

NMAA Appeals Review Committee Hearing
August 10, 2026
9:00 a.m. - Virtual

Welcome - Meeting called to order by Mr. Paul Benoit, NMAA Appeals Review Committee Chairman, at 9:03 a.m., Mrs. Alissa Wesbrook, NMAA Assistant to the Executive Director, conducted roll call and the following members were present:

Mr. Brian Stacy
Mr. Gerry Washburn
Mr. Gary Salazar
Mr. Paul Benoit

Not Present:
Mr. Vance Lee
Mr. Bill Green
Mr. Keith Durham
Mr. Mike Chambers
Ms. Freda Daugherty

4 members were present representing a committee quorum.

Approval of the Agenda:

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

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Benoit asked for a motion to approve the minutes of August 4, 2026, appeal review hearing. Mr. Washburn made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Stacy seconded. A vote was taken and passed unanimously (4-0).

Cibola 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 reviewed the procedures for the hearing and then introductions took place.

Also present from the NMAA staff were Mrs. Alissa Wesbrook, Assistant to the Executive Director; Mr. Scott Owen, Deputy Director; and Mr. Dusty Young, Executive Director. Present for the aggrieved party was Mr. Doug Dorame, Athletic Director Cibola High School; Ms. Kimberly Finnke, Principal, Cibola High School; Mr. and Mrs. Parker, parents of Croix and Croix Parker, student.

NMAA Summary

Croix is a senior transfer from Rio Rancho HS to Cibola HS wishing to participate in the sport of football. Upon receiving Croix's petition for eligibility, documentation was provided that indicated that current Cibola HS volunteer Coach Arthur Brown was also on the Rio Rancho HS football staff as a volunteer coach during the 23-24 SY in which Croix was also a part of the program. It was also later confirmed that Croix enrolled at Cibola this summer roughly a month after Coach Brown's hire. Per NMAA 6.2.5 – if a student participates on/with any team that is affiliated with or coached by a coach associated with that same sport at a school other than the one the student attends or has attended, and then transfers to that school, the student will be ineligible for all high school athletic participation for 365 calendar days. Because of Croix's previous association with Coach Brown during his enrollment at Rio Rancho HS, and due to his enrollment at Cibola after Coach Brown's hire, Croix has been ruled ineligible at all levels and all sports for 365 days from the date of his enrollment at Cibola HS under the NMAA's "following a coach provision."

Aggrieved Summary

Dorame- Coach Brown was hired as a volunteer coach in June, since that time he has been named the freshman head coach at Cibola. Croix enrolled at Cibola and is in the football program. Coach Brown was at Rio Rancho when Croix was a freshman, this year was the first time they had seen each other since his freshman year.

Mrs. Parker- biggest thing to consider is there has been no contact with Coach Brown since the day of the freshman banquet at Rio Rancho. She is happy to provide phone records. Based on the rule there had to be some intent to follow him, and there was not. This was a coincidence, they both ended up at Cibola. The timing is unfortunate, he was hired in June, Croix didn't have the option to transfer prior as the transfer rule didn't go into effect until beginning of July. There has been no contact with Coach Brown, and from what they heard he was out of state prior to this. They understand the rule is there to keep the integrity and maintain a fair playing field. They have presented facts and hope that is what they consider.

Mr. Parker- Croix only played in two games his freshman year as he had a broken arm. Coach Brown was also an offensive coach, and Croix was on defense side. After the season was over they no longer spoke to Coach Brown. He has been out of state the past two years.

Croix- Mr. Brown was hired as a freshman coach this year, he is a senior varsity athlete.

Mrs. Parker- there was no athletic motivation to follow coach Brown. He is a varsity player.

Principal- she has not gotten to meet the family, they are navigating the new rules in the state and hope the committee will look at the application of the new rule, and not act in a manner that is capricious. Making decisions should be based on facts, the Parker family didn't know Coach Brown was going to be employed there. That was not the motivation for coming to Cibola.

Committee Questions

Stacy- why transfer his senior year.

Croix- he would get more opportunities with play time that he was not getting at Rio Rancho.

Stacy- why Cibola

Croix- they dropped to 5A, and it is close to his residence.

Stacy- is Rio Rancho his district. Croix- yes sir.

Stacy- so he is out of district here. Croix- yes sir.

Stacy- how much further is the drive. Croix- the same.

Stacy- Any other sports.

Croix- he participates in track.

Stacy- he understands athletics, and transferring for not enough playing time however is he aware that he will be taking someone's spot that has been a Cibola student their entire career.

