



To: NJSIAA Executive Committee

From: Paul Popadiuk, Chief Compliance Officer

Date: December 10, 2025

RE: NJSIAA Bylaws Clarification Proposal: International Student Eligibility

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The International Committee met to review member school requests regarding the Association's policy on International Student Eligibility. They requested that students who are housed with district staff who are not eligible to play at all to be able to play on the sub-varsity level. This would keep to the spirit of the rule by eliminating the recruiting and competitive balance issues while allowing student-athletes to experience sub-varsity sports. They also requested that sub-varsity student-athletes be permitted to participate alongside varsity athletes, without their results counting toward the varsity outcome in the following sports that may not have sub-varsity levels: Cross Country, Gymnastics, Bowling, Swimming/Diving, Fencing, Golf and Track & Field. This would alleviate participation issues with sub-varsity only eligible students in sports where no true sub-varsity exists. The Committee unanimously proposes the following updates to Bylaws Article V, Section 4 M.2 (additions are underlined):

**2. International Student Eligibility Requirements:**

- a. An International Student is eligible for one season of varsity athletics and unlimited seasons of sub-varsity athletics, per sport, if all of the following conditions are met:
  - i. The student satisfies the requirements to be considered an International Student, as listed above; and
  - ii. The student has been assigned to a host family without any prior contact or influence from the student, the student's parents, the school, or any other interested parties before the placement; and
  - iii. The student was not selected or placed on any basis relating to the student's athletic abilities/interests; and
  - iv. The student does not reside with district staff members, boosters, or coaching staff (paid or voluntary); and
  - v. The student and school have completed the NJSIAA International Student Eligibility Form, and it has been approved by the NJSIAA; and
  - vi. The student has not been previously enrolled in another U.S. school, or participated on a U.S. athletic team (club, school, or otherwise); and
  - vii. The student meets all eligibility requirements in Article V of NJSIAA Bylaws.

*CL 1: Any student who is residing with a district staff member will remain ineligible for varsity sports as per requirement iv above but will be eligible for unlimited seasons of sub-varsity sports.*

- b. Notwithstanding any provision of Article V, a student who receives eligibility under this section shall thereafter be ineligible to participate in interscholastic athletics at that or any other NJSIAA member school.
- c. Sections 1 and 2 are not applicable to students who move to the United States with their parent/guardian as defined in Section 8.
- d. Schools are limited to one international student per varsity team during a given season. There is no limit on the number of international students participating at the sub-varsity level.

*CL 2: International students who would otherwise have to compete at the sub-varsity level may participate alongside varsity athletes in the following sports, when sub-varsity levels do not exist: Cross Country, Gymnastics, Bowling, Swimming/Diving, Fencing, Golf and Track & Field. However, their results may not count toward the varsity score or outcome.*