OHIO HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION:

BYLAW 4-9

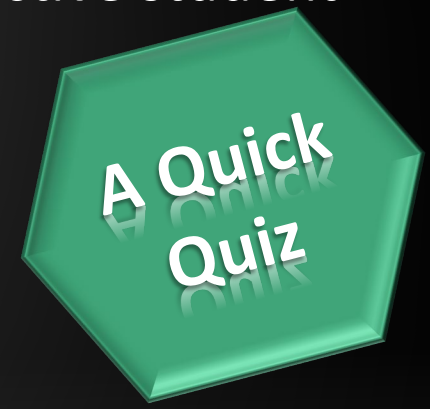
RECRUITING GUIDANCE

BYLAW 4-9-1

DEFINITION OF PROSPECTIVE A STUDENT ATHLETE

Bylaw 4-9-1 indicates that "any attempt to recruit a prospective student-athlete ***for athletic purposes*** shall be strictly prohibited." Who is considered a "prospective student-athlete?"

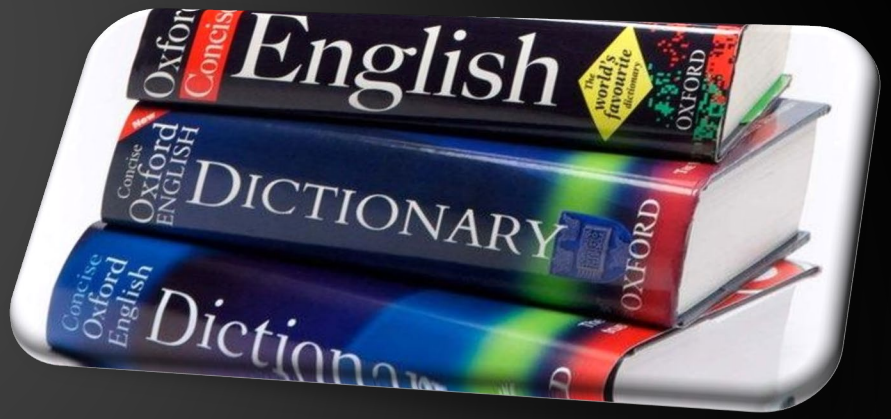
A. Any student in grades K-12
B. Any student in grades 5-12
C. Any student in grades 6-12
D. Any student in grades 7-12
E. Any student in grades 9-12



The answer is D. A student is considered a prospective athlete after enrolling in the seventh grade, or the grade corresponding to the seventh grade for a student from a foreign country, irrespective of whether the student is currently enrolled in a public 7th-8th grade school located within a public school district or a non-public school that is part of a non-public system.

BYLAW 4-9-2

What is the definition of “recruit” as outlined in Bylaw 4-9-2?



- *“The term “recruit” shall mean the use of influence by any person connected or not connected with the school to secure the enrollment of a prospective student-athlete for athletic purposes.”*
- This prohibition of securing the enrollment of a student for athletic purposes applies to all non-school personnel too (i.e. a club coach, a fan in the community, a student from an opposing team etc.).

DEFINITIONS SUMMARY

- **4-9-1** A student is considered a prospective athlete after enrolling in the seventh grade, or the grade corresponding to the seventh grade for a student from a foreign country, irrespective of whether the student is currently enrolled in a public 7th-8th grade school located within a public school district or a non-public school that is part of a non-public system. Any attempt to recruit a prospective student-athlete for athletic purposes shall be strictly prohibited.
- **4-9-2** For purposes of this Bylaw Section 9, the term “recruit” shall mean the use of influence by any person connected **or not connected** with the school to secure the enrollment of a prospective student-athlete for athletic purposes.

