



AHSAA Eligibility Rules

**What Every Parent
Should Know**

AHSAA Eligibility Rules



The presentation highlights some of the major AHSAA eligibility rules. It is important to understand that these are general statements only and do not include all the details that may be involved in any specific eligibility question.

If you have any questions or need further explanation of details and exceptions, see your school's principal, athletic director or head coach. If an official ruling from AHSAA is necessary, your school must make a request.

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- **What every parent should know about the Enrollment Rule:**
 - Must be a regularly enrolled student and must have enrolled in a school no later than the 20th school day of the semester.
 - Must not have graduated or received a certificate of completion from an accredited high school.
 - Home school student are immediately eligible their initial year of enrollment. Must meet all AHSAA academic requirements thereafter.

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- **What every parent should know about the Age Rule:**
 - In high school, must not have reached their 19th birthday prior to Aug. 1 of the current school year.
 - In junior high, must not have reached their 16th birthday prior to Aug. 1 of the current school year.
 - In middle school, must not have reached their 15th birthday prior to Aug. 1 of the current school year.
 - For seventh-grade-only teams, must not have reached their 14th birthday prior to Aug. 1 of the current school year.

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- **What every parent should know about Eligibility Verification Requirements:**
 - Must have the following items on file in the principal's office:
 - Copy of certified birth certificate
 - Current physical exam form signed by a doctor (M.D. or D.O)
 - Concussion information form signed by student-athlete and parent
 - Student release form
 - NFHS Sportsmanship completion certificate
 - Name must be submitted on an official eligibility list and principal certified for two days before becoming eligible.

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- **What every parent should know about Participation Limits:**
 - Students are eligible for eight consecutive semesters after entering the ninth grade (15 days of attendance during a semester count as a semester).
 - No student can participate more than four years (seasons) in any one sport after entering the ninth grade or three years (seasons) after entering the 10th grade.
 - No student can participate more than six years (seasons) in any one sport after entering the seventh grade.

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- **What every parent should know about the Academic Rule:**
 - A 10th, 11th or 12th grade student must have passed a minimum of six units of work (including any four core courses) with a composite average of 70 for those six units during the preceding two semesters of attendance. Any four core courses must be included in the six passed and averaged.
 - A maximum of two units (subjects) may be earned in an accredited summer school and/or Credit Recovery.
 - All students must be taking six units of work (ones not previously passed) during the current year (seniors on track for graduation fall under different guidelines).
 - An 8th or 9th grade student must have passed a minimum of five new subjects with a composite average of 70 and must have been promoted to the next grade.

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- **What every parent should know about the Transfer Rule:**
 - A student is eligible at his/her home school at the beginning of each new school year.
 - The home school is the AHSAA-member school that serves the area where the parents reside.
 - Students entering the seventh grade for the first time are eligible where they enroll.

(Transfer Rule, continued on next slide)

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- **What every parent should know about the Transfer Rule:**
 - A student who is enrolled in one school then leaves and enrolls in another school at any time after beginning the seventh grade is a transfer.
 - A student who attends a school outside of his/her home school district must attend that school for one full calendar year in order to establish athletic eligibility.
 - Before transferring from one school to another, always check AHSAA eligibility rules.

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- **What every parent should know about the Outside Participation Rule:**
 - A student may not participate on a non-school team or in an outside sport activity (including camps, tryouts, showcases, etc.) in his/her sport during the school sport season, with the following exceptions:
 - Students in track, cross country or wrestling may participate as an independent only in two outside activities with no loss of school time during the season in that sport.
 - A student in soccer may participate in one activity per month with principal and coach permission. 50% rule remains in effect.
 - Students in tennis, golf, bowling and swimming are exempt from this rule but must compete only as an independent, not part of a non-school team.

(Outside Participation, continued on next slide)

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- **What every parent should know about the Outside Participation Rule:**
 - Private individual instruction is not considered an outside sports activity. Private individual instruction is one-on-one instruction between one athlete and one instructor and cannot be instruction with another player or groups of players.
 - A team's school sports season begins the day of the first contest and ends when the team's season has been completed.

