

Date of Hearing: March 25, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Darshana R. Patel, Chair
AB 1572 (Alanis) – As Introduced January 12, 2026

[Note: This bill was double referred from the Assembly Arts, Entertainment, Sports & Tourism Committee and was heard by that Committee as it relates to issues under its jurisdiction.]

SUBJECT: California Interscholastic Federation: officials: registration, certification, and eligibility verification

SUMMARY: Establishes a background check process for game officials used in California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) events. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Requires the CIF to require its officials to annually register to verify the official's eligibility to officiate California Interscholastic Federation contests.
- 2) Requires the registration platform for officials to consist of all of the following components:
 - a) A statewide and standardized background screening;
 - b) A record of rules tests, online training modules, sport-specific annual certifications, and continuing education requirements; and
 - c) A record of liability insurance coverage.
- 3) Requires the CIF to annually verify that all components listed above are complete before an official is deemed and marked as eligible to receive an assignment to officiate.
- 4) States that only officials who are deemed eligible in the selected platform may be assigned to California Interscholastic Federation contests by assignors or officiating associations.
- 5) Requires the CIF to ensure that its participating member schools, school districts, county offices of education, and charter schools can access the platform to verify the eligibility of an official, and shall not have access to the sensitive information in each individual component of the platform.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Requires the CIF to report to the appropriate policy committees of the Legislature and the Governor on its evaluation and accountability activities on or before January 1, 2023, and on or before January 1 every seven years thereafter. Requires the report to include, but not be limited to, the goals and objectives of the CIF with regard to, and the status of, all of the following:
 - a) The governing structure of the CIF, and the effectiveness of that governance structure in providing leadership for interscholastic athletics in secondary schools;

- b) Methods to facilitate communication with agencies, organizations, and public entities whose functions and interests interface with the CIF;
 - c) The quality of coaching and officiating, including, but not limited to, professional development for coaches and athletic administrators, and parent education programs;
 - d) Gender equity in interscholastic athletics, including, but not limited to, the number of male and female pupils participating in interscholastic athletics in secondary schools, and action taken by the CIF in order to ensure compliance with Title IX of the federal Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. Sec. 1681 et seq.);
 - e) Health and safety of pupils, coaches, officials, and spectators;
 - f) The economic viability of interscholastic athletics in secondary schools, including, but not limited to, the promotion and marketing of interscholastic athletics;
 - g) New and continuing programs available to pupil athletes; and
 - h) Awareness and understanding of emerging issues related to interscholastic athletics in secondary schools.
- 2) Authorizes a community youth athletic program to request state and federal level criminal history information from the California Department of Justice (DOJ) for a volunteer or paid coach. (Penal Code 11105.3)
- 3) Requires commencing January 1, 2016, a community youth athletic program to provide written notice to the parent or guardian of any youth participating in the program regarding the program's policies relating to whether the program obtains criminal background checks for hired or volunteer coaches. (Business & Professions Code 18900)
- 5) Requires any entity that has a contract with a local educational agency (LEA) to ensure that any employee who interacts with pupils, outside of the immediate supervision and control of the pupil's parent or guardian or a school employee, has a valid criminal records summary. Requires, when the contracting entity performs the criminal background check, the entity to immediately provide any subsequent arrest and conviction information it receives to any LEA that it is contracting with pursuant to the subsequent arrest service. (Education Code 45125.1)

FISCAL EFFECT: This bill is keyed nonfiscal by the Office of Legislative Counsel.

COMMENTS:

Need for the bill. According to the author, "AB 1572 is necessary to ensure that California's student athletes compete in safe, fair, and well-regulated environments. By establishing a consistent standard for CIF officials, we can give schools and parents confidence that officials assigned to games are qualified and accountable. This measure will also promote greater transparency and consistency across leagues, reducing uneven enforcement of

rules. Ultimately, it strengthens the integrity of high school athletics and reinforces a commitment to protecting the well-being of every student athlete.”

What does this bill do? This bill requires CIF to maintain a platform to monitor the registration and eligibility of game officials, including a background check and liability insurance coverage.

Existing law requires school employees and contractors, including coaches, to be fingerprinted and for the school to receive subsequent arrest records. Currently, there is no such requirement for game officials to be fingerprinted, unless they are an employee or contractor hired by a school.