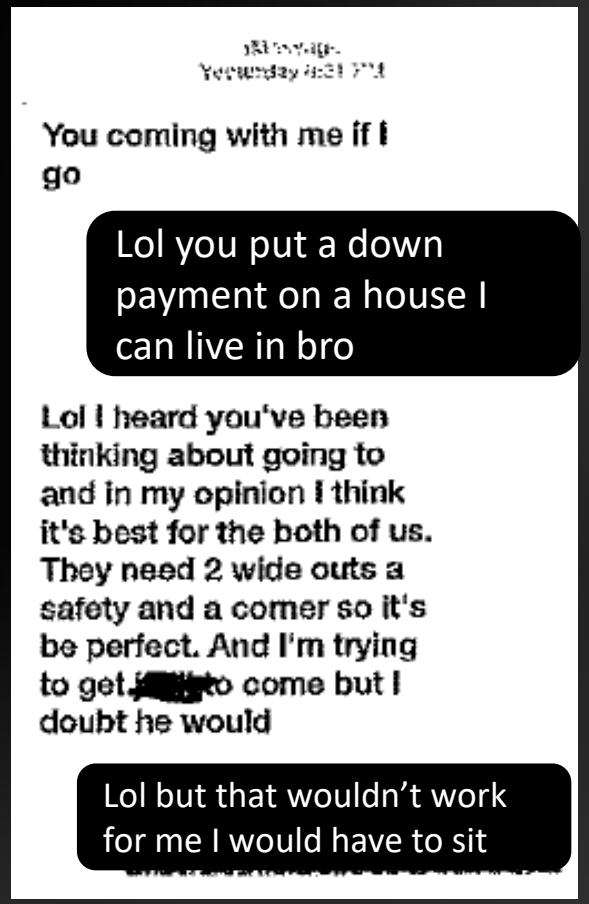
BYLAW 4-9-2 VIOLATION

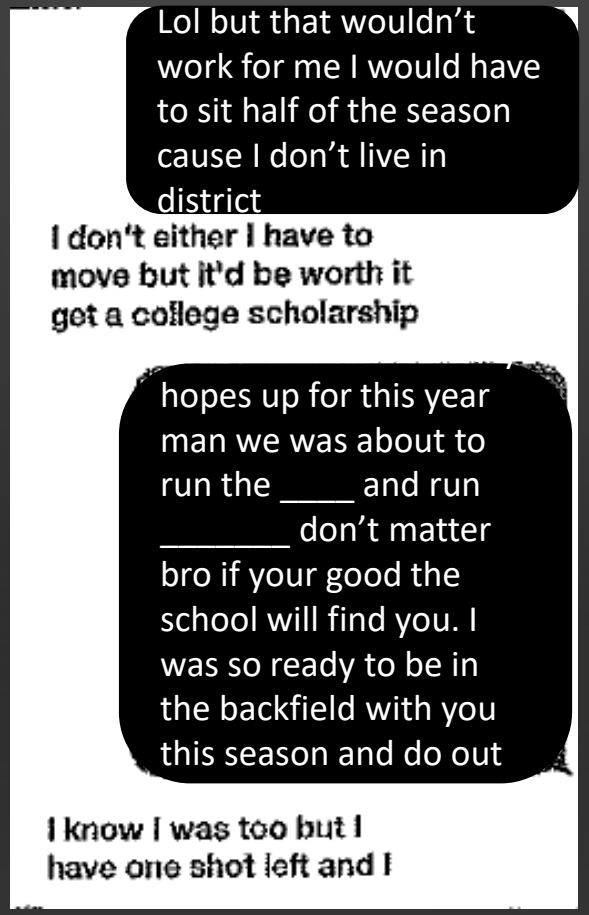
Who is most likely to engage in conversations regarding transferring to a different school for athletic purposes?

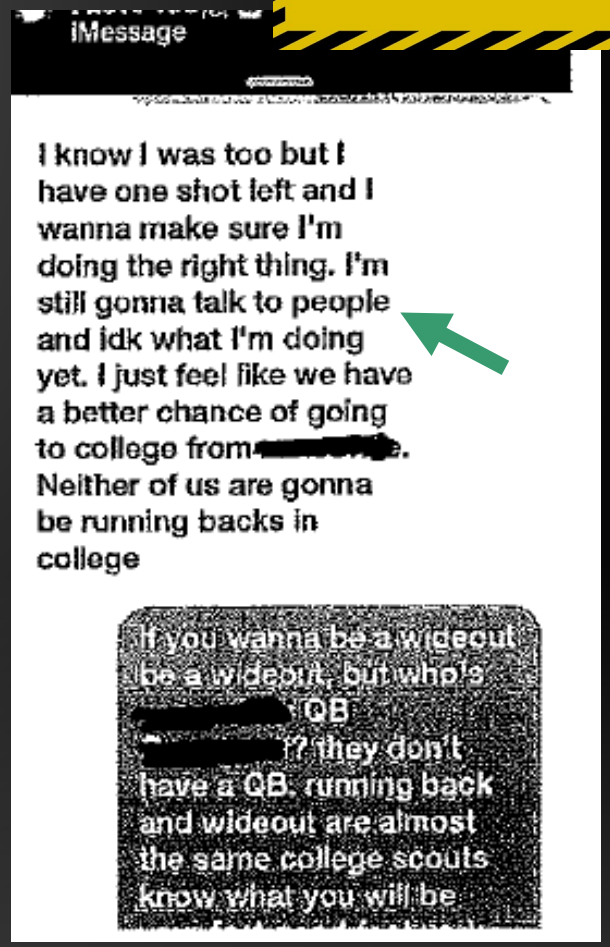
Students-athletes and parents!

BYLAW 4-9-2 VIOLATION

WARNING







<u>"Connected or not connected with the school"</u> In this instance, the "receiving school" would not have any recruiting penalties but if these two students transferred and we obtained these messages then both would be ruled ineligible for a period of time, likely for the postseason tournament.

BYLAW 4-9-2 VIOLATION

Educate coaches on who they can have contact with.

"Control The Controllables"

RECRUITING BYLAW 4-9-2 EXCEPTION

- There are two exceptions (one for public school coaches and one for non-public school coaches) which will allow a high school coach to have athletic related contact with students in grades 7-8 to influence their enrollment at the high school and not be in violation of Bylaw 4-9-2…

When are non-public high school coaches allowed to have contact with 7-8 grade students for athletic purposes? (Select all that apply; HINT: 2 correct responses).

