THSCA
TEXAS HIGH SCHOOL COACHES ASSOCIATION
& COACHES EDUCATION FOUNDATION

THSCA Guide to NIL & Athlete Representation



Helping Texas Coaches Lead, Educate and Protect Student-Athletes and Their Families

The NIL landscape continues to evolve, but a coach's responsibility remains the same: educate families, protect student-athletes, and connect them with trusted resources.

This guide summarizes current Texas law, UIL guidance and NCAA considerations regarding Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) and athlete representation. It is intended to help coaches educate and support families. It is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice.

EverRise

Prepared by EverRise on behalf of THSCA

Why Your Leadership Matters

Texas coaches have always done more than teach the game. They develop leaders, mentor young people and help families navigate some of the most important decisions their student-athlete will ever make.

Today's recruiting landscape has become increasingly complex. NIL opportunities, institutional revenue sharing, athlete representation and evolving regulations have created exciting possibilities, but they have also created confusion and risk for many families.

As a result, parents are looking for trusted guidance. They don't expect coaches to serve as attorneys or agents, but they do trust them to provide perspective, reinforce sound decision-making and help them avoid costly mistakes.

This guide is designed to help coaches confidently fulfill that role while protecting student-athletes, their families and their programs.

Understand Your Role

One of the most valuable things a coach can do is understand where their responsibility begins and where it ends.

Coaches SHOULD:
✔️ Educate families using current THSCA and UIL guidance.
✔️ Reinforce that academics, relationships and school fit should always come before financial opportunities.
✔️ Encourage families to seek independent legal and financial advice before signing any agreement.
✔️ Refer NIL questions involving contracts or representation to the athletic director and qualified professionals.
✔️ Report suspected UIL violations through appropriate school procedures.

Coaches SHOULD NOT:
✘ Recommend one agent or advisor over another.
✘ Interpret legal agreements.
✘ Negotiate NIL contracts.
✘ Offer legal, tax or financial advice.

Your role is simple: Educate. Protect. Refer.

Know the Rules

Help families understand these important facts before they make any decisions and remind them that signing an agreement and receiving compensation are two separate events governed by current law and applicable rules.

Student-athletes age 16 and younger

- May not sign NIL agreements with agents, postsecondary institutions, businesses, collectives or other organizations under any circumstance. Eligibility will be lost.

Student-athletes age 17 and older

- May sign scholarship agreements.
- May sign NIL and institutional revenue-sharing agreements with the college or university they choose to attend. However, compensation may not be received until the student-athlete is on campus at the postsecondary institution.
- May NOT sign with businesses, collectives, marketing agencies, or other third parties until their UIL eligibility has ended.

Remember: Texas law, UIL rules, NCAA rules, Conference rules, Institutional policies all apply independently. A legally valid NIL agreement under Texas law does NOT automatically preserve UIL eligibility. Families should verify compliance with every applicable rule before signing any agreement.

Reinforce That School Fit Comes First

One of the greatest services a coach can provide is reminding families what truly matters. Encourage families to choose a college based on:

- Academic opportunity
- Athletic development
- Coaching relationships
- Campus culture
- Long-term personal growth

Financial opportunities should support that decision, not drive it. The right school will almost always create greater long-term value than the biggest short-term opportunity.



Prepare Families for the Risks

One of the biggest misconceptions surrounding NIL is that everyone offering representation is qualified. Currently, Texas does not have a registry specifically for individuals representing high school athletes in NIL matters. That means almost anyone can present themselves as an Agent, NIL Advisor, Consultant, Marketing Representative, Recruiting Expert without specialized state oversight.

Encourage families to independently verify each person's:

- Credentials
- Experience
- References
- Reputation
- Knowledge of current Texas law, UIL rules, NCAA regulations and function of the College Sports Commission

Without a state registration or oversight system, independent verification is a family's best protection against unqualified or predatory representatives. Coaches should encourage families to verify credentials, experience, and references before signing any agreement.

