

Basic Eligibility Rules

The rules in their entirety are found in the current AHSAA Handbook.

Enrollment Rule - A student must be enrolled within the first 20 days of a semester as a regular student in the school system where the student will participate. The 20-day requirement may be waived under extenuating circumstances. Note: A regular student is one who is enrolled at the school and is taking six new subjects of work.

Age Rule - A high school student who has reached his/her 19th birthday before Aug. 1 is ineligible. Any junior high (ninth grade) student who has reached his/her 16th birthday before Aug. 1 is ineligible. Any middle school student who has reached his/her 15th birthday before Aug. 1 is ineligible.

Eight Semester Rule - A high school student may be eligible only eight semesters in attendance after entering the ninth grade. School attendance of 15 days or more of any semester is counted as a semester.

A student can be eligible only four fall semesters and four spring semesters after entering the ninth grade. The last two semesters, the seventh and eighth of a four-year high school and fifth and sixth of a three-year high school, must be consecutive.

A junior high student may be eligible only three seasons in any one sport. A middle school student may be eligible only two seasons in any one sport.

Participation Rule - No student may participate in any one sport for more than six years (seasons) after entering the seventh grade or for more than three seasons after entering the 10th grade. A student who officially participates in one contest of a sport is credited with one year of participation in that sport.

Outside Participation Rule - A student who is a member of any school athletic team (grades 7-12) may not participate (includes practice) on a non-school team in the same sport during the school season of that sport. Also, a member of any school athletic team may not participate in an outside sport activity in the same sport during the school season of that sport.

Private individual instruction is not considered an outside sports activity. A team's season begins the day of that team's first contest and ends when that team's season has been completed.

A student who violates this rule becomes ineligible to compete on that school team or in that school sports activity for the remainder of that school season. Any student who participates on an outside team after the school sport season begins is ineligible to join that school team for the remainder of the season.

Fifty Percent Rule- Participation (includes practice) during the school year by students from any high school team (varsity and junior varsity/B-team) on a non-school team during the off-season is limited to 50 percent of the number of players required to play the game of that sport (i.e., three in basketball, six in soccer, five in baseball, etc.) A freshman team is considered a junior high team.

Note: In each sport, only the specified number of students participating on a non-school team during the school year may be placed on the same high school team roster the following season. Those students cannot be interchanged on the school team roster.

The rule does not apply to seniors who have completed their high school eligibility in that sport nor to middle and junior high school students that will not play on any high school team the following season.

Independent Rule - A student who is a member of any school swimming, track, cross country or wrestling team may participate as an independent in two outside activities on non-school days during the season of that sport. The schedule of the school team, including the championship play, takes precedent over any outside participation by an individual. (Members of tennis and golf teams are exempt from this rule.)

A member of a school soccer team may participate in one Olympic Development Program evaluation period per month as long as there is no loss of school time. The evaluation must be under the guidance of ODP.

Amateur Rule - Only amateurs are eligible. An amateur is one who does not use his/her knowledge or athletics or athletic skill for gain. A student may not receive an award of any kind having a monetary value of more than 50 dollars-other than medals, trophies, plaques or championship rings.

Academic Rule - Students entering the 10th, 11th and 12th grades must have passed during the last two semesters in attendance and summer school, if applicable, at least six new Carnegie units with a minimum composite numerical average of 70 in those six units. Four core courses must be included in those units passed and averaged. English, mathematics, science and social studies are core curriculum courses.

Students entering the 8th and 9th grades must have passed during the last two semesters in attendance and summer school, if applicable, at least five new subjects with a minimum composite numerical average of 70 in those five subjects.

Students entering the 7th grade for the first time are eligible.

Students may regain eligibility at the end of the first semester by meeting the same requirements listed above during their last two semesters in attendance and summer school, if applicable. All first semester work used in regaining eligibility must be completed by the fifth day of the second semester.

Transfer Rule - A student is eligible in the school zone in which his/her parents reside (public, private or parochial schools). Any student who completes one year's attendance at a school outside his/her home school zone and fulfills all other requirements becomes eligible in that school. (This does not apply to foreign exchange students.)

A student whose parents make a **bona fide** move completely out of one school zone into another school zone may transfer all his/her rights and privileges to the member school that serves the area where the parents reside.

The following factors are basic guidelines for determining a bona fide move:

- a. The household furniture of the family must be moved into an unoccupied house or apartment.
- b. All principal members of the family must reside in the new place of residence
- c. The original residence should be closed, rented or disposed of and not used by the family.
- d. Nine months at the new residence will be required to make a move bona fide.

Note: If a family moves into a new school zone and remains there for less than nine months, the move will not be considered bona fide and the family's child who is enrolled in the new school zone becomes ineligible there the day the family leaves the new school zone.

The student remains ineligible for a full calendar year from the date the family moved out of the new zone. However, if the student did not participate in athletics, the period of ineligibility will be 12 months from the date of the student's enrollment.

Custody or legal guardianship set up with anyone will not establish immediate athletic eligibility.

Divorce: The eligibility of a student whose parents are divorced is determined by the following:

(a) If there has been a divorce or a legal separation in a family and sole or physical custody has been awarded by the court granting the divorce to one of the parents, the athletic eligibility of the student will be established at the school that serves the area where that parent resides.

Note: If joint custody has been awarded and a transfer is involved, the student must attend the new school for one year before becoming eligible.

(b) If it becomes necessary at a later date for the student to reside with the other parent, the move will be accepted as a bona fide move if the court that granted the divorce changes the custody to this parent. This type of move will be accepted for immediate athletic eligibility purposes only one time. Therefore, if a student subsequently decides to return and reside with the first parent in a different school zone, the student will be ineligible for a period of one year.

Home Rule - A student attending a member school outside his/her school zone may return to his/her home school (where the parents reside) and be eligible at the beginning of any school year if all other requirements are met.

Overlapping School Zones - A student whose parents reside in an area served by more than one school lives in the zone of each school, thus in overlapping school zones. A student who changes schools within these overlapping school zones is ineligible for one year at the new school.

Custody or legal guardianship assigned to anyone (including relatives) will not establish immediate athletic eligibility.

Home Rule - A student attending a member school outside his/her school zone may return to his/her home school (where the parents reside) and be eligible at the beginning of any school year if all other requirements are met.

Overlapping School Zones - A student whose parents reside in an area served by more than one school lives in the zone of each school, thus in overlapping school zones. A student who changes schools within these overlapping school zones is ineligible for one year at the new school.

Practice – A team or individual must have at least three weeks of practice for a sport before engaging in any interscholastic competition.

Outside the sports season during the school year (includes the school day), no coach or non-faculty coach from a school's staff in any sport may hold organized practice or competition in that sport for students from his/her school or feeder school(s). The only exceptions are the allowable fall evaluation periods for spring sports and the spring practice periods for football, basketball and volleyball.

A **Fall Evaluation Period** for each spring sport is permitted for a maximum five days in a consecutive 10-school day calendar period anytime during the first semester with all students allowed to participate.

During the school year, exclusive of allowable dates, a school's gymnasium and other facilities may not be open after school for practice and no balls or equipment of any sport may be used to develop skills.

Use of School Facilities: During the school year, exclusive of allowable dates, a school's gymnasium and other facilities may not be open after school for practice and no balls or equipment of any sport may be used to develop skills.

Weight training and conditioning programs are exempt from these restrictions.

During an **Athletic Physical Education Period**, a ball of any sport may be used but no instruction can be given.