

# Name, image, likeness and the potential impact on high school athletics

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (WTXL) — On July 1, bills allowing college athletes to profit off their name, image, and likeness take effect in both Florida and Georgia. While it's a move many applaud, many wonder the impact it'll have on not just collegiate sports, but high school athletics as well. No matter what happens, one school in Tallahassee is making sure its athletes are ready.

A simple search on Instagram, shows how big a following Florida High dual-sport stand-out Tre Donaldson has.

"You make one highlight that everybody likes and it could go viral," said Florida High Athletic Director Anthony Robinson of the impact of social media. "Once they start seeing that, Tre Donaldson is the first one to do this in high school."

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According to ESPN, Donaldson is a Top 20 safety recruit in the country and a Top 30 point guard. With a name, image, and likeness bill set to take hold in Florida, college athletes can begin profiting off NIL, and while the impact on high school athletics remains to be seen, Florida High wants to make sure their athletes are ready to capitalize when they can.

"We started talking about supplying our kids with the education to be able to leave here and make an immediate profit off their name or make a profit off their name while they're here," said Tyrone McGriff, who is the Director of Programming and Community Development at Florida High.

Karissa Niehoff is the Executive Director of the National Federation of State High School Associations. One of her biggest concerns with NIL is making sure high school athletes don't lose their amateur status.

"The state associations are going to be challenged to protect the high school itself," she said. "The high school team, the high school identity itself. That's going to be where associations and legislatures are going

to have to dig heels in. A lot of education is going to need to happen."

The Florida High School Athletic Association addresses Amateurism in its bylaws. ABC 27 reached out to the FHSAA about NIL, and if they planned to adapt to the new state bill.

Their response? "To date, there's been no discussion of potential bylaw or policy changes relating to the topic here in Florida."

The NFHS is hosting a conference in Orlando this weekend, and the FHSAA did say "if after the meeting their policies and bylaws need to be revisited, they will take the appropriate steps in the coming school year."

For Florida High, they'll be ready no matter what happens. They've already requested proposals from marketing and branding companies.

"We're trying to make sure we educate all of our students, all of our parents," said Robinson.

"We're going to really take an in-depth look at what this looks like for high school athletes, and hopefully help our athletes," added McGriff.

That's something everyone, can get behind.

"We want kids and parents to be in the driver's seat with this and be very educated and very informative and be in charge," said Niehoff.

"We have to do that."

ABC 27 reached out to Georgia High School Association Executive Director Dr. Robin Hines, who said:

"I think it's fair to say that we will be forced to address this in the future.

Our focus is education-based sports and activities and to lose amateur status in high schools drives us in the wrong direction away from our mission."