A. Non-public high school coaches can have contact with any 7-8 grade student currently enrolled in a non-public school of the same type if the boundaries of that non-public school system are clearly defined and on file with the OHSAA and the contact is restricted to students enrolled within that defined boundary.
B. Non-public high school coaches can have contact with any 7-8 grade student currently enrolled in any non-public school of the same type.
C. Non-public high school coaches can have contact with any 7-8 grade student currently enrolled in any non-public school (not necessarily of the same type).
D. Non-public school coaches can have contact with 7-8 grade students if the non-public school is K-12 and the 7-8 grade building is located in the same building as the high school and the 7-8 grade students would be assigned to the high school where the coach or school employee works.

Answer: The answers are A and D.

IN OTHER WORDS…

- If specific Catholic elementary schools (or one school) are within a specific diocesan territory and assigned by the Diocese to a **SPECIFIC** high school then coaches and other personnel could have contact with students in those specific schools…
- This exception requires action on the part of the Diocesan Superintendent to so indicate the elementary/MIDDLE schools and the high schools to which they would be assigned.
- So when is it permissible for coaches to begin having contact with a prospective student-athlete?...We'll get to that later. But first…

BYLAW 4-9-2, EXCEPTION 1

When are <u>public high school coaches</u> allowed to have contact with 7-8 grade students for athletic purposes?

A. Public high schools can have contact with any 7-8 grade student currently enrolled in that public school district.
B. Public high schools can have contact with any 7-8 grade student who currently lives within the district.
C. Public high schools can have contact with any 7-8 grade student who attended a school extracurricular camp in the past.
D. Public high schools are NEVER permitted to have contact with 7-8 grade students for athletic purposes.

Answer: The answer is A.

BYLAW 4-9-5

Is a student allowed to visit (i.e. “shadow”) a school in contemplation of enrollment?

A. Yes, but a student can only visit a non-public school (tuition based) in contemplation of enrollment.
B. Yes, but the student can only shadow on an advertised open house/information day.
C. Yes, a student can visit any school in contemplation of enrollment.
D. No, a student cannot visit a school in contemplation of enrollment.

Answer: The answer is C. Bylaw 4-9-5 does permit a student-athlete and his/her family to visit a school, public or non-public, prior to enrollment **provided arrangements for the visit are made through the principal of the school or another school administrator designated by that school’s Board of Education or other governing board.**

BYLAW 4-9-3 #3

Schools are allowed to conduct an open house/information session/shadow day for all prospective students provided all elements of the school program are presented. During such an event, it is permissible for which of the following to occur... *(Select all that apply)*

A. Have a coaching staff member guide the prospective student-athlete's visit
B. Have the coach exchange contact information with the student/parents
C. Have the coach talk with a prospective student-athlete in the presence of a school administrator if the conversation centers around program procedures and expectations but not the student's expected impact on the program
D. Receive a small token, such as a "goodie bag," containing items related to the school's athletic program.
E. Allow the athlete to practice/train with the team on that day
F. Take a photo of the athlete in a team jersey

Answer: The answer is C, and partially D. Regarding answer D- during this visit athletes are permitted to receive a small token, such as a "goodie bag" containing an item or items, **the value of which cannot exceed $25 and which CANNOT be solely related to the school's athletic program** (See 4-9-4 #7 Exception).