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- **What every parent should know about the Bona Fide Move Rule:**
 - A bona fide move occurs when a student's parents move completely out of one school attendance zone into another.
 - Guidelines for determining a bona fide move include:
 - The household furniture of the family must be moved into an unoccupied house or apartment.
 - All principal members of the family must reside in the new place of residence.
 - The original residence must be closed, rented or disposed of and not used by the family.
 - Nine months at the new residence will be required to make a move bona fide.

(Bona Fide Move, continued on next slide)

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- **What every parent should know about the Bona Fide Move Rule:**
 - A transfer student whose parents make a bona fide move is eligible at the member school that serves the area where his/her parents reside if all other requirements are met.
 - If the family making the bona fide move remains at the new residence for less than nine months, the student becomes ineligible there on the day the family leaves the attendance zone of the new school.

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

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- **What every parent should know about The Alabama Accountability Act of 2013:**
 - The Alabama Accountability Act of 2013 (Act 2013-265) shall not affect or change the athletic eligibility rules of student-athletes governed by the Alabama High School Athletic Association.
 - A student transferring from a failing school to non-failing is ineligible unless the transfer is within the same school system.

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- **What every parent should know about Participation Limitations:**
 - A student who plays on a non-school team during the school year in the off-season must observe the Fifty-Percent Rule on that non-school team (not including summer). Only 50-percent of the number of players required to play the game (three in basketball, six in soccer, etc.) may play on the same non-school team and then the same high school team the following season in that sport.
 - The Fifty-Percent Rule does not apply in the summer except for students attending individual camps.
 - The Fifty-Percent Rule does not apply to players on middle school or junior high teams.

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- **What every parent should know about the Higher Level Participation Rule:**
 - A student will be ineligible at any AHSAA-member school if he/she enrolls or registers in an institution of higher rank or plays on an athletic team of such an institution.
 - It is not a violation if a student's principal approves his/her enrollment in special classes for an accelerated or enrichment program.
 - College tryouts are permitted, but only outside the high school sports season.

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- **What every parent should know about working with coaches during the school year:**
 - During the school year, a student may not be coached by his/her school's coaching staff outside the season of his/her sport except for the allowable 2 hours per week per athlete. (see Rule III. Coaching outside school year.)
 - An evaluation period allowed in each sport is exempt from this restriction.
 - Weight training and conditioning programs are exempt from this restriction.

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- **What every parent should know about the Summer Practice Rules:**
 - During the summer months (from the end of school until the first fall sports practice date), a student may be coached by his/her school coach during the three allowable weeks in competition for each sport in which the student participates.
 - During the summer months (from the end of school until the first fall sports practice date), there is no limit on the number of practice days a student may be coached by his/her coach.
 - Mandatory practices are not allowed.

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- **What every parent should know about the Dressing Out Rule:**
 - An ineligible student-athlete may not dress in uniform for an athletic contest, sit on the bench in a game uniform or be on the field or court as a player.
 - An ineligible student-athlete may practice with his/her school team and is covered by catastrophic insurance.

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- **What every parent should know about the Levels of Competition Rule:**
 - A student may not participate in two levels of competition (varsity, junior varsity, B-team, junior high or middle school) in one sport during the same event or the same day.
 - This restriction includes all tournaments even though they may be played over several days.

Recruiting cautions:

- ▶ It is illegal for a coach or anyone associated with another school to talk to a student (not enrolled in his/her school) about transferring to their school to participate in athletics. (this includes private instructors, trainers, club coaches, etc.)
- ▶ It is also illegal for a coach or anyone associated with another school to talk to parents about their student transferring to the other school to participate in athletics.
- ▶ Parents on their own will, may visit a school to inquire about their child transferring to a new school.
- ▶ If a student or parent is contacted by anyone about transferring to a new school, they should notify their school principal immediately.

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- Official AHSAA Rulings
 - To receive an official ruling, the principal of a member school must request a ruling in writing to the Executive Director or Eligibility Coordinator.
 - Official Rulings are issued/approved in writing by the Executive Director or Eligibility Coordinator. A verbal opinion, statement or email is not an official ruling.

AHSAA Contact Information

- ▶ Alabama High School Athletic Association
 - ▶ P.O. Box 242367
 - ▶ 7325 Halcyon Summit Drive
 - ▶ Montgomery, AL 36124-2367
- ▶ Phone – (334) 263-6994
 - ▶ FAX – (334) 387-0075
- ▶ Website – www.ahsaa.com