



VHSL announces guidelines for student-athlete NIL deals

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NIL NO-NOS

- Adult Entertainment Products or Services
- Alcohol
- Tobacco and Electronic Smoking
- Opioids or Prescription Drugs
- Casinos and Gambling, Weapons and Firearms



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CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA (WTKR)- Like many other states, institutions and organizations, the Virginia High School league is trying to help student-athletes navigate the Name, Image and Likeness World. Wednesday saw the VHSL announce

its guidelines to help its pupils take advantage of opportunities while also remaining eligible to compete.

VHSL Executive Director Dr. Billy Haun unveiled the guidelines during a Zoom press conference with media members.

Students may receive compensation for commercialization of their own name, image and likeness. This includes taking part in commercials, product endorsements, personal appearances, autograph sessions, merchandise and apparel sales, group licensing and acting as a social media influencer. Haun pointed out that a large portion of NIL deals involving high school student-athletes would likely come on social media platforms.

Schools and teams may not use NIL opportunities to provide incentive for a student's enrollment or membership on a team. Using intellectual property of the VHSL or any member school to receive compensation, endorsements or gifts is also prohibited. This includes school names, uniforms, mascots and logos.

NIL activities that student-athletes take part in may not include any reference to a school team, school, district, region or the VHSL. Students may not appear in their school uniform or have their school logo visible. They also may not endorse or promote any NIL partner during school athletic events unless that identifying mark or logo is part of the standard school uniform for that sport.

There are a handful of categories or products that student-athletes may not promote or endorse. Those include adult entertainment products and services, alcohol products, tobacco or electronic smoking products, opioids or prescription drugs, controlled dangerous substances, casinos, gambling or sports betting and weapons or firearms.



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Schools may not solicit or arrange compensation for an NIL deal. Booster clubs, coaches, administrators, alumni or an NIL Collective may not assist athletes in securing the deals.

Student-athletes must notify the principal or athletic director of their school in writing within 72 hours of entering into any NIL contract. Haun told us that experts have said between 1.5 percent and 9.5 percent of high school athletes could sign these deals in Virginia.

Violating the guidelines shall result in a student-athlete's ineligibility in regards to VHSL competition.

Haun said the guidelines passed a committee vote by a count of 32-2. The executive director also noted that the league plans to adjust its policies as it sees fit and as the NIL landscape changes. The league used an NIL consultant to help develop its guidelines, as well as its legal counsel.

As far as oversight, Haun stressed that schools will be responsible to self report any violations of the policies.

This is a developing story, so stay tuned to wtkr.com for the latest information.

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