

Notes from the Ohio High School Athletic Association Presentation on Educational Athletics and Eligibility

Education Based Athletics

- **Participation in interscholastic athletics programs:**
 - Complements your school experience.
 - Fosters a sense of community and
 - Teaches lifelong lessons of hard work, teamwork, citizenship and discipline.
 - Promotes a lifetime appreciation for sports and healthy lifestyles.

- **Participation in interscholastic athletics programs:**
 - Helps prepare you for the next level of your life as a responsible adult and productive citizen.
 - Interscholastic athletics programs are not designed to prepare you for the next level of sports.

- **The educational components of participation in interscholastic athletics programs make it unique.**
 - This is unlike many other non-school organizations that promote free player movement, the athletic development of the individual and provide a showcase for those individuals.

- **Participants in interscholastic athletics programs should engage in a well-rounded experience that includes participation in a multitude of extracurricular activities.**

- **In interscholastic athletics:**
 - Student academic achievement and success take priority over athletics achievement and success.
 - The success of a team is more important than individual awards.

- **Participation in interscholastic athletics programs is a privilege, not a right.**

- **The OHSAA's vision for positive sporting behavior is built on expectations.**
 - It calls on the school community — administrators, contest officials, coaches, students, parents and fans — to strive for positive sporting behavior in everything they do by teaching the value of ethics, integrity, equity, fairness and respect.
 - As a student-athlete, you must always remember to Respect The Game! That means you are expected to accept the responsibility and privilege of representing your school and community while participating in school sports.
 - You are expected to:
 - Treat opponents, coaches and officials with respect.
 - Ensure that your actions do not incite fans or other participants or attempt to embarrass, ridicule or demean others.

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Health and Safety

- Forms need to be completed on the FinalForms website: <https://worthington-oh.finalforms.com>
- Before the season's first practice, you must have had a physical examination within the past year AND an examination clearance form must be on file at the school.
- You and your parents are highly encouraged to work with your certified athletic trainer and/or athletic administrator to complete an electronic pre-participation evaluation.
- In addition, you will not be eligible unless you and your parents have signed the OHSAA Authorization Form, the OHSAA Eligibility & Authorization Statement and the Ohio Department of Health's concussion form, all of which must be on file at your school.
- It is EXTREMELY important for everyone involved in school sports to recognize the potential dangers associated with concussions and review their responsibilities in protecting student-athletes.
- **Concussions** are NOT just a problem in football . . . concussions can happen in just about any sport!
- A concussion is a traumatic brain injury that interferes with normal function of the brain. "Dings" and "bell ringers" are SERIOUS brain injuries and you do NOT have to have loss of consciousness for it to be considered serious. Young athletes are at increased risk for serious problems.
- In Ohio, any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion . . . such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems . . . shall be IMMEDIATELY removed from the contest or practice and shall not return to play that same day.
- Thereafter, the student shall not return to practice or competition until cleared with WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION from a physician or health care provider approved by the local board in accordance with state law.
- Each school is required to review its concussion management protocol with you and your parents.
- In addition, you and your parents must review and sign the Ohio Department of Health's "Concussion Information Sheet" prior to participation, and you are highly encouraged to review a short presentation on concussions available at no cost (www.nfhslearn.com).
- While return-to-play policies are very important, parents must also work with school administrators and teachers in developing concussion management guidelines for student-athletes who have been concussed and are returning to the classroom (i.e. Return to Learn).
- The OHSAA does not permit the use of any form of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs.
- Besides the health risks involved, use of any of these items will result in students being disqualified from contests and violators likely facing additional school and legal penalties.
- Another prominent issue is the use of performance enhancing supplements.
- The increased availability of these items allows students easy access to a wide variety of products aggressively marketed to include promises — endorsed by faulty research claims — of extraordinary weight loss, explosive power or tremendous strength gains.
- It is important for parents to educate themselves about what substances their child may be using and about the potential risks involved with uneducated supplement use.
- Beyond performance enhancing supplements, there are additional issues related to illicit drugs, such as anabolic steroids and some prescription drugs used with the goal of aiding performance.
- The OHSAA website (www.OHSAA.org) provides a wealth of information to assist parents, coaches, students and anyone interested in learning more about sports medicine and healthy lifestyles.

