

Dear Athletic Directors, Principals, League Commissioners,

In an effort to promote the growth of education-based athletics in our student-athletes, the CIAC, in conjunction with the Connecticut Association of Athletic Directors, is sponsoring the [Fred Balsamo Awards](#).

The CIAC Sportsmanship Committee will recognize schools with awards of up to \$400. The goal is to increase programs that support character, sportsmanship, citizenship and personal growth. All CIAC schools and leagues are welcome to apply.

The intention of this award is to support schools in educating students to the ideals supported by the CIAC toward [education based athletics](#). The awards will be determined by the CIAC Sportsmanship Committee and will be based on the following criteria:

How well the program supports tolerance, acceptance and respect.

How well the program directly affects the growth of students.

How well the program supports the ideals of the [CIAC Class Act program](#) (your school does not have to be a Class Act School to apply).

How broadly the program touches the students and athletes at your school.

* The recipients will be announced at the CIAC Sportsmanship Conference on October 7, 2026.

* Recipients must attend the CIAC Sportsmanship Conference to receive an award.

Areas schools may consider for this award could be (but are not limited to):

Equity (gender equity, racial equity)

Disabilities (including Unified Sports)

Treatment of Officials

Support for Class Act initiatives

Medical/Safety

Captain/Leadership Training

Or any other training based on the [CIAC Education Based Athletics Curriculum](#).

Due Date: Applications must be made by Thursday, September 10, 2026.

Application: [Must be made online](#)

Who can apply? Principals, Athletic Directors, Leagues, Student leadership groups, Coaches, Teams (including cheerleading or spirit teams), Class Act Committees, Captains or Captain Councils

For questions or further information please contact Joe Velardi,
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