Athletic Eligibility: A Basic Guide for Schools, Students and Parents

To All Student Athletes

- Your high school years will provide some of the most memorable and enjoyable moments you will ever experience. Competition in interschool athletics is a once-in-a-lifetime experience, which will influence you forever.
- Your participation in high school athletics is dependent on your Eligibility.
- Keep that Eligibility. Read the following summary of the IHSAA Eligibility rules which govern your participation.
- Review these summaries with your parents and ask your principal, athletic directors and coaches about them.

To All Parents of Student Athletes

- The value of participating in athletics has been well documented: participants earn better grades, have better school attendance and have a greater chance for success in later life, than non-participants in athletics.
- Students must meet certain Eligibility rules to maintain the privileges of participating in interschool athletics.
- Review the following summaries with your son or daughter. Your role in stressing and supporting the value of following these rules cannot be emphasized enough.

From the IHSAA

- Since 1903 the IHSAA has been the principal governing body for high school athletics in Indiana.
- Your school is a voluntary member of the IHSAA and has agreed to follow the IHSAA rules.
- Your school and the IHSAA believe in equal competition and the close relationship between academics and athletics.
- The following are only summaries of some of the IHSAA Eligibility rules affecting student athletes. A complete listing of the IHSAA Eligibility rules is found in the IHSAA By-Laws and Articles of Incorporation manual, which your principal and your athletic directors have a copy; an on-line version can also be found at www.ihsaa.org.

You may be fully ELIGIBLE for interscholastic competition, if:

1. **Age Eligibility (Rule 4).** You will not have turned 20 by the scheduled date of the state finals of IHSAA Tournament Series in your sport.
2. **Amateurism Eligibility (Rule 5).** You have not:
   - Played under an assumed name.
   - Accepted money or merchandise directly or indirectly for any athletic participation, in your sport.
   - Signed a professional contract in your sport.
3. **Awards and Gifts Eligibility (Rule 6).** You have not received, or been 'loaned':
   - An award in recognition of your athletic talents in your sport which was not approved by your school and the IHSAA.
   - Merchandise as an award, prize or gift, or been allowed to purchase for a token sum.
   - An award, medal, recognition, gift or honor from a college/university or it’s alumni.
4. **Conduct and Character Eligibility (Rule 8).** You have not:
   - Conducted yourself in or out of school in a way which reflects discredit upon your school or the IHSAA.
   - Created a disruptive influence on the discipline, good order, moral and educational environment of your school.
5. **Consent and Release Certificate Eligibility (Rule 3).** You have on file with your principal, each school year, a Certificate (annual physical form) which was completed between April 1 and your first practice in your sport.
6. **Enrollment Eligibility (Rule 12).** You have:
   - Enrolled in a school during the first 15 days of the semester.
   - Been enrolled for no more than 4 consecutive years (or the equivalent, e.g. 8 semesters, 12 trimesters, etc.), beginning with grade 9.
• Represented a high school in your sport for no more than 4 years.

7. Illness and Injury Eligibility (Rule 9). You have been absent, due to illness or injury, from practice sessions:
   • On 5 or more, but less than 11 consecutive days (not including Sunday), but have since participated in at least 4 separate days of practice prior to your participation in an interscholastic contest in your sport.
   • On 11 or more consecutive days (not including Sunday), but have since participated in at least 6 separate days of practice prior to your participation in an interscholastic contest in your sport.

8. Participation (Rule 15).
   a. During the Authorized Contest Season in your sport, you have not:
      ▪ Participated in a try-out or demonstration in your sport as a prospective post-secondary school student-athlete.
      ▪ Participated in a practice with or against players not belonging to your school in your sport.
      ▪ Participated in a non-school sponsored contest, in your sport, without an approved waiver.
      ▪ Attended a non-school sponsored camp in your sport.
      ▪ Attended and participated in a student-clinic in your sport.
   b. During the School Year Out-of-Season in your sport, you have not:
      ▪ Participated in a team sport contest as a member of a non-school team where there was more than the following number of students, who had participated the previous year in a contest as a member of the school team (also including incoming freshmen): Basketball-3 Baseball-5 Football-6 Volleyball-3 Softball-5 Soccer-7.
      ▪ Received instruction in your sport, in a school sponsored program, from an individual who was a member of your school’s coaching staff (Exception: see the Limited Contact Program of your school).
      ▪ Participated in a non-school contest during school time without the approval of your school.
   c. During the Summer, you have not:
      ▪ Attended a school-sponsored fall sports camp/clinic after Monday of Week 5 (See your AD for specific dates).
      ▪ Attended a non-school sponsored camp/clinic after Monday of Week 7 (See your AD for specific dates).

9. Pre-participation Practice (Rules 50 & 101). You have completed the required number of separate days of organized practice in your sport under the direct supervision of your school’s coaching staff prior to your participation in a contest.

10. Scholarship Eligibility (Rule 18). You have:
    • Passed 70% of the full credit subjects, or the equivalent, that a student can take at your school, in the previous grading period (semester grades take precedence of grading period grades).
    • Been enrolled in 70% of the full credit subjects or the equivalent that a student can take at your school.

11. Transfer and Initial Promotion Eligibility (Rule 19). You have:
    a. Not transferred from your prior school to your current school for Primarily Athletic Reasons, or,
    b. Enrolled at your current school for the first time as a 9th grader, or,
    c. Transferred from your prior school to your current school:
       ▪ And at the same time you and your parents made a bona fide move to a New District or Territory, or,
       ▪ Because you became a ward of the court, or,
       ▪ Because you became an orphan, or,
       ▪ Because your prior school closed, or,
       ▪ And your prior school was not a member of the local state athletic association or was not accredited by the local state accrediting agency, or,
       ▪ Because of a school board mandate for redistricting which involved your prior school, or,
       ▪ Because you enrolled or attended, in error, a wrong school, or,
       ▪ And you transferred from a correctional school to your current school, or,
       ▪ Because you are emancipated and you have now moved to a New District or Territory, or,
       ▪ And you did not participate in a contest for another school or for a club team during the preceding 365 days, or,
       ▪ And your prior school was not a member of the local state athletic association and you have moved back to reside with the same parent or guardian, or,
       ▪ And the transfer is either to or from a Boarding School, or,
       ▪ And you are a qualified Foreign Exchange Student under an approved CSIET program for one year, or,
       ▪ And at the same time your parent or guardian just took a licensed or certified position at your current school, or,

12. Undue influence (Rule 20). Your enrollment at your new school:
    • Was not influenced by anyone seeking to secure you as a student at your new school for athletic purposes.
    • Did not involve a Past Link (see definition).