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Basic Eligibility Rules for Participation

- As a student-athlete, **YOU** are responsible for your compliance.
- Eligibility rules exist to help maintain competitive balance in school sports and to promote the purpose of education-based athletics.
- Besides OHSAA regulations, your school also has the authority to establish additional academic standards and codes of conduct.
- In order to maintain eligibility, you must be officially enrolled in an OHSAA member school, or participating in accordance with state law, **AND** you must have both parents living in Ohio (or the parent with custody, due to divorce or having never been married, lives in Ohio).
- You will not be eligible if you are competing under a false name or have provided your school with an incorrect home address.
- You will not be eligible if you have been recruited to attend this school.
- All incoming **ninth graders** must have received passing grades in a minimum of five of the subjects in which they received grades in the immediately preceding grading period.
- To maintain eligibility, high school students must have received passing grades in a minimum of five one-credit courses, or the equivalent, in the immediately preceding grading period. Work done outside of the grading period may not be used for eligibility purposes.
- Students taking College Credit Plus must comply with OHSAA scholarship standards.
- All students participating via state law that permits home educated, non-public, community and STEM school students to participate at public schools must also comply with OHSAA scholarship standards.
- Semester and yearly grades have no effect on OHSAA eligibility. **However, Worthington Schools added earned semester credits as an additional requirement. Each student must earn 2.5 credits per semester in addition to the OHSAA quarterly standard.**
- To attempt to regain OHSAA eligibility, summer school grades may **NOT** be used to substitute for failing grades received in the final grading period of the regular school year or for lack of enough courses taken the preceding grading period. **They may be used for the Worthington School's semester credit requirement.**
- If you drop a course or change your schedule, it is critically important that you contact your principal or athletic administrator to see if this affects your eligibility.
- The OHSAA has no minimum grade point (GPA) requirement, thus issues regarding eligibility when only the state-mandated GPA is of concern are strictly a local school district matter and not an OHSAA matter. **Worthington School's GPA requirement is a 1.0 in the preceding grading period.**
- No high school student will be eligible if he or she has been enrolled in high school for more than eight semesters.
- High school students will be ineligible whenever they turn 20 years old.
- **You will be ineligible if you are competing on a non-school team in the same sport during your school team's season (example: club soccer team during school's soccer season).**
- Coaches and schools cannot require that you participate in an open gym/open facility **OR** in a conditioning or instructional program. Violations of this regulation will result in penalties.

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- There are certain restrictions regarding tryouts, practices and competitions with non-school teams before, during and after the school season.
- There are also restrictions for instruction you can receive from school coaches outside of your season.
- Before participating with a non-school team or receiving instruction outside the season from your school coaches, meet with your athletic administrator or visit the OHSAA website (www.OHSAA.org) to ensure all regulations are being followed.
- You could lose your amateur status and forfeit your eligibility if you compete for money or other monetary compensation **OR** capitalize on your athletic fame by receiving money, merchandise or services or by entering into an agreement with a professional team or agent.

Transferring and International Students

- Once eligibility has been established at a member high school and you transfer to another school, you will be ineligible for all contests until the first 50 percent of the maximum allowable regular season contests have been competed in any sport in which you participated during the previous 12 months.
- Should you have transferred to this school, you must ensure all required paperwork has been submitted to the OHSAA **AND** the state office has granted approval for eligibility.
- Transfer and international students whose families that have not yet met with the athletic director need to schedule an appointment for the proper OHSAA paperwork.
- Immediate eligibility will be granted only if one of the exceptions to the OHSAA transfer regulation has been met. This is done by the OHSAA and there is a wait period.
- There **ARE** exceptions to some regulations. If you believe you qualify for an exception or you have questions pertaining to your eligibility or about any of the regulations, please consult with your school principal or athletic administrator.
- Ask your school principal or athletic administrator to discuss any unresolved issues with the administrators in the OHSAA office who handle eligibility issues.