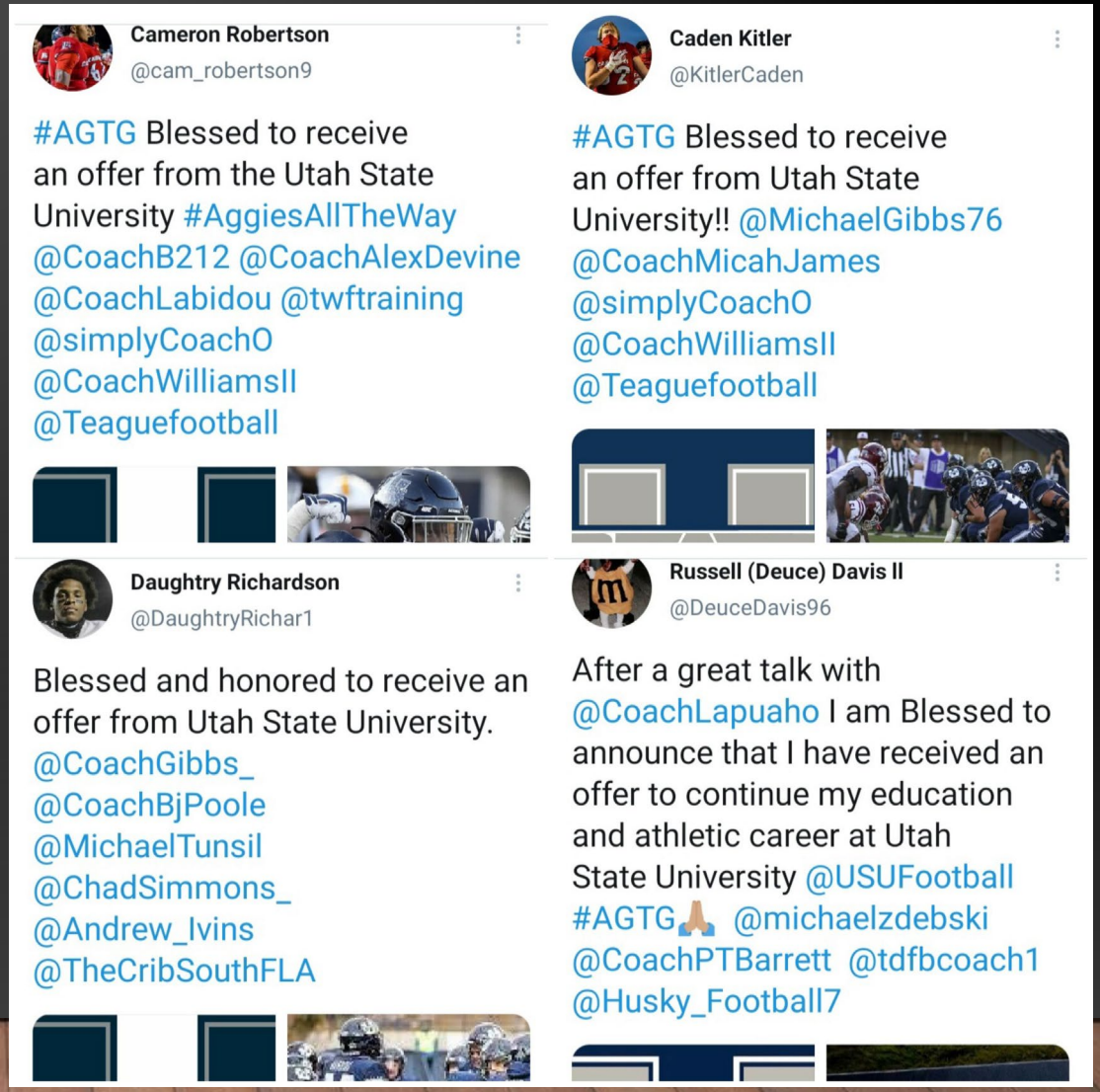
BYLAW 4-9-5, SCHOOL VISITS

Prior to enrollment, a student-athlete may visit a public or non-public school in contemplation of enrollment, as long as that contemplated enrollment is consistent with Board of Education or similar governing board policy formally adopted by that school district and arrangements for the visit are made through the principal and/or school administrator designated by the Board of Education or similar governing board. During such an event, it is permissible for a coach to talk with a prospective student-athlete **in the presence of a school administrator** if the conversation centers around program procedures and expectations but not the student's expected impact on the program.

After the conclusion of the visit, a coach is not permitted to have further communication with the prospective student-athlete about athletics …prior to …the school accepting the student's application for enrollment (for non-tuition based schools).

BYLAW 4-9-5, SCHOOL VISITS

Kids want that #BLESSED moment they see on social media. They SHOULD NOT have that feeling when leaving a shadow day at an OHSAA member school. It should not be a sales pitch for your athletic programs.



BYLAW 4-9-4 #4

After a student-athlete completes his/her shadow day at school in contemplation of enrollment, can student-athletes from a team text the student to try and make him/her feel welcome?

A. If the contact is being done to attempt to influence their enrollment at the school,

NO!

*4) — Any individual associated with a school, **including team members,** attempting to use electronic communication or a social media platform(s) to communicate with a prospective student-athlete about athletics PRIOR TO…2) the school accepting the student's application for enrollment (for non-tuition based schools).*

BYLAW 4-9-4 #4 VIOLATION

Examples of coaches texting current players to reach out to prospective-athletes (Illegal)

DM him. We've heard he's considering transferring as well

11:42 AM

I've heard that too. All the [redacted] kids seem to think he's going there for some reason but they think [redacted] and everyone else is going there too.

11:43 AM

Message him here on Twitter and see what he says

11:44 AM

Okay I follow him on Instagram so I'll dm him there sometime

11:44 AM

[redacted] >

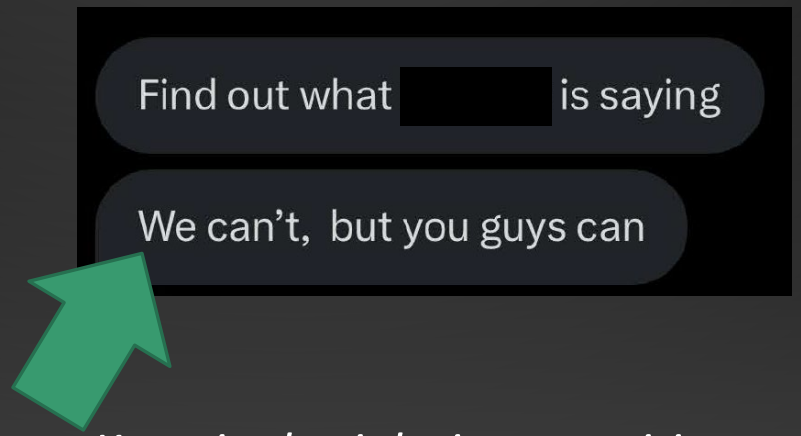
This is [redacted] cell. I thought it would be nice if you guys followed up with a text and telling him it was great to have him there last night and you look forward to playing with him , etc

