

It's still happening every day.

TRANSFERS

Aid for new and current Athletic Directors

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Recently, a newly assigned AD asked me what counsel or help they should provide to a student transferring to or from their school. What should they say that would be helpful and not mislead a student when preparing a transfer submission? What a great question! This article attempts to summarize the principles and points the two of us discussed. We hope it will be helpful.

Principles that guide transfers between ASAA affiliated schools.

1. The ASAA policies state as one of their primary objectives, "To promote among students an awareness that:
 1. The primary aim of school is education;" (Policies, 3.D.i)
 2. Therefore, "all stakeholders have a positive duty to discourage an athletically motivated transfer." (Section II, 5, p. 31)
 3. Students "are expected to provide complete and accurate information regardless if the information requested may be perceived by the party member to have a less desirable impact on decision outcomes." (Section II, 4, A)

Therefore, when a student athlete approaches you for help or counsel with a transfer, the following points could be conveyed (using all the tact and communication skills you have garnered over the course of your coaching experience).

1. Transfers which are athletically motivated will be denied by the ASAA. Below are some athletically motivated rationales that would probably result in a denial of transfer:
 - A. The coach at the new school is a better coach and will advance my sport career significantly, or I know the new coach and get along with her/him better.
 - B. The team at the new school is far more successful and I would have a better chance at winning games and championships.
 - C. Given the track record of the new school's teams, I will have a greater chance of being noticed by a scout for recruitment to post secondary programs.
 - D. The new school has much better access to scholarship opportunities for their sports programs and I need the funding for post-secondary education and athletics.
 - E. I have more friends on the teams in the new school, because of club teams, social groups or previous athletic experiences.
 - F. I am not getting along with the team at my present school and want a new start with a different team.

2. There are valid and supported reasons for transferring from one school to another. The key is to ensure that these are the foundational reasons for the transfer (see section IV, 11, of the policies manual for an outline of acceptable reasons for transfer).
 1. When a student athlete comes to you about a transfer, your role is to ensure that the transfer is based upon supportable reasons, and then to counsel the student accordingly. Sometimes a blunt, “from what you have told me, you will not be able to play sports in your new school (or in this school) for the next year,” is the best message you can share with your student. Remember, your role is not to initiate, prompt, or promote any transfer.
 2. Finally, if you are in doubt as to how to proceed, we are available to help. You can call the ASAA during office hours at 780-427-8182, and ask to speak with the Compliance Officer. I am happy to help in any way I can.

Key takeaway:

How you counsel a student regarding their transfer and the actions resulting from that counsel can have a significant impact on the life of a student. Whether the student is transferring into or out of your school, your discussion with them should be open, honest and factual. To students coming into your school, be careful not to make promises you cannot keep. To students leaving your school, please don't make comments that are disparaging or intimidating. As well, please remember that students have been denied athletic eligibility by the ASAA for not being truthful in their transfer documents. Let's not be the catalyst for a student's ineligibility; their mental health is at stake.

We recognize the awkward situations that Athletic Directors are placed in sometimes when transfers are being made, and we appreciate your efforts to support our students in the best way possible. Your efforts and integrity are deeply appreciated and are an excellent example to our youth. Thank you.