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Loyalty to the High School Team: Bona Fide Team Members

Any student who violates this standard becomes ineligible for the MIAA tournament(s) for that season.

The regular season portion of the penalty for a violation toward the end of a season will carry over to the very next high school season in which the student is a legitimate participant. For example, a soccer player who violates the rule by missing the last high school match would serve the required suspension (i.e. two games or two weeks) at the start of basketball season, if that student is a legitimate basketball participant.

A waiver of the bona fide team rule excusing the student from the school activity that day and allowing the student to participate in a non-school event is possible under the guidelines set forth below. Before a waiver request (See White Book for forms) is submitted ALL of the following considerations must be present:

1. The non-school event must be a significant and a very unusual opportunity -- not one available to large numbers of teams or individuals whose eligibility for the event is related to their ability to pay for it.
2. The invitation must be in the form of a personalized invitation, not from a website or form letter to a large number of students or teams in a mass marketing effort.
3. It must be clear that the student is not being exploited (e.g. financially by buying an airline ticket, hotel rooms, paying a registration fee), and that the student is being recognized for unique and elite achievement.
4. The request for a waiver must have the written support of the school principal, the athletic director and the high school coach.
5. Whenever a waiver request related to an event that requires a student athlete to meet a qualifying standard (e.g. a minimum time), then that requirement must exceed the MIAA best level of achievement.

Among other factors that also will be considered:

- a. The amount of time being missed from school.
- b. The number of school team activities being missed.
- c. There is a limit to the number of times that a student could qualify for a waiver. It would be somewhat unusual that a student-athlete would be granted more than one waiver per school year.

Waivers will be considered by MIAA on an individual basis, and on the merits of each case. The above points (i.e. 1 – 4 and a – c) all should be addressed in the waiver request, which must be forwarded to the MIAA at least 30 days prior to the non-school event, unless the nature of the individual invitation precludes this timeline.



The MIAA Board of Directors agreed to a modification of the response to Bona Fide Team waiver requests at their March 7, 2005 meeting. Staff may approve requests in behalf of students who would be missing high school activity in order to participate in a sport **different** than that of the high school season. It was understood that waiver guidelines would limit the number of days that such a student might be absent from the high school team.