Thx

BYLAW 4-9-4 #4

- *4) — Any individual associated with a school, **including team members,** attempting to use electronic communication or a social media platform(s) to communicate with a prospective student-athlete about athletics prior to…the school accepting the student's application for enrollment (for non-tuition based schools).*

"The term "recruit" shall mean the use of influence by any person connected or not connected with the school to secure the enrollment of a prospective student-athlete for athletic purposes."



Knowingly violating recruiting rules

BYLAW 4-9-6/ 4-9-4 #5

What should a coach do if he/she is contacted by a student-athlete (or a student-athlete's family) not currently enrolled at the school where the coach is approved to work?

A. Provide information as requested but direct the individual to a school administrator (principal/AD/admissions officer) if questions are related to athletics.
B. Direct the individual to a school administrator (principal/AD/admissions officer) and cease further communication until the allowable time (discussed later).
C. Do not respond to the individual.
D. Provide information as requested since the student/family made first contact.

Answer: The answer is B. It is not appropriate for a coach to try and respond to questions from a prospective student athlete (or his/her family) about the school where he/she is approved to work, even if the questions are not centered around athletics. Bylaw 4-9-6 indicates that, "All questions relating to enrollment, attendance or the athletic program shall be handled through the school administration or the admissions office." A coach can exercise common courtesy and direct the individual(s) to the correct school personnel, but then should cease all further communication until the allowable time (discussed later).

BYLAW 4-9-6/ 4-9-4 #5

Forms of recruiting that are prohibited by this bylaw include but are not limited to:

5) — Interscholastic coaches answering athletic questions from prospective student-athletes and/ or their parents and describing their programs except within the school in accordance with approved administrative policies and procedures (i.e. via admissions offices) and consistent with the provisions set forth in Bylaw 4-9-3 #3.

Note: When an administrator is also a member of a coaching staff, that person shall have no contact with prospective enrollees except as specified within these bylaws as permissible for coaching staff members.

IMPORTANT

When is a coach allowed to initiate contact with a student-athlete who will be transferring to his/her school at the beginning of the next school year?

A. Once the student has requested information from the school where the coach is approved to work.
B. Once the school accepts the student's application for enrollment.
C. Once the student has moved into the district where the coach is approved to work.
D. Once the student is withdrawn from the previous school.

Answer: The answer is B. Requesting information about a school does not permit contact (A) and moving into a district also does not permit contact (C). Once a student shows a serious interest in a school by submitting an application and being accepted to the school then that is when coaches are permitted to contact that student. (Non-Public schools=Submitted Application Fee)

BYLAW 4-9-3

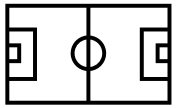
IN TODAY'S ECONOMY, SOME SCHOOLS MAY NEED TO ENGAGE IN MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION WITH THE PUBLIC FOR THE PURPOSE OF SECURING STUDENTS. BYLAW 4-9-3 RECOGNIZES THIS NEED AND ALLOWS FOR MARKETING IF THE COMMUNICATION COMPLIES WITH CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS. THE NEXT SERIES OF QUESTIONS WILL FOCUS ON FORMS OF MARKETING THAT ARE PERMITTED UNDER BYLAW 4-9-3.

BYLAW 4-9-3 #1 & 2 AND 4-9-4 #6

Before a student attends a shadow day at a school, which of the following types of mailings would you think would be acceptable for a school to send to them?

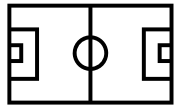
A

Resident:
4080 Roselea Place
Columbus, Ohio 43050



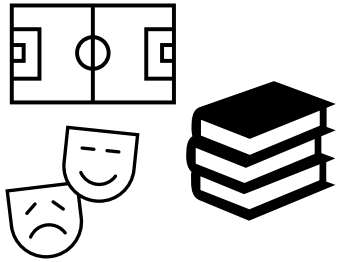
B

Parents of Tyrone Hill
4080 Roselea Place
Columbus, Ohio 43050



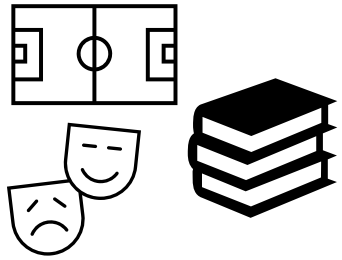
C

Tyrone Hill
4080 Roselea Place
Columbus, Ohio 43050



D

Occupant:
4080 Roselea Place
Columbus, Ohio 43050



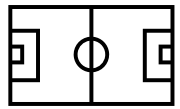
- Any mailing or electronic communication may not be directed to a specific individual or individuals by name prior to a student attending a open house/information session/shadow day . It is ok to use "Resident/Occupant."
- Additionally, member schools may not distribute publications/advertisements solely for athletics except for athletic camps (discussed in 4-9-3 #6).
- Any marketing must involve ALL aspects of a school's educational program (education, religion, extracurriculars, athletics, etc.) in order to be in compliance.

