

ELIGIBILITY FOR ATHLETICS AND ACTIVITIES

The Waterloo Community School District recognizes the value of student participation in extracurricular activities. The purpose of the regulation is to improve the participation rate of students in athletics and activities as well as improve the District's overall graduation rate. A team approach, involving the District, parents, students, and staff, is necessary to enhance this regulation.

Extra-curricular activities include all school-sponsored programs for which a student does not receive a credit or grade. The participation of as many students as possible is encouraged. High School participation in sanctioned sports or activities, however, shall be subject to regulations governing eligibility.

Students must meet and follow all governing bodies (IHSAA, IGHSAU, IHSSA, and IHSMA) as stated in Chapter 281 of the Iowa Administrative Code, Section 36. You may click [HERE](#) to also reference the ISHAA Handbook.

It is the policy of the Waterloo Community School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices.

I. BASIC ELIGIBILITY, GRADES 7-12

1. Required Forms

Each year students must have the following on file in the athletic director's office. All forms can be found on the Waterloo Schools website at <https://www.waterlooschools.org/athletics/student-parent-corner/>

- a. Athletic Physical Form
- b. Heads Up Concussion Fact Sheet
- c. Student Athlete and Parent Contract
- d. Health and Injury Information / Consent for Medical Treatment

2. Attendance

- a. Attendance at school and practices is mandatory. If a student continually misses practice, he/she may be referred to the building athletic director or school activities administrator for removal from the team.
- b. Students who are absent for all or part of a school day will not be allowed to participate in practice, competition, or performances on that day unless special permission is received from the building principal or his/her designee. If a student begins attending classes as of 10:30 a.m., attends the rest of the day, and the absence prior to 10:30 a.m. was excused, the student will be allowed to participate in practice, competition, or performances that day
- c. Students who are on out-of-school suspension or expulsion are not allowed on any school property or to attend any school activity, including athletic

events. Students who are on in-school suspension must go directly to and from the assigned room for in-school suspension and are not allowed on any other area of school property or to attend any school activity, including athletic events. Students who are assigned to in-school suspension for reasons other than behavioral will be allowed to practice and compete in athletic events.

3. High School Academic Eligibility

- a. All students shall be considered eligible in the fall of their ninth-grade year (if entering the ninth grade for the first time); unless a good conduct violation has occurred during the summer prior to the ninth-grade year.
- b. Ineligible time period is 20 consecutive calendar days for all participation levels Freshman through Varsity level play
- c. Students must be enrolled in at least four subjects at all times to be eligible.
- d. Eligibility is determined based on transcribed grades (where credit is awarded) after a grading period including all concurrent course work and all online course work.
- e. A student may not, for the purposes of eligibility, take a class during the summer session to replace a grade earned in the same class the previous academic year for the purpose of determining eligibility.
 - i. Any other class taken during a summer session will be treated as an additional class and will be included with the grades for the previous spring semester. The student's GPA will be recalculated after an official transcript has been received.
- f. Academic ineligibility and Good Conduct ineligibility cannot be served concurrently
- g. Student must complete the season in which they are serving their ineligibility in order to count the days served
- h. If a student does not compete during a full year after receiving a failed grade, the student is eligible to compete in the next activity (one year look back)
- i. A student may not have had a twentieth (20th) birthday

4. Middle School Academic Eligibility

Students are expected to keep up with homework on a daily basis. Study tables will be offered to students who are struggling and/or hold an "F" in any core class. For the vast majority of students, doing daily work will lead to satisfactory grades. Staff dealing with academics and extra-curricular activities shall develop a partnership. Teaching teams will work with coaches and sponsors to make sure

that students have assigned work finished before engaging in other activities. Teaching students to understand this connection at the middle school level should lead to more success in all areas

Students who do not meet these requirements will be suspended from competition. Building administrators will work with teachers and coaches to develop a system to monitor student progress and eligibility. The building Athletic Director and/or building administration will determine eligibility in each student's unique situation.

- a. All students shall be considered eligible in the fall of their seventh-grade year (if entering the seventh grade for the first time); unless a good conduct violation has occurred during the summer prior to the seventh-grade year.
- b. Adhere to District Student Conduct Code including no major discipline problems
- c. Attendance at all practices, team sessions (with the exception of excused absences)
- d. Work with academic supports, who will monitor grades on a weekly basis, and adhere to any academic improvement plans developed
- e. Meet District attendance policy requirements

II. GOOD CONDUCT ELIGIBILITY, GRADES 7-12

Any student who (in season or out of season) admits to or is taken into custody, cited, arrested, convicted, placed on official or unofficial probation or adjudicated or through the process of investigation by school officials is found to be in violation of breaking the law for any acts other than minor traffic violations and curfew violations shall be in violation of the Good Conduct Eligibility Guidelines.

