

# A Message To Student-Athletes

Participating in your school's interscholastic athletics program will provide some of your most memorable and enjoyable moments ever. Your state association, the Ohio High School Athletic Association, has standards that must be met in order to be eligible to compete.

The essential eligibility requirements in this brochure are only a summary of some of the regulations affecting student eligibility. Most requirements are found in the OHSAA Handbook, which can be found in the offices of your principal and athletic administrator. Your school district also has the authority to establish additional academic standards and codes of student or athletic conduct.

Any questions you have concerning the OHSAA standards or your athletic eligibility should be reviewed with your school principal or athletic administrator. You should also meet with these administrators **every time** before you change your course schedule or drop a course.

The eligibility standards of the OHSAA have been adopted by the member schools and were accepted by your school when it became an OHSAA member.

You are urged, as a student-athlete, to study these standards carefully since you are responsible for compliance with these standards. We want you to enjoy your school years!

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## Eligibility Bulletin - Summary of the Rules

### 1. SCHOLARSHIP

High school students (grades 9-12) must be currently enrolled in a member school and have received passing grades in a minimum of five (5) one credit courses, or the equivalent, in the immediately preceding grading period.

Seventh- and eighth-grade students must be currently enrolled in a member school and have received passing grades in 75 percent of subjects in which enrolled.

- You may not use summer school grades for failing grades received or lack of courses taken in the final grading period.
- Your semester and yearly grades have no effect on eligibility.
- Those taking post-secondary school courses must comply with OHSAA scholarship regulations.

### 2. RESIDENCE AND TRANSFER OF SCHOOLS

You may attend any public or non-public high school in which you are accepted when you enter a high school (grade 9) from a 7th-8th grade school.

Eligibility at that school is then established by:

1. Participating in a contest (scrimmage, preview or regular season game) prior to the first day of school, or
  2. Attending the first day of school at any high school.
- Once eligibility has been established at a member school, those who transfer to a different school will be ineligible for athletics for one year from the date of enrollment in the new school.
  - There are eight (8) exceptions to this regulation. To see if you qualify for an exception, you and your parents should arrange a meeting with your principal or athletic administrator and review the document entitled "The OHSAA Transfer Bylaw," which is found online at [www.ohsaa.org](http://www.ohsaa.org), prior to transferring to another school.
  - If your parent or legal guardian live outside of Ohio, you are ineligible unless one of the four (4) exceptions to the regulation is met. These exceptions to the out-of-state residency rules are found in Bylaw4-6 at

www.ohsaa.org.

- If additional questions concerning these regulations remain, school principals or athletic administrators should contact the OHSAA.

### **3. SEMESTERS OF ENROLLMENT**

After establishing ninth-grade eligibility, you are permitted eight (8) semesters of athletic eligibility.

- The semesters are taken in order of attendance once ninth-grade eligibility has been established.
- Semesters are counted toward eligibility whether you participate in interscholastic athletics or not.
- Those with a disability may qualify for an exception to this regulation and should arrange a meeting with the principal or athletic administrator to review the exception.

### **4. AGE LIMITATIONS**

High school students (grades 9-12) who turn 19 years of age prior to August 1, 2004, are ineligible for interscholastic athletics.

Seventh- and eighth-grade students who turn 15 years of age prior to August 1, 2004, are ineligible for 7th-8th grade athletics but are eligible to participate in high school athletics.

- Those with a disability may qualify for an exception to this regulation and should arrange a meeting with the principal or athletic administrator to review the exception.

### **5. AWARDS**

You may receive awards as a result of athletic participation in interscholastic athletics from any source. However, the value cannot be more than \$200 per award.

### **6. AMATEUR STATUS**

You will lose your amateur status and forfeit your eligibility if you:

- Compete for money or other monetary compensation.
- Capitalize on your athletic fame by receiving money, merchandise or services.
- Receive expenses or compensation from a sponsor unless that sponsor is a recognized amateur governing body or organization, recognized by a member school, or is your parent or guardian.
- Sign a contract or make a commitment to play professional athletics.
- Receive services, merchandise or any form of financial assistance from a professional sports organization.
- Compete with a professional athletics team even if no pay is received..
- Enter into an agreement with a sports or marketing agent.