BYLAW 4-9-3 #1 & 2 AND 4-9-4 #6

After a student attends a shadow day at a school, which of the following types of mailings would you think would be acceptable for a school to send to them? *(Select all that apply)*

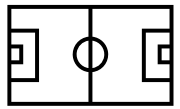
A

Resident:
4080 Roselea Place
Columbus, Ohio 43050



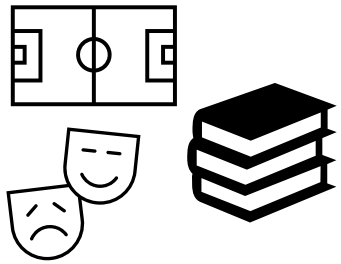
B

Tyrone Hill
4080 Roselea Place
Columbus, Ohio 43050



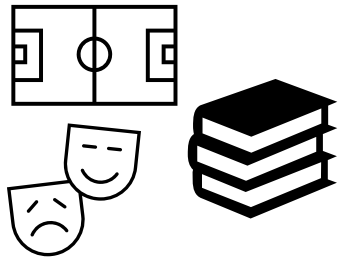
C

Tyrone Hill
4080 Roselea Place
Columbus, Ohio 43050



D

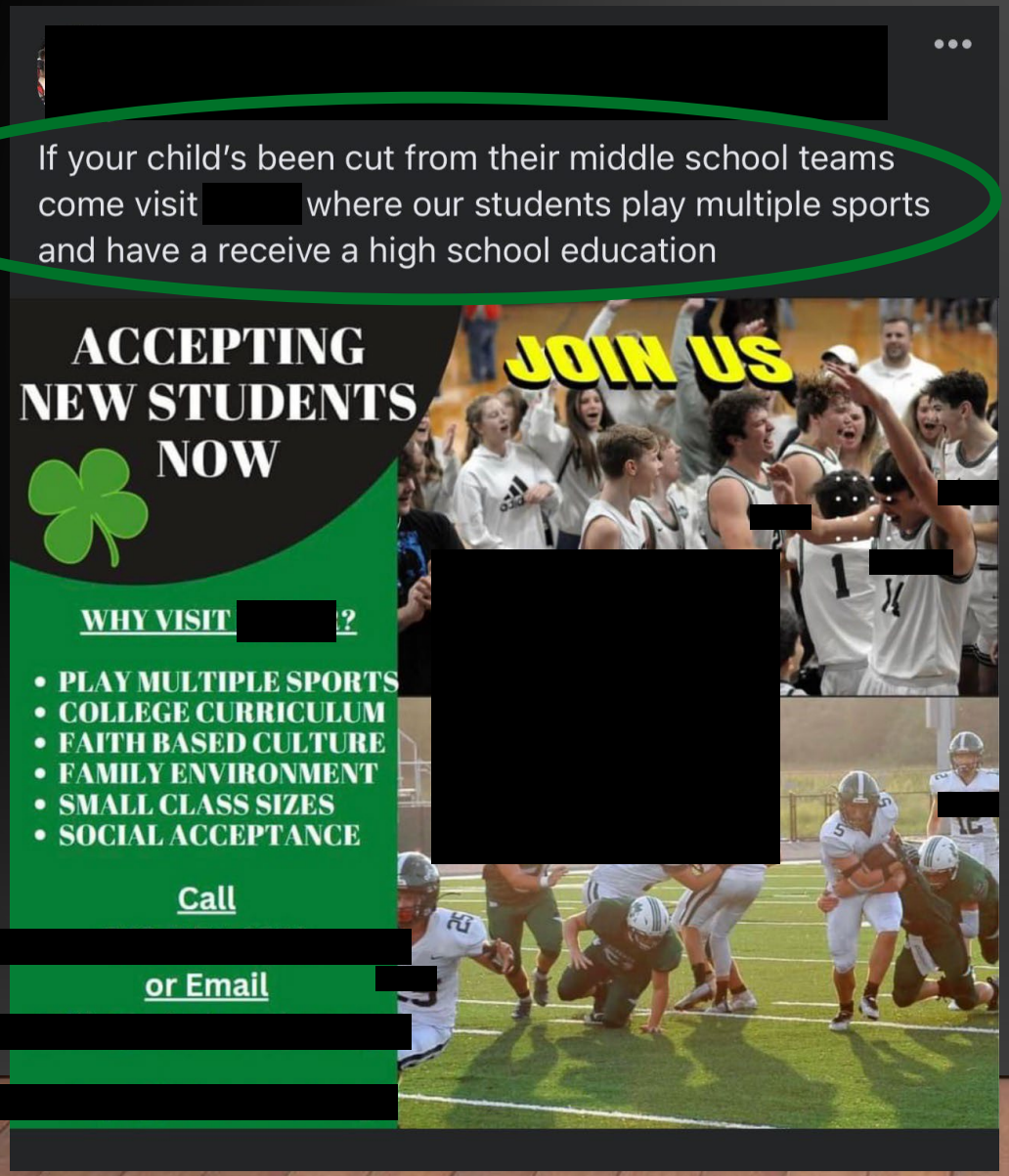
Occupant:
4080 Roselea Place
Columbus, Ohio 43050