1. If a violation occurs during the summer between the sixth/seventh or eighth/ninth grade, the student is ineligible based on the number of offenses stated above for the first available sport in which the student participates in.
2. A student may also lose eligibility for any of the following behaviors observed or reported by law enforcement or school officials, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Possession, use, distribution, or purchase of tobacco products, regardless of the students age;
 - b. Possession, use, distribution, or purchase of e-cigarettes, vape products, or alternative nicotine products, unless with physician permission regardless of the student's age;
 - c. Possession, use, distribution, being under the influence, or the sale or purchase of alcoholic beverages;
 - d. Possession, use, distribution, being under the influence, or purchase of illegal drugs and/or drug paraphernalia, and the unauthorized possession, use, distribution, being under the influence of, or purchase of otherwise

- lawful drugs, and the possession, use, distribution, being under the influence of, or purchase of lawful items for the purpose of achieving mind-altering effects;
- e. Founded incidents of bullying, hazing or harassment of others
 - f. Possession of weapons.
3. When school officials find students to be in violation of the Good Conduct Eligibility Guidelines, the students will be denied the privilege of participating in a number of extracurricular activities as follows:
- a. 1st Offense - Students shall be suspended for a minimum of twenty percent of all activities in which a student is participating at the time of the violation.
 - i. For the first offense, if a student self-reports within 48 hours of the incident or prior to the next event, whichever comes first, to the athletic director, a ten percent penalty may be imposed unless the violation is already known to school officials and/or under investigation.
 - ii. Admitting to a violation when questioned by school officials does not qualify as self-reporting
 - iii. Self-reporting can only be used one time at the middle school level and one time at the high school level
 - b. 2nd Offense (within one year of the date of the first offense) – A student will be suspended for a minimum of forty percent of all activities in which the student is participating at the time of the violation.
 - c. 3rd Offense (within one year of the date of the previous offense) – A student will be suspended from all activities for a period of one calendar year from the date of the last violation.
4. For students who voluntarily seek help for substance abuse problems prior to a violation, the following will apply:
- a. A student who is not currently under investigation for use, possession, and/or distribution of alcohol, or other controlled substances may voluntarily seek help from the building administrator or his/her designee for any substance abuse problem.
 - b. A student who seeks help, voluntarily, shall do so without penalty.
 - c. The building administrator may refer the student to a licensed substance abuse program for counseling and treatment.
 - d. If it is determined that the student should be referred to a community agency for assistance, the student, parent, guardian, or legal custodian must give written consent for the exchange of information between the school and the appropriate agency(ies).
 - e. A student who voluntarily seeks help from a licensed or accredited counseling or treatment program approved by the Waterloo Community School District before the violation will remain eligible for athletics and for participation in extracurricular activities so long as eligibility rules are not broken.

5. Students are not allowed to join any sport after the tenth day of practice or in a fall sport after the third day of school of the season and apply their ineligibility to that sport in order to avoid punishment during another sport season. In addition, if a student in good standing (both in conduct and academics) joins a team after the first day of practice, that student must participate in at least 10 practices prior to a competition at the high school level (5 practices prior to competition at the middle school level).
6. The Administration may also have at their discretion the ability to impose consequences of greater magnitude due to the severity of the violation which may include violations of the student conduct code not previously specified.

III. STUDENTS WITH AN INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN

A student with a disability who has an individualized education program shall not be denied eligibility on the basis of scholarship if the student is making adequate progress, as determined by school officials, towards the goals and objectives of the student's individualized education program.

IV. TRANSFER ELIGIBILITY

Student athletes shall attend the school in their geographic attendance area in accordance with Waterloo Community School District Policy 501.6 (*School Attendance Areas*).

Student athletes who have a change of address during the school year and prior to each school year shall provide proof of residency to the District Registrar or the individual school registrars for verification prior to the student athlete engaging in interscholastic competition.

The receiving school shall be entitled to rely upon the verified address until such time as it shall receive knowledge or information that the previously verified address may be inaccurate.

Any student transferring into the Waterloo Community Schools who is ineligible under the prior school's Academic or Good Conduct Rule and has not completed the full period of ineligibility imposed by that school will not be eligible for extracurricular competition at any District high school until the full period of ineligibility has passed. Once the period of ineligibility has been completed, the student is immediately eligible for extracurricular competition, as far as any Academic or Good Conduct Rule is concerned.

