

NMAA Appeals Review Committee Eligibility Hearings
December 16, 2025
1:00 p.m. – Virtual

Welcome - Meeting called to order by Mr. Paul Benoit, NMAA Appeals Review Committee Chairman, at 1:00 p.m. Ms. Alissa Wesbrook, NMAA Assistant to the Executive Director, conducted roll call and the following members were present:

Mr. Paul Benoit
Ms. Freda Daugherty
Mr. Gerry Washburn
Mr. Keith Durham

Not Present:

Mr. Bill Green
Mr. Vance Lee
Mr. Mike Chambers
Mr. Brian Stacy

4 members were present representing a committee quorum.

Approval of the Agenda:

Mr. Benoit asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Washburn made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Durham seconded. A vote was taken and passed unanimously (4-0).

Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Benoit asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the December 11, 2025, appeal hearing. Mr. Durham made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Washburn seconded. A vote was taken and passed unanimously (4-0).

Cleveland High School Appeal

Closed Session (unless family requests hearing to be in open session)

Mr. Benoit asked the appealing party if they wished for the appeal hearing to be in open session or closed session. The appealing party requested the hearing be conducted in open session.

Mr. Benoit- The appeal hearing will be open as per the request.

Mr. Benoit reviewed the agenda.

Also in attendance were Mr. Scott Owen, NMAA Associate Director; Mr. Matt Martinez, Athletic Director, Cleveland High School; Mr. Scott Affentranger, Principal, Cleveland High School; Mr. Greg Crow, father of student and Coach at Cleveland High School; and Aiden Crow, student.

Background and Ruling

Mr. Scott Owen stated Aiden is currently a freshman at Cleveland High School and participated in the sport of wrestling last year as an 8th grader at Ruidoso High School. Upon moving from Ruidoso, Aiden's family established residency at 576 Superstition Drive located within the Rio Rancho High School attendance

zone. Per NMAA bylaw 6.6.1., because Aiden's residence is outside the Cleveland attendance boundary he is deemed a transfer student at Cleveland High School and per NMAA bylaw 6.6.2.E., students deemed transfers are ineligible for participation at the varsity level for a calendar year from the date of their enrollment. Because of his transfer status due to his out-of-zone residence, Aiden was ruled ineligible for varsity participation in the sport of wrestling but eligible for varsity participation in all other sports under the "did not participate provision" which can be used once in a student's high school career.

Appealing Party Statement

Martinez- Coach Crow had an opportunity to be a head coach in Ruidoso. For whatever reason it didn't work out, and he came back to their original residence in the Rio Rancho school district. He still teaches at Cleveland, and Aiden was deemed eligible for JV only in the sport of wrestling. Cleveland's JV participates primarily in varsity meets only. Since he is ineligible at the varsity level, he cannot do that. They are requesting he be allowed to wrestle at varsity tournaments.

Affentranger- Greg is a great coach for them and he supported his decision to go to Ruidoso. Luck had it he returned to Cleveland and he was happy to hire him back. RRPS does have a hard boundary line, however, employees of RRPS are given the option for their kids to attend any school in their district regardless of residence.

Mr. Crow- He and his wife and decided to move to Ruidoso when he was asked to be a head coach there. The move was career driven. Mr. Crow's wife is a nurse and a nurse practitioner, and it made sense financially to move back to Rio Rancho after a period of time. They also had house they previously owned. The situation made sense to move back and come back to Cleveland. Aiden is an easy-going kid, and this move was not athletically motivated. He understands the importance of the rules, and would love for him to wrestle varsity, but if not, they hope for the possibility of wrestling JV at varsity meets.

Committee Questions

Washburn- Were they renting their current house out when at Ruidoso? Yes, and they moved into the same house, out of zone.

Crow- Owned the house in Rio Rancho and moved to Ruidoso. Selling the Rio Rancho home was not financially viable. Selling the house in Ruidoso right now due to floods is very hard.

Washburn- JV team wrestles at varsity meets. The majority of matches and tournaments are against other varsity. So, the ability to compete and not score or qualify at the varsity level. Is that the request?