The answer is C and D. Once a prospective student-athlete has attended an open house/information session/shadow day as outlined in 4-9-3 #3 then it is permissible for the school to **send enrollment/general school information** to the named individual but it still can't solely be about the athletics programs (B).

(Later we will talk about when a coach or other students are permitted to contact a prospective student-athlete.)

BYLAW 4-9-3 VIOLATION



This is a violation of 4-9-3 #1. This marketing does not involve the entire high school program and is solely focused on the school's athletic program(s).

OHSAA

BYLAW 4-9-3 #6/ 4-9-4 #1

A school wants to market its summer basketball camp to students who do not currently attend the school. What are some ways it can do this and not be in violation of the recruiting bylaw? *(Select all that apply)*

A. Post the camp brochure/registration link on the school website.
B. Mail/email a camp brochure to a prospective student-athlete who attended a shadow day at the school.
C. Hand out a camp brochure to a prospective student-athlete who does not attend the school.
D. Mail the camp brochure to a general population as long as no direct mailing to specific individuals is conducted.
E. It is never permissible to make a camp brochure available for a student who does not currently attend your school.

The answers are A and D. Regarding B, you can send a mailing to families with information about all your different offerings and include the camp brochure in it, but a camp brochure can't be the only content of the mailing.

BYLAW 4-9-3 #6

4-9-3 “Marketing,” though a form of recruiting students, may be permitted under this bylaw by any and all member high schools provided the marketing complies with the following requirements:

6) — Providing athletic camp brochures that advertise athletic camps/clinics available to a general population is permissible as long as 1) there are no direct mailing to specific individuals (See #2) and 2) the brochures are solely used to advertise for a specific non-interscholastic opportunity (camp/clinic). These brochures are not to be used to promote the school.

BYLAW 4-9-3 #5

Billboard and newspaper ads, etc. are additional forms of marketing. Are member schools allowed to use these platforms to attempt to secure the enrollment of prospective student-athletes (2 correct answers)

A. Yes, if the platform advertises all aspects of the school's educational offerings and not solely athletics.
B. Yes, if the platform includes no mention of athletics.
C. Yes, if the platform is first approved by the OHSAA Executive Director's Office.
D. Yes, if the advertisement is congratulatory in nature and does not attempt to promote the athletic program
E. No, it is not permissible to use billboards or newspaper ads in order to attempt to secure the enrollment of prospective student-athletes.

The answer is A and D. It is permissible to use the school website or other forms of media such as billboards, newspaper advertisements, etc. to advertise all aspects of the school's educational offerings (Bylaw 4-9-3 #5). Athletics may be included, but that cannot be the sole focus of the content.

NEW: Schools are permitted to utilize athletic advertisements of this nature so long as the advertisement simply congratulates a team and does not attempt to promote the athletic program (i.e. newspaper ad congratulating a state championship team).

BYLAW 4-9-3 #7

Bylaw 4-9-3 #7 indicates **WHEN** it is permissible to invite prospective student-athletes and/or their parents to a high school athletic contest or another athletic related event, such as a banquet or recognition ceremony. When may this contact may occur? *(Select all that apply)*

A. When an admissions officer (not a coach) invites a student to this type of event.
B. When the invitation is extended by the school administrator to an entire group or team and the participation is mutually agreed upon by the administration of BOTH schools/ organizations.
C. When the student has completed a shadow day in contemplation of enrollment at the school.
D. All of the above

Answer: The answer is B. The only time in which it is permissible to invite prospective student-athletes and/or their parents to a high school contest or another athletic related event is when the invitation is extended to an entire group or team AND the participation is mutually agreed upon by the administration of both schools/ organizations…. such as a school's 7th or 8th grade team or non-interscholastic group such as a C.Y.O program.

Why are A/C not correct? Admissions officer contact cannot be solely related to athletics and just because one has shadowed does not mean that that the school can contact him/her for athletic purposes.

BYLAW 4-9-3 #7

As referenced in the prior question…If an entire group of students is invited to a high school contest, what are some activities in which they are permitted to engage? *(Select all that apply)*

A. Running out onto the field with the team & standing on the sideline
B. Having a locker room visit
C. Attending a pre-contest meal with the team
D. Having an arranged interaction with the team prior to/after the contest
E. None of the above

Answer: The answer is E. Though an invitation can be extended to a group of students, the group is not permitted to receive special accommodations during the event. The group can receive admission to the contest but then should be seated in the spectator area for the duration of the contest.

