



*(A model statement for schools to print / distribute)*

## Recruiting in High School Sports is a Violation of the Rules Guidance for parents, students, staff and others

In 2007, the United States Supreme Court issued a rare unanimous decision that state high school athletic association rules should prevent and penalize the recruiting of students into high schools because of athletics. Our school has agreed to follow the rules of the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) which apply equally to public schools, charter schools and nonpublic schools. A long-standing rule, **Undue Influence**, involves cooperation and compliance by more than just the athletes and coaching staff. **The anti-recruiting rule states that a violation can occur if a person “directly or indirectly associated with a student, a student’s parent or the school” encourages or secures the attendance of a student because of athletics.** “Directly or indirectly associated with the school” may include but not be limited to parents of players, booster club members, alumni and representatives of non-school athletic programs. Often it is the non-school environment (AAU or youth sports) where inappropriate recruiting rule violations occur and where vigilance is needed.

**Parents or others should not attempt to encourage or secure attendance by a student because of sports.** They should not attempt to build up the roster by encouraging a good athlete to enroll at one school or another, or target the best athletes for enrollment. Athletic recruiting is a violation, whether to a middle school student beginning the 9<sup>th</sup> grade or a high school student transferring between schools.

Attempting to encourage a student or parent to attend our school because the student is an athlete risks our reputation, our entire program and the future involvement of adults with our high school. Violation of the anti-recruiting rule can result in penalties of up to four years to the school and athletic program and ineligibility for a coach or a recruited athlete and can also result in a parent, alumnus or supporter being banned from attendance and involvement with the school. **We strongly urge all those who support our school to follow the spirit and letter of the anti-athletic recruiting rules.**

In the present day, schools of all types often market or advertise to either retain or attract **students**. The anti-athletic recruiting rule must be understood and followed by those who support our school to protect legitimate school-wide efforts to attract **students** who make their decisions free from **athletic** recruiting. Decisions about what school to attend would involve many factors, including athletics. But because athletics is based on competition, discussions about sports are only allowed as part of general school presentations. Non-athletic department school administrators and staff deal with admissions and are assigned to provide information to students and parents about our **school**. People interested in enrollment should be referred to administrators responsible for admissions.

Our school follows the rules of the Michigan High School Athletic Association. We insist our staff follow these rules in letter and spirit. Anti-recruiting rules require the awareness and adherence of our entire school community to ensure a level playing field in school sports. Contact the school athletic director or principal if a violation of the anti-recruiting rules may be present.

## **ATHLETIC RECRUITING & UNDUE INFLUENCE (Regulation I, Section 10)**

The use of undue influence for athletic purposes by any person or persons directly or indirectly associated with a student, a student's parents, the school or its athletic program to secure or encourage the attendance of a student or the student's parents or guardians as residents of the school district, shall cause the student to become ineligible for a minimum of 90 scheduled school days and a maximum of four years. The offending school shall be placed on probation for up to four years and offending individuals disconnected from the program. The offending coach or coaches shall not be permitted to coach at that school for up to four years in any sport and shall not coach for up to four years at any other member school in any MHSAA tournament in any sport. Examples of undue influence would include but not be limited to offers of or acceptance of: residential relocation, financial aid to parents, guardians or student; reduced or eliminated tuition and/or fees; any special privileges not accorded to other students, whether athletes or not; transportation allowances; preference in job assignments; room, board or clothing; promotional efforts and admission policies for athletes which are in excess of efforts for other students..

### **CAN HIGH SCHOOL COACHES, THEIR REPRESENTATIVES, OR OTHERS DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE SCHOOL...?**

1. Call athletic recruits?  
**No.**
2. Send athletic recruits questionnaires, cards or letters?  
**No.**
3. Visit prospective athletes and their families at their homes (even if the parents request the visit)?  
**No. No.**
4. Entertain or invite specific prospective athletes and their families in the school or field?  
**No.**
5. Attend meetings with parents and students as requested through the school administration for information purposes?  
**Yes, provided the meeting is for all students, not just athletes.**
6. Sponsor "junior high nights" at the high school for athletes?  
**Not if exclusively for athletes (Except as allowed under Int. 101-102 -Question 20).  
If for all students, okay: Diversity of presentation.. open houses.**
7. Speak at grade school athletic banquets?  
**Yes.**
8. Visit schools to discuss a specific athlete's possible enrollment with students, staff or parents?  
**No.**
9. Transport prospective athletes to high schools for entrance exams, or athletic events?  
**No.**
10. Attend grade school age games for the purpose of evaluating and recruiting specific prospective athletes or their parents.  
**No.**
11. Ask their own players, alumni or parents to discuss the merits of their program with athletic recruits by phone, in person or through letters?  
**No.**
12. Give grade school age players free passes to their high schools' games?  
**Not if exclusively for athletes. If for all students, okay.**

**OVER**

13. Invite specific prospective athletes to their summer camps?

**No.**

14. Reduce or eliminate the fee for summer camps for certain athletes based upon the high school they may or may not attend?

**No.**

15. Do anything in numbers 1-14 above because the parents or athlete indicated an interest in the high school?

**No. Even if the parents or athlete initiated the contact and indicate an interest in the high school, coaches must restrict themselves to what is proper and appropriate actions with prospective students. Refer them to the school administration.**

16. Initiate contact with a student at a junior high/middle school or other high school about attendance at the school?

**No.**

17. Have anything at all to do with a student/athlete attending high school?

**Yes. MHSAA HANDBOOK Interpretation #104 states: "If it is a faculty member's responsibility to recruit students (not just athletes) and that person, makes such contact irrespective of athletic eligibility, such contact is permitted. However, anything done for an athlete that is not done in comparable fashion for all students is undue influence."**

18. Do the rules and interpretations on undue influence apply to both public and nonpublic schools?

**Yes.**

19. What should a coach do when a student or parents of that student at a junior high/middle school or other high school contact the coach about attending the coach's school?

**MHSAA HANDBOOK Interpretation #105 states: "...the coach shall refer the student or parent to the appropriate school personnel (those who have the responsibilities for seeking and processing prospective students). It is not a coach's role to explain or encourage a transfer student in how to gain interscholastic athletic eligibility. There should be no contact or communication regarding enrollment between coaches and potential transfer students or their parents. In other words: "It is a violation for me to talk to you, contact the main office (period)."**

20. MHSAA Handbook Int. 101 and 102 states: In addition, high school coaches or athletic directors may conduct once each school year for each sport – at the high school building for all feeder schools or at each of the feeder schools as defined below – a sport specific group presentation to a group of 7th and 8th grade students and/or their parents assembled in advance by the school for the purpose of encouraging students to participate in specific sports when enrolled in that high school. Once each school year for each sport sponsored by that high school these presentations may be conducted for junior high/middle school teams or groups of students from schools which either (1) are subject to the same governing board, or (2) are of the same religious denomination as the high school and from which at least 25 percent of the students in the previous year's 8th grade attended that high school. (Single gender high schools count only 8th grade students of that gender.) Informational communication (written or oral) announcing the starting dates of practices and other allowed summer activity may be distributed to groups of 8th grade students (not individuals) on or after April 1, provided they are informational only and confined to students who have formally registered an intention to attend that high school in the fall or who attend a junior high/middle school which has a relationship to a high school as described above (same governing board or religious denomination and 25 percent previous enrollment).

These group presentations are voluntary and may not be held in conjunction with an athletic contest. (not the same day, site or time as a game or scrimmage and may only be conducted at the school or the regular practice location of the middle school team.