Affentranger- They moved back from Ruidoso and because he is an employee of the district they can pick which school to attend, but he is ineligible at the varsity level. They feel it's a further penalty if he can't wrestle JV in varsity tournaments.

Martinez- In other sports, JV will have a number of guaranteed games. In the sport of wrestling, JV typically participates in varsity tournaments due to lack of JV-only opportunities.

Durham- What weight classification is he at Cleveland.

Aiden- 215

How many other wrestlers are 215.

Coach Copeland- 4-5 wrestlers.

Benoit- He was down at Ruidoso for two years?

Crow- Yes

Benoit- He was at Cleveland for how long?
 Crow- 2 years. Prior to that Ruidoso 10-11 years.
 Benoit- When he was in Rio Rancho what schools did he attend?
 Crow- He attended Lincoln Middle School.
 Benoit- Feeders of Cleveland?
 Crow- Yes.

Benoit- How many JV wrestlers do you have opposed to varsity?
 Coach Copeland- 93 wrestlers, 14 varsity weight classes. 79 JV wrestlers. JV wrestlers wrestle without getting any points.

Benoit- Is this common practice for wrestlers?
 Owen- It is common practice. JV wrestling is minimal for many teams. Many schools enter both their JV and Varsity into varsity tournaments due to lack of JV opportunities but the JV does not score points.

Executive Session

Mr. Benoit asked for a motion to enter into Executive Session for discussion purposes only. A motion was made by Mr. Washburn and seconded by Mrs. Daugherty to go into Executive Session at 1:25 p.m. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously (4-0).

Yes/For	No/Against	Appeal Review Committee Member Name
X		Mr. Paul Benoit
X		Mr. Keith Durham
X		Mr. Gerry Washburn
X		Ms. Freda Daugherty

Mr. Benoit asked for a motion to exit Executive Session. A motion was made by Mr. Washburn and seconded by Ms. Daugherty to exit Executive Session at 1:38 p.m. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously (4-0). Mr. Benoit stated there was no action taken during Executive Session.

Mr. Vance Lee entered the meeting.

Yes/For	No/Against	Appeal Review Committee Member Name
X		Mr. Paul Benoit
X		Mr. Keith Durham
X		Mr. Gerry Washburn
X		Mrs. Freda Daugherty
X		Mr. Vance Lee

Action Items

Vote On Student Eligibility: Mr. Benoit asked if there was any need for further discussion, if not he asked for a motion to uphold, amend or overturn the original decision. A motion was made by Mr. Washburn to uphold the New Mexico Activities Association Decision regarding the Cleveland High School appeal. Ms. Daugherty seconded the motion. A vote was taken and unanimously passed with a vote of 4-0. Mr. Lee abstained.

Rio Rancho High School Appeal- Meeting called to order by Mr. Paul Benoit, NMAA Appeals Review Committee Chairman.

Closed Session (unless family requests hearing to be in open session)

Mr. Benoit asked the appealing party if they wished for the appeal hearing to be in open session or closed session. The appealing party requested the hearing be conducted in open session.

Mr. Benoit- The appeal hearing will be open as per the request.

Mr. Benoit reviewed the agenda.

Also in attendance were Mr. Scott Owen, NMAA Associate Director; Mr. Sal Gonzales, Athletic Director, Rio Rancho High School; Mr. Phillip Keller, Rio Rancho High School; Ms. Chantelle Gallegos, mother of the student; Terrance Gallegos, student.

Background and Ruling

Mr. Scott Owen stated Terrance is a senior transfer student at Rio Rancho High School.

Up until this year, Terrance had been enrolled in Maxwell High School and spent his junior year living with extended family in Maxwell while mom resided in the Albuquerque/Rio Rancho metro area. During Terrance's junior year, Terrance's mom held leases in the Albuquerque/Rio Rancho Metro area, the first at 10204 Jarmel in the Cibola High attendance zone, and currently at 121 Los Miradores in the Rio Rancho High attendance zone. NMAA 6.8.1 establishes that after a student has been enrolled a full calendar year, they retain eligibility at the current school even if the legal guardians move outside the school's attendance zone. If the legal guardians do move, the student, at that time, can either choose to utilize eligibility retention to remain enrolled and eligible at the current school or choose to move with legal guardians to the new attendance zone public school and establish eligibility there. Because Terrance chose to remain enrolled and eligible at Maxwell when his mother moved, he utilized his eligibility retention at Maxwell and forfeited eligibility at the school his mother's new residence was zoned to. As a result, and as a senior transfer student, Terrance has been ruled ineligible for any level of cheer competition but eligible for varsity participation in all other sports under the "did not participate" provision.

