

# New NCAA rule limits coaches' access to large number of recruits in June

A large number of high school basketball players, including ones from the most prominent programs in the country, are ineligible to be seen by college coaches in June, multiple sources told ESPN.

In August, the NCAA implemented new recruiting rules, specifically ones that impact the recruiting calendar and when coaches can watch prospects. They changed the July evaluation periods and added two weekends in June for college coaches to watch recruits.

In theory, this was supposed to enable colleges to see recruits more than in the past, and in different settings.

Under these new rules, however, there is a major caveat that most high school and college coaches are not aware of just yet: The NCAA -- along with the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) -- is limiting college coaches to watching just one school association per state.

Earlier this month, ESPN confirmed with the NFHS that only one association per state was eligible to be seen by college coaches.

"There is only one member [association] in each state that has NFHS membership," Theresia D. Wynns, the director of sports and officials for the NFHS, told ESPN via email. "Only the schools that are a part of the members of that NFHS member can participate in the June

evaluation period."

Provided the example of New York, Wynns confirmed that only the New York State Public High School Athletic Association was a recognized member of the NFHS and therefore only public school members are eligible to participate in the June evaluation period. Private schools in New York would be ineligible to participate in June.

Other associations and/or leagues that might not be able to be seen by college coaches in June include: private schools in North Carolina, among other states; the New England Preparatory School Athletic Council (NEPSAC), arguably the best basketball conference in the country; the Virginia Independent Schools Athletic Association, which includes Oak Hill Academy, Paul VI and Bishop O'Connell; and La Lumiere School (Indiana), one of the best high school basketball programs in the country.

The NFHS confirmed that students who attend schools in the NEPSAC and VISAA are ineligible to be seen.

The NFHS, in coordination with the NCAA, also provided a statement to ESPN.

"At the NCAA's request, the NFHS was asked to develop criteria for the June Scholastic Basketball Evaluation Events -- both with regard to hosting the events in education-based settings and parameters for participation in the events," the statement said. "With the task of bringing recruiting back into the scholastic environment, the criteria were developed by a subcommittee of NFHS-member state association representatives and NFHS staff members with input from the National High School Basketball Coaches Association (NHSBCA).

"In keeping with the NFHS' model of its sanctioning program, this subcommittee determined that these events would be limited to individuals and schools from NFHS member state associations. Other opportunities continue to exist in July for those individuals and schools outside NFHS member associations."

The NFHS has one member association per state, 51 in total, including Washington D.C. There are "affiliate associations," but they are not considered members. Many of the associations are comprised of both public and private high schools, but a number are public-only and don't include private or independent schools.

"They're taking away an opportunity to be seen," one high school coach impacted by the rule told ESPN. "There's a whole class of kids not able to be seen. They deserve the same opportunity as everyone else."