

NCAA Votes To Allow College Athletes To Profit From Name, Image and Likeness



The NCAA Board of Governors on Tuesday afternoon unanimously voted to allow college athletes to profit from their name, image and likeness in a “manner consistent with the collegiate model” and directed the three divisions of college sports to immediately begin crafting their rules in a way that maintains a distinction between collegiate and professional sports.

The new rules — which must be transparent, focused and enforceable as to not create a competitive imbalance — can be implemented immediately but no later than January 2021.

“As a national governing body, the NCAA is uniquely positioned to modify its rules to ensure fairness and a level playing field for student-athletes,” NCAA president Mark Emmert said. “The board’s action today creates a path to enhance opportunities for student-athletes while ensuring they compete against students and not professionals.”

The decision came roughly one month after California passed a law allowing college athletes to earn money from endorsements, something the NCAA had long resisted.

“We must embrace change to provide the best possible experience for college athletes,” Ohio State president and NCAA Board of Governors chairman Michel Drake said. “Additional flexibility in this area can and must continue to support college sports as a part of higher education. This modernization for the future is a natural extension of the numerous steps NCAA members have taken in recent years to improve support for student-athletes, including full cost of attendance and guaranteed scholarships.”

Ohio State athletic director Gene Smith and Big East commissioner Val Ackerman have spent the last several months spearheading a working group that was appointed to evaluate the name, image and likeness issue. They presented their recommendation to the board on Tuesday during its final regularly scheduled meeting of the year at Emory University in Atlanta.