California Interscholastic Federation. The CIF was organized at a high school athletic convention on March 28, 1914, as a voluntary association of schools. Since 1914, the California Department of Education (CDE) has allowed the CIF to regulate interscholastic athletics, and the CIF has been the rule-making body for all of California's K-12 athletics programs since 1917. In 1981, that rule-making authority was expanded to include control over all interscholastic athletics, replacing the CDE in that role.

The Federation consists of ten regional sections, each of which is divided into several “leagues,” for purposes of scheduling athletic contests and assigning referees. Similar organizations exist in other states. Almost all public, private, and parochial schools in California are CIF members.

The primary responsibilities of the CIF are to administer high school athletic programs and to promulgate and enforce rules relating to a student’s involvement in athletics – age, semesters in school, scholarship, residence, transfer status, and amateur standing. Such regulations, which are generated by the member base of secondary schools, prevent undesirable exploitation of high school students, provide for the welfare of participants, and ensure that interscholastic athletics offer major benefits to students in a safe, rewarding environment.

Legislative history and the Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) AB 218 report. Recent legislative changes have significantly reshaped California’s legal landscape around childhood sexual assault claims, profoundly affecting schools and public agencies. Assembly Bill 218 (Gonzalez) Chapter 861, Statutes of 2019, increased liability exposure for schools by extending and, in many cases, reviving expired statutes of limitation for childhood sexual assault claims against educational agencies. Subsequently, AB 452 (Addis) Chapter 655, Statutes of 2023, permanently eliminated these statutes of limitation for claims arising after January 1, 2024. In response to concerns about substantial fiscal impacts on public agencies—estimated by FCMAT to be between \$2–\$3 billion for California schools alone—the Legislature enacted SB 153 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, Chapter 38 Statutes of 2024), mandating FCMAT to analyze the financial implications and provide recommendations to strengthen prevention, accountability, and fiscal management related to childhood sexual assault in public entities.

The resulting FCMAT AB 218 report underscores the urgent need for enhanced statewide measures, including clearer boundary policies, mandated comprehensive training, improved oversight, and more rigorous employment screening practices, all aimed explicitly at preventing misconduct and mitigating substantial legal and financial risks to California’s educational institutions.

Arguments in support. The CIF states, “This bill would require CIF to annually verify the eligibility of its officials to officiate CIF contests by requiring those officials to annually register through a platform selected by CIF for that purpose. The platform would comprise a standardized background screening, a record of understanding of the game, and a record of liability insurance coverage. Under AB 1572, only officials who are deemed eligible in the platform may be assigned to officiate CIF contests. CIF would ensure that member schools can access the platform to verify eligibility but shall not have access to any sensitive information.

CIF has voluntarily instituted a system that would meet the requirements of AB 1572, and we believe the health and safety of all interscholastic athletics participants—students, parents, coaches, and officials—is worthy of being codified into law. Therefore, we support AB 1572 and urge committee members to vote “aye” on this measure.”

Committee amendments. Staff recommends the bill be amended to:

- 1) Require the existing components of the bill go into effect January 1, 2027.
- 2) Require, as of July 1, 2028, officials to hold an Activity Supervisor Clearance Certificate from the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) in order to register and maintain eligibility as a sports official.
- 3) Require the CTC to publish on their website a list of holders of the Activity Supervisor Clearance Certificate who have the certificate suspended or revoked.
- 4) Clarify that CIF shall maintain the eligibility platform and that CIF is not considered an employer of officials.

Related legislation. AB 465 (Bonilla), Chapter 146, Statutes of 2013, authorizes a community youth athletic program to request state and federal level criminal history information from the DOJ for a volunteer or paid coach.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

California Interscholastic Federation
 California Interscholastic Federation - Central Coast Section
 California Interscholastic Federation - Central Section
 California Interscholastic Federation - North Coast Section
 California Interscholastic Federation - Northern Section
 California Interscholastic Federation - Oakland Section
 California Interscholastic Federation - Sac-joaquin Section
 California Interscholastic Federation - San Diego Section
 California Interscholastic Federation - San Francisco City Section
 California Interscholastic Federation - Southern Section
 California Interscholastic Federation Los Angeles City Section

Opposition

None on file

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