



SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

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November 24, 2009

Carlyle Carter
Executive Director, Commission on Athletics
2017 O Street
Sacramento CA 95811-5211

Re: Conference realignment

Dear Carlyle,

Bob Mariucci and I have discussed the issue of conference realignment and, in turn, he has met with our coaching staff. The response below was prepared by Mr. Mariucci and has received my approval.

I (Bob Mariucci) have reviewed the conference realignment proposals with our coaching staff and they have expressed several concerns with the proposed conference configurations.

The primary concern of our coaches is the type of travel that will exist traveling on two-lane roads, Hwy 46 and 41, and the safety of our student athletes and coaches. We travel in 15-passenger vans and the fact that our teams will now be traveling on a continual basis, on narrow two-lane roads, late at night and during busy Friday traffic, is very concerning to us. Ever so often, these vans break down and services, even cell phone reception, on those highways, especially at night, are not readily available. In addition, narrow two-lane roads are much more difficult to drive on, especially in 15-passenger vans. We are also concerned with the travel conditions in the winter months with the Tule fog. Several of our coaches are already familiar with this type of travel and driving in these potentially dangerous conditions is a major concern. In fact, some of these longer trips, to Merced or Fresno, may warrant overnight stays, which would increase our costs.

Based on the data provided, the average mileage for all the colleges within the newly proposed CVC is 65 miles more, which is not a cost savings to the conference as a whole. In fact, Merced and Allan Hancock would have significantly higher travel mileage. Again, based on the data provided, I have not seen any actual dollar amount, in savings, within this realignment. I also believe that participating in the North could potentially increase our post-season travel costs. These figures cannot be calculated, since we do not know how often or when our teams would make the playoffs, however, it is possible that we would again, be paying overnight costs, in post-season play.

I will mention that a few of our coaches are in favor of the realignment. Our water polo coaches travel long distances because of the location of our current water polo teams in the WSC. Santa Monica, LA Valley, Citrus, Ventura and Cuesta are the current conference teams. Driving through LA traffic has always been a major concern for our coaching staff. The water polo coaches feel that traveling to the North, such as to the Coast Conference is much safer and shorter distances. Assuming, as it was proposed, our water polo teams will be hosted out by the Coast Conference, our water polo coaches are in favor of the realignment. Our volleyball coach would also be in favor of the move to the CVC, again, since she plays quite a few interdivisional games, with southern colleges, such as LA Pierce, Citrus, Santa Monica and West Los Angeles. We are also under the assumption, that wrestling will be singled out and state-wide conferencing will be discussed solely for that sport.

As a majority, we are very concerned with the new travel commitments and safety of our student athletes and coaches and would not be in favor of the move. We would like to propose that the Conference Committee met once again to take into consideration additional proposals and allow more input from the colleges that are directly impacted. Since we are a coastal school, we would consider a conference that included those colleges such as Gavilan, Hartnell, Hancock, Cuesta, Santa Barbara, etc. that would allow travel on Hwy 101 and eliminate some of the travel into the Los Angeles area.

We propose the COA Board reconsider this proposal for now and have the Conference Committee develop a conference in which Cuesta College would either remain in the Western State Conference, or develop another coastal conference. I appreciate the opportunity to provide input.

Sincerely,



W. David Pelham
Superintendent/President