



November 7, 2024

# MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER

## THANK YOU!

As we conclude the 2024 Fall season, I would like to thank all the athletic directors, school administrators, athletic trainers, and anyone else responsible for helping implement and navigate our new Health and Safety Bylaws. Adapting to rule changes can be challenging at times. However, meeting the expectations of these new bylaws required establishing new systems and best practices that were previously unfamiliar to most. The heat and smoke experienced this Fall put those systems and practices to the test. Though there were many inconveniences experienced along the way, I was very pleased to see that schools were taking these new rules seriously and doing their best to prioritize student safety. At the end of the day, that is all we can ask of anyone. Thank you very much.

## #STOPITWHENYOUSEEIT

As our fall season ends and we are in the middle of the championship playoffs, preparations are ramping up for winter sports. With winter sports, comes potential issues with fans in the stands and crowd control concerns. Sportsmanship challenges in the stands have been a long-standing issue that hasn't seen much improvement these last few years. In the hope that we can make some headway regarding fan behavior, here are some resources and recommendations for our member schools.

The CIF State Website has a page with resources for schools to use to help address fan behavior. ([CIF State Sportsmanship](#)) One strategy that has proven effective is to have an athlete on one or both teams get on the microphone before the start of the game and encourage the crowd to show proper sportsmanship. This message coming from a player can carry much more weight than the same message coming from an adult.

We recognize that addressing fan behavior in the stands is challenging for most people. Even the most experienced administrators can find it difficult to address challenging adult behaviors. An effective plan administrative teams should consider is to #STOPITWHENYOUSEEIT. Oftentimes when behaviors start to show themselves early in a contest, administrators monitor the situation hoping that the problem does not escalate into a larger issue. Instead of waiting, we suggest having a polite and friendly conversation with the individuals when the behaviors first appear. It provides an opportunity to establish a basic relationship with the fan if you don't have one already, and your expectations can be expressed in a non-confrontational manner. Not having the conversation early and waiting until behaviors truly escalate, leaves administrators fewer options for a non-confrontational resolution. Early intervention can make traditionally uncomfortable conversations much easier to have and perhaps even make them enjoyable.

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# MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER

## #STOPITWHENYOUSEEIT continued

If a situation arises at a game where discriminatory or egregiously disrespectful behavior is exhibited by fans in the stands or perhaps the athletes themselves, these behaviors must be addressed immediately. Communication between game officials and school administration should be common practice before games in case a scenario arises where the contest needs to be interrupted. [The Contest Interruption Policy](#) is a document that outlines recommendations on how to address discriminatory or other egregiously disrespectful behaviors during a game. Preparation and early communication can be the key to addressing these types of situations effectively. More information on addressing these potential situations can be found on the CIF State website on their [SPORTSMANSHIP](#) page.

## ATHLETIC TRAINER TITLE PROTECTION

I would like to bring your attention to some legislation that recently passed in the State of California. AB 796, sponsored by Assemblymember Akilah Weber from San Diego, was signed into law by Governor Gavin Newsome on September 29, 2024, which provides for Title Protection for the Athletic Training profession.

Effective January 1, 2025, Assembly Bill 796 prohibits a person from holding themselves out to be an athletic trainer unless they meet certain qualifications. A person who currently is under a collective bargaining agreement as an athletic trainer is not subject to this new law until that existing collective bargaining agreement expires.

I would encourage all schools and school districts that employ an athletic trainer or are considering employing an athletic trainer to familiarize themselves with all the details of the new law which can be found at the following link:

[Full Language of AB796 Chaptered on September 29, 2024](#)

## GOOD LUCK

Good luck to those of you still in the Fall playoffs! The data coming back from the new competitive equity playoff model is quite encouraging as the point spread for games played seems to be closer than in past years. I look forward to providing a full report in next month's message.

**Mike West**

