well as the rates for assistant or lower-level officials as compared to the varsity or head officials. The committee is tasked with not only determining what might be appropriate fee adjustments for the officials, but also considering the impact any fee adjustment might have on our member schools. This responsibility will not be taken lightly.

One thing schools and districts must consider is that officials fees are in essence fixed costs in the world of athletics, much like buses and uniforms. Without officials, we would not be able to offer opportunities for our athletes to participate. A lot of energy and effort has been directed toward the recruitment and retention of officials in all sports and we are beginning to

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## Officials Fees Agreement continued

see the fruits of that labor pay off. Though education is going through a significant economic situation right now, it would be difficult not to consider some modicum of an increase in officials fees in order to maintain our recruitment momentum.

## And Finally...

Our annual Athletic Administrators Summit will be held on Monday, October 7, 2024 once again at the Riverside Convention Center. Commissioner Emeritus Rob Wigod will be our Keynote speaker and will focus on the "Impact of a Coach". Diane Marshall Freeman, CIF Legal Counsel and Brian Seymour, CIF State Associate Executive Director will provide information on current legal and liability issues affecting high school athletics. There will be a number of other great speakers covering topics ranging from Emergency Action Plans, Artificial Intelligence in Athletics, Mental Health of the High School Athlete, and so much more. As we have had in the past, there will be different tracks for Athletic Administrators, School and District Leaders, and Athletic Trainers. Early bird registration ends this Saturday, September 1st!!! Please follow this [LINK](#) to register.

I hope to see you there!!!!



**Mike West**