



E L I T E

How Coaches Can Help Their Athletes Navigate NIL





UNDERSTAND THE RULES ON NIL

Although NIL is now permitted at the high school level in New Jersey, specific regulations and limitations still apply, impacting an athlete's eligibility. Coaches must familiarize themselves with these rules to effectively educate players and families while also supervising their athletes' NIL activities to ensure compliance.



SHOW THEM IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT \$

Many athletes understand NIL primarily as a way to earn money. However, NIL offers far more than financial benefits. Coaches should first educate themselves on the broader opportunities NIL provides, including personal branding, financial literacy, and career development. By doing so, they can help athletes see NIL as a tool for long-term success rather than just a financial pursuit. Encouraging athletes to explore these aspects will better prepare them for life beyond sports.



ENCOURAGE THEM

High school coaches may initially be hesitant about NIL. However, as their understanding grows, they will recognize how NIL can serve as a valuable resource for young athletes' personal and professional development. The lessons learned through NIL—such as responsibility, business acumen, and networking—can also reflect positively on the team, school, and community. Coaches should support athletes interested in NIL by guiding them, offering advice, and serving as a trusted resource throughout their journey.



HAVE TEAM/SCHOOL SPECIFIC RULES

Coaches can no longer ignore NIL or assume it will only impact the most elite athletes. NIL is here to stay, and it has the potential to benefit a wide range of student-athletes. To manage this transition effectively, schools and teams should proactively develop their own internal NIL policies. This may include requiring athletes to disclose NIL deals or setting restrictions on NIL activities during the season. Establishing these guidelines in advance will help prevent potential conflicts and ensure NIL remains beneficial for all parties involved.



MONITOR WHO ATHLETES ARE INVOLVED WITH

In New Jersey, coaches and school representatives are not permitted to initiate NIL activities on behalf of athletes. However, this does not mean coaches should remain uninvolved. A coach's role extends beyond the field, encompassing the overall well-being and development of their athletes. NIL is no exception. While athletes should seek guidance from responsible third parties, coaches should remain vigilant to ensure their players are not being misled or exploited by unethical partners. Offering guidance and oversight will help athletes navigate NIL safely and effectively.



BUILD COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Successful coaches understand the importance of fostering strong relationships between their teams and local communities. NIL strengthens these connections even further, as community support can play a critical role in an athlete's NIL success. On the flip side, communities themselves will feel a closer connection with the athletes who are proudly representing their town and community.



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