Encourage Families to Slow Down

Many poor decisions happen because families feel pressured or rushed. Encourage them to:

- Never sign anything under pressure.
- Never rely on verbal promises.
- Have every agreement reviewed by an independent attorney.
- Keep copies of every agreement and payment.
- Fully understand every fee before signing.
- Ask questions until they are completely comfortable.

Professional advisors should welcome thoughtful questions, not discourage them.

Recognize the Warning Signs

Families should slow down if anyone says:

- "You don't need to tell your school."
- "You have to sign today."
- "UIL rules don't matter."
- "You don't need your own attorney."
- "Trust me—I do this all the time."
- "This opportunity depends on which college your athlete chooses."

These are common pressure tactics and should be treated as significant warning signs.

Help Families Ask the Right Questions

If a family is considering representation, encourage them to ask the following:

Background

- What qualifies you to represent student-athletes?
- Are you professionally certified or licensed?

Experience

- Which athletes have you represented?
- Can we speak with families you've worked with?
- Have you negotiated NIL and revenue-sharing agreements?

Knowledge

- How do you stay current on Texas law, UIL rules, NCAA rules and College Sports Commission requirements?

Fees

- How are you compensated?
- Are all fees disclosed in writing?
- Will we receive a written fee agreement?
- Are there referral fees or sub-agents involved?

Professional Support

- Do you work with qualified attorneys?
- Do you provide tax or financial planning resources?
- Will you encourage us to have our own attorney review every agreement?
- Who else is on your team supporting our family (attorneys, financial advisors, tax professionals, etc.)?

Values

- Will you put our student's education and long-term success ahead of financial opportunity?

Term

- Make sure the Term of any agreement does not extend beyond the student-athletes college career.

If someone hesitates to answer any of these questions, families should proceed with extreme caution.

Watch for Behavioral Red Flags

Coaches should encourage families to involve their athletic director if they observe:

- An adult approaching the athlete before involving the family.
- Someone attempting to secure representation from an athlete under age 17.
- Pressure to sign quickly.
- Pressure to keep agreements confidential.
- NIL opportunities tied to transferring schools or choosing a particular college.
- Representatives discouraging legal review.
- Representatives unwilling to provide verifiable credentials or references.
- Compensation involving coaches, boosters or school personnel.

When in doubt, encourage families to slow down and seek additional guidance.

Help Families Understand Agent Fees

While every agreement is different, families should understand some common industry practices, such as:

- Athletic contract commissions often range from 3–5%.
- Marketing and NIL sponsorship commissions often range from 15–20%, depending on the services provided.

Families should insist on:

- Written fee agreements.
- Full disclosure of compensation.
- Limit Term of Agreements to time in College,
- Clear explanations of services.
- Copies of every signed document.

Emphasize Financial Literacy

Texas law requires student-athletes to complete financial literacy and life-skills education before fully participating in certain NIL opportunities. Encourage families to work with professionals who can help them understand:

- Budgeting
- Taxes
- Investing
- Contract management
- Long-term financial planning

Helping student-athletes manage their earnings wisely is just as important as helping them earn them.

Know When to Refer

The best advice a coach can sometimes give is: “Let’s involve our athletic director.” Coaches are encouraged to refer families to the AD whenever:

- They ask legal questions.
- They ask you to review contracts.
- They ask whether an agent is trustworthy.
- There are concerns about eligibility.
- You suspect a UIL violation.
- You observe predatory behavior.

Once a referral is made, continue to support the student-athlete and family as a trusted mentor while allowing qualified professionals to provide legal, financial, and contractual guidance.

A Final Thought

As a Texas high school coach, you have earned the trust of your student-athletes, their families, and your community. That trust extends well beyond the playing field. As NIL and recruiting continue to evolve, your leadership has never been more important. Families are looking to you, not for legal advice, but for trusted guidance, sound perspective, and a steady voice as they navigate unfamiliar decisions.