Appealing Party Statement

Gallegos- She was a traveling nurse and going from hotel to hotel and didn't have stability for Terrance to be able to go to a school and live with her in the Albuquerque/Rio Rancho Metro area while traveling to and from Maxwell. Terrance did stay at home in Maxwell with extended family. On December 2, 2024, she decided to take a full-time position with UNM Health Services. She was able to get a lease move into the Rio Rancho area. As soon as she was fully established and Terrance was done with school, he moved in with her at the beginning of May, 2025. She needed stability before he could come and live with her full time

Gonzales- Since he has been at school, he has been a model student and he chose Rio Rancho because that is the address they are living at. He did not transfer for athletic reasons at all.

Keller- Talking with the mother she did what most parents would do. She was a traveling nurse and staying at several different addresses during her time. Once she established a permanent residence, he moved in with her.

Committee Questions

Washburn- What was the mailing address when traveling in Maxwell and what address did she file taxes at?

Gallegos- At the Maxwell residence.

Daugherty- Is the extended family still available for him to live with there in Maxwell?

Gallegos- Her mother is elderly, and not the best health wise. It was difficult for her and would have been difficult to continue to support her in that way.

Durham- Travel from different hospitals or one main hospital?

Gallegos- She was working at MDC the entire time she was there, traveling back and forth from Maxwell. In December 2024 she decided to take a full-time position.

Durham- How long was she at MDC?

Gallegos- She started in August 2023 through December 2024. She was driving to and from Maxwell that entire year and stayed in a hotel in downtown Albuquerque. She would work three days and then went back home. Never resided there more than 3 days at a time.

Lee- Rio Elite is that located in the Albuquerque/Rio Rancho area?

Gallegos- When she traveling back and forth to Albuquerque, Terrance would sometimes accompany her and he wanted to do tumbling classes so he did them there. Got more involved in the gym and wanted to join their all-star team. In May he started cheering with them.

Lee- Are there any athletes that are at Rio Elite that also attend Rio Rancho High School?

Terrance- No sir.

Lee- Is he currently doing sideline cheer?

Terrance- Yes.

Washburn- Has he competed at the state level at Maxwell?

Terrance-Yes, he has.

Washburn- How many years?

Terrance- Started at the 8th grade, so 4 years.

Washburn- Did anyone ever explain the eligibility issues if he transferred?

Terrance- No.

Executive Session

Mr. Benoit asked for a motion to enter into Executive Session for discussion purposes only. A motion was made by Mr. Lee and seconded by Ms. Daugherty to go into Executive Session at 1:56p.m. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Yes/For	No/Against	Appeal Review Committee Member Name
X		Mr. Paul Benoit
X		Mr. Keith Durham
X		Mr. Vance Lee
X		Mr. Gary Washburn
X		Ms. Freda Daugherty

Mr. Benoit asked for a motion to exit Executive Session. A motion was made by Mr. Lee and seconded by Ms. Daugherty to exit Executive Session at 2:11 p.m. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously (5-0). Mr. Benoit stated there was no action taken during Executive Session.

Yes/For	No/Against	Appeal Review Committee Member Name
X		Mr. Paul Benoit
X		Mr. Keith Durham
X		Mr. Vance Lee
X		Mr. Gary Washburn
X		Ms. Freda Daugherty

Action Items

Vote On Student Eligibility: Mr. Benoit asked if there was any need for further discussion, if not he asked for a motion to uphold, amend or overturn the original decision. A motion was made by Mr. Lee to overturn the New Mexico Activities Association decision regarding the Rio Rancho High School appeal. Ms. Daugherty seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously (5-0).

Adjournment

Mr. Benoit asked for a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Mr. Lee and seconded by Ms. Daugherty. The meeting was adjourned at 2:12 p.m.