What if the students are below 7th grade?

What if they are 7-8 graders currently enrolled in your district?

BYLAW 4-9-3 #5

Billboard and newspaper ads, etc. are additional forms of marketing. Are member schools allowed to use these platforms to attempt to secure the enrollment of prospective student-athletes?

A. Yes, if the platform advertises all aspects of the school's educational offerings and not solely athletics.
B. Yes, if the platform includes no mention of athletics.
C. Yes, if the platform is first approved by the OHSAA Executive Director's Office.
D. No, it is not permissible to use billboards or newspaper ads in order to attempt to secure the enrollment of prospective student-athletes.

The answer is A. It is permissible to use the school website or other forms of media such as billboards, newspaper advertisements, etc. to advertise all aspects of the school's educational offerings (Bylaw 4-9-3 #5). Athletics may be included, but that cannot be the sole focus of the content.

NEW: Schools are permitted to utilize athletic advertisements of this nature so long as the advertisement simply congratulates a team and does not attempt to promote the athletic program (i.e. a billboard congratulating a state championship team).

BYLAW 4-9-4 #10

If a coach leaves a school to pursue a coaching opportunity at another school, Bylaw 4-9-4 #8 indicates that "*the coach shall refrain from any communication with any students at his or her former school.*" Furthermore, if any student-athlete from the coach's former school transfers to the new school where the coach is now approved as a member of the coaching staff, what happens?

A. The student-athlete is ineligible for 50% of the maximum allowable regular season contests in any sport in which the student competed during the 12 months immediately preceding the transfer.
B. The student-athlete is automatically ineligible for one year unless the new school can disprove the presumption of recruiting.
C. The student-athlete is automatically ineligible for one year.
D. The school where the student transferred is automatically ineligible for the postseason tournament in the sport in which the student followed the coach.

BYLAW 4-9-4

FORMS OF RECRUITING THAT ARE PROHIBITED BY THIS BYLAW INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO…

It would be impossible to list every single action which is a violation of the recruiting bylaw. Are your actions, your coaches' actions, or your athletes' actions being done in an attempt to influence a student's enrollment at your school for athletic purposes? If so, it is a violation. Don't do it. If it could be perceived as an attempt to influence a student's enrollment at your school, be ready for allegations. (i.e. what is the purpose of going to watch a 7/8 grade practice or game?)

BYLAW 4-9-4 #8

- Forms of recruiting that are prohibited by this bylaw include but are not limited to: Providing financial aid or scholarships to a student-athlete on the basis of athletic ability/involvement. See Bylaw 4-10 for prohibitions on offering athletic scholarships to a student currently enrolled in a school.

- Scholarships should be merit-based (academics) and need-based.

The [redacted] Scholarship Grant

The [redacted] Scholarship Grant provides a one-time $1000 tuition grant a returning student-athlete who is affiliated with the football program as a player, manager, or trainer to be used for their junior or senior year at [redacted] High School. This one-time grant is awarded to a student-athlete that truly exemplifies what it means to be a team player. This student-athlete is not the star athlete or best player on the team and might not even be a starter. They are someone who works hard, is respected by their peers, is dedicated and loyal to the program, has a great attitude, is coachable and gives maximum effort. This scholarship was funded by the family of [redacted] who was commissioned by the [redacted] the 1960's to raise the necessary funds to build [redacted] High School. The family endowed this scholarship to be a permanent fund, but it is open to accept donations from other family members and/or friends for future growth.

It is announced at the season ending banquet. The winner will receive the $1000 scholarship grant for their senior year. The [redacted] Scholarship Grant is endowed and will be given yearly thereafter. Contributions to the scholarship grant may be made through [redacted] High School.

The Head Football Coach and his staff, in conjunction with the Director of Advancement, will be responsible for handling the selection process and maintaining the spirit of the scholarship grant.

Post award requirements on the part of the award winner prior to beginning of the following year. These must be completed for scholarship grant funding to be credited to student financial record.

1. Remain eligible and involved in the program and in good academic/disciplinary standing.
2. Participation in the annual spring scholarship breakfast or luncheon at the conclusion of your scholarship year with your scholarship benefactors.

It is a secondary goal that that individuals benefiting from this tuition grant along with any others interested in promoting the values of teamwork, character and hard work will help sustain and grow this grant for future generations.

SCHOLARSHIP VIOLATION

OHSAA

SOME PARTING THOUGHTS:

- The OHSAA is created to serve ALL members and to assist schools in supporting the mission of education-based sports
- Sometimes questions relative to Bylaw 4-9 are complicated and require some examination
- We will endeavor to provide you with a complete answer to any questions ASAP
- Meanwhile, we will continue to add to our guidance document here on ohsaa.org.

QUESTIONS?

? ? ? ? ?