### **7. FALSE INFORMATION**

If you compete under a name other than your own or provide a false address, you immediately become ineligible.

## **8. OPEN GYMS/FACILITIES**

School officials may designate open gyms or facilities and the sports to be played. You may participate in open gyms or facilities provided:

- No one is limited from participating.
- No one is required to attend.
- No school officials invite selected students or determine the teams.
- No timing or written scoring is kept.
- No coaching or instruction is provided.
- No one is restricted from observing.

Violating these rules may result in you being declared ineligible for a maximum of one (1) year.

## **9. INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS**

You may attend camps, clinics and workshops that involve team play any time between June 1 and July 31.

- Team play means there is more than one player opposing one player.

There is no limit on the number of students from the same school team that may participate on the same non-school team from June 1 to July 31.

You may receive instruction from a coach from your school team only:

1. During the season of the sport, or
2. For 10 days only from June 1 to July 31.

You may receive individual skill instruction from a non-school coach at any time during the year in individual or group lessons.

Members of a school football team may play in non-contact football contests and attend non-contact team football camps at any time between June 1 and July 31. Remember, however, that the 10-day regulation for instruction from school coaches is in effect.

## **10. PARTICIPATION ON NON-SCHOOL TEAMS**

You may not try out, practice or participate in a contest with a non-school team while a member of a school team in the same sport.

- In individual sports, however, you may practice and try out for a non-school team but may not compete in a contest.

Those in team sports may try out, practice and compete on non-school teams before and after the school season provided:

1. The number of students from the same school on the roster of the non-school team is limited to five (5) students in the sports of soccer and field hockey; four (4) students in the sports of baseball and softball; three (3) students in the sports of volleyball and ice hockey, and two (2) students in the sport of basketball. School football team members are prohibited from competing on non-school teams except from June 1 to July 31.
2. You have no contact with school coaches while on a non-school team (other than the 10 days permitted between June 1 and July 31).

- Violating these rules during the school season may result in you being declared ineligible for the remainder of the school season.
- Violating these rules outside the school season may result in you being declared ineligible for the next season.
- Violating these rules by a senior may result in that student being declared ineligible for the remainder of the school year.

#### **11. RECRUITING**

You will be declared ineligible if you are recruited by a person or group of persons to change schools. This may also affect the eligibility of the school team.

#### **12. USE OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO & ILLEGAL DRUGS**

You are prohibited from using any form of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs at the playing site of an interscholastic contest. The penalty is disqualification from that contest, and you will likely face additional school and/or legal penalties.

#### **13. STEROIDS OR OTHER PERFORMANCE-ENHANCING DRUGS**

If you use anabolic steroids or other performance enhancing drugs, you are ineligible for interscholastic competition until medical evidence indicates that your system is free of these items.

#### **14. PHYSICAL EXAM FORMS**

Each year you must submit a physical examination form signed by a medical examiner, your parents or guardian and yourself before you begin practice for a school sport. Procedures will be reviewed by school officials. Physical examinations are valid for one year from the date of the exam.

#### **15. STUDENT CONDUCT AND EJECTION POLICIES**

You are expected to accept seriously the responsibility and privilege of representing your school and community while participating in interscholastic athletics. As a student-athlete, you are expected to:

- Treat opponents, coaches and officials with respect.
- Display no behavior that could incite fans or other participants in the contest or which is intended to embarrass, ridicule or demean others under any circumstances including on the basis of race, religion, gender or national origin.
- Remember that winning isn't everything. Having fun, improving your skills, making friends and doing your best are also important.

The OHSAA has established a policy for students ejected for unsporting behavior. If you are ejected, you:

- Will be ineligible for all contests for the remainder of that day.
- Will be ineligible for all contests at all levels in that sport until two regular season/tournament contests are played at the same level as the ejection (one contest in football).

If you are ejected a second time in a season, you are subject to additional, stiffer penalties, including suspension from play for the remainder of the season in that sport.

The complete OHSAA ejection policy for unsporting behavior can be found in the OHSAA Handbook.