Croix- yes

Finke- this is the rule that the NMAA passed, they have accepted this new rule. They did not vote for this new rule as they are just abiding by it.

Mrs. Parker- they were aware that Cibola lost a lot of seniors. Volcano Vista seems to have a solid program, so he wanted to transfer to a school where he wouldn't play against Rio Rancho. Also to have a better opportunity to play and experience playing against other teams. Cibola was the APS school that is closest to their residence, same distance to Rio Rancho from their residence.

Salazar- June 15th was the hire date for Mr. Brown

Dorame- correct, they submitted it earlier, but that was the day APS finalized him.

Salazar- did he apply back even further

Dorame- he stated the head coach told him he was interested in hiring Brown, he had been out of state, and this was a chance to bring him on campus also, he is a teacher there.

Salazar- when did the change in transfer rule occur.

Owen- referenda closed around the 19th or 20th of June.

Young- June 22nd was the first day it was in effect.

Executive Session

Mr. Benoit asked for a motion to enter Executive Session for discussion purposes only. A motion was made by Mr. Washburn and seconded by Mr. Stacy to go into Executive Session at 9:29 a.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. Gerry Washburn
X		Mr. Brian Stacy
X		Mr. Paul Benoit
X		Mr. Gary Salazar

Mr. Benoit asked for a motion to exit out of Executive Session. A motion was made by Mr. Washburn and seconded by Mr. Salazar to exit Executive Session and go back into open session at 9:37 a.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.

Yes/For	No/Against	Appeal Review Committee Member Name
X		Mr. Gerry Washburn
X		Mr. Brian Stacy
X		Mr. Paul Benoit
X		Mr. Gary Salazar

Action Item

Vote On Student Eligibility: Mr. Benoit asked if there was any need for further discussion. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to uphold, amend or overturn the original decision for the Cibola High School appeal. A motion was made by Mr. Stacy to overturn the New Mexico Activities Association's ruling. Mr. Washburn seconded. A vote was taken and passed unanimously (4-0).

Yes/For	No/Against	Appeal Review Committee Member Name
X		Mr. Gerry Washburn
X		Mr. Brian Stacy
X		Mr. Paul Benoit
X		Mr. Gary Salazar

Mr. Benoit adjourned the meeting for a short recess.

Mr. Benoit called the next meeting back to order at 9:40 a.m.

Cibola 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 closed session.

Mr. Benoit asked for a motion to go into closed session. A motion was made by Mr. Washburn and seconded by Mr. Stacy to go into closed session at 9:44 a.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. Gerry Washburn
X		Mr. Brian Stacy
X		Mr. Paul Benoit
X		Mr. Gary Salazar

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 Mr. Salazar to go into Executive Session at 10:05 a.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. Gerry Washburn
X		Mr. Brian Stacy
X		Mr. Paul Benoit
X		Mr. Gary Salazar

Mr. Benoit asked for a motion to exit out of Executive Session and go back into closed session at 10:25 a.m. A motion was made by Mr. Washburn. Mr. Salazar seconded. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously (4-0). Mr. Benoit stated there was no action taken during Executive Session.

Yes/For	No/Against	Appeal Review Committee Member Name
X		Mr. Gerry Washburn
X		Mr. Brian Stacy
X		Mr. Paul Benoit
X		Mr. Gary Salazar

Mr. Benoit asked for a motion to exit out of closed session. A motion was made by Mr. Washburn and seconded by Mr. Salazar to exit out of closed session and go back into open session at 10:26 a.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. Gerry Washburn
X		Mr. Brian Stacy
X		Mr. Paul Benoit
X		Mr. Gary Salazar

Action Items

Vote On Student Eligibility: Mr. Benoit asked if there was any need for further discussion. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to uphold, amend or overturn the original decision for the Cibola High School appeal. A motion was made by Mr. Washburn to overturn the decision of the NMAA, thus granting varsity eligibility in all sports at Cibola High School. Mr. Stacy seconded. A roll call vote was taken and passed (3-1).

Yes/For	No/Against	Appeal Review Committee Member Name
X		Mr. Gerry Washburn
X		Mr. Brian Stacy
	X	Mr. Paul Benoit
X		Mr. Gary Salazar

Adjournment

Mr. Benoit asked for a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Mr. Washburn and seconded by Mr. Stacy to adjourn the meeting. A vote was taken and passed unanimously (4-0). The meeting was adjourned at 10:28 a.m.