A student who transfers from a school in another state or country or from one member or associate member school to another member or associate member school shall be ineligible to compete in interscholastic athletics for a period of 90 consecutive school days, as defined in 281-Subrule 12.1(256), exclusive of summer enrollment unless one of the exceptions listed in paragraph 36.15(3) "a" applies. The period of ineligibility applies only to varsity-level contests and competitions. ("Varsity" means the highest level of competition offered by one school or school district against the highest level of competition offered by an opposing school or school district.) The student will become

eligible at 4:00 PM on the 90th day. In ruling upon the eligibility of transfer students, the executive board shall consider the factors motivating student changes in residency. Unless otherwise provided in these rules, a student intending to establish residency must show that the student is physically present in the district for the purpose of making a home and not solely for school or athletic purposes.

1. Exceptions: The Executive Officer or Executive Board shall consider and apply the following exceptions in formally or informally ruling upon the eligibility of a transfer student and may make eligibility contingent upon proof that the student has been in attendance in the new school for at least ten school days:
 - a. Upon a contemporaneous change in parental residence, a student is immediately eligible if the student transfers to the new district of residence or to an accredited nonpublic member or associate member school located in the new school district of residence. In addition, if with a contemporaneous change in parental residence, the student had attended an accredited nonpublic member or associate member school immediately prior to the change in parental residence, the student may have immediate eligibility if the student transfers to another accredited nonpublic member or associate member school.
 - b. If the student is attending in a school district as a result of a whole-grade sharing agreement between the student's resident district and the new school district of attendance, the student is immediately eligible.
 - c. A student who has attended high school in a district other than where the student's parent(s) resides, and who subsequently returns to live with the student's parent(s) becomes immediately eligible in the parent's resident district.
 - d. Pursuant to Iowa Code Section 256.46, a student whose residence changes due to any of the following circumstances is immediately eligible provided the student meets all other eligibility requirements in these rules and those set by the school of attendance:
 - i. Adoption. 39
 - ii. Placement in foster or shelter care.
 - iii. Participation in a foreign exchange program recognized by the school of attendance.
 - iv. Placement in a juvenile correction facility.
 - v. Participation in a substance abuse program.
 - vi. Participation in a mental health program.
 - vii. Court decree that the student is a ward of the state or of the court.
 - viii. The child is living with one of the child's parents as a result of divorce, separation, death, or other change in the child's parent's marital relationship, or pursuant to other court-ordered decree or order of custody.
 - e. A transfer student who attends a member or associate member school or school that is a party to a cooperative student participation agreement, as defined in rule 36.20(280), with the member or associate member school the student previously attended is immediately eligible in the new district to compete in those interscholastic athletic activities covered by the cooperative agreement.

- f. Any student whose parents change district of residence but who remains in the original district without interruption in attendance continues to be eligible in the member or associate member school of attendance.
 - g. A special education student whose attendance center changes due to a change in placement agreed to by the district of residence is eligible in either the resident district or the district of attendance, but not both.
 - h. A student who is found by the attending district to be a homeless child or youth as defined in rule 281-33.2(256).
 - i. In any transfer situation not provided for elsewhere in this chapter, the Executive Board shall exercise its administrative authority to make any eligibility ruling that it deems to be fair and reasonable. The Executive Board shall consider the motivating factors for the student transfer. The determination shall be made in writing with the reasons for the determination clearly delineated.
2. Intra District Transfers include any student athlete who changes residence with parent/guardian move; changes their school attendance with a Student Services Special Permission or District Voluntary Transfer. These students shall be ineligible to compete at the varsity level for 90 consecutive school days.
 - a. If after participating in a Student Services Special Permission or District Voluntary Transfer, a student desires to return to his/her home school, the student shall be ineligible to compete at the varsity level for 90 consecutive school days.
 - b. Additionally, if the student transfers to a different school during a semester, the student will be ineligible until the end of the current semester AND for 90 consecutive school days beginning on the first day of the next semester.
 - c. Students approved for the District's Voluntary Student Transfer Program at the ninth-grade level will be accorded immediate eligibility (in regard to the Athletic Transfer Rule) for athletic and other school activities at the receiving school.
 - d. Any student athlete who is found to have falsified his/her address in order to attend a specific school, shall be ineligible for interscholastic competition on behalf of that school for a period of one calendar year from the date of the final determination to that affect by the District administrator in charge of athletics.
3. Open Enrolled students in grades 9 through 12 whose transfer of schools had occurred due to a request for open enrollment by the student's parent or guardian is ineligible to compete in interscholastic athletics, during the first 90 school days of the transfer except that a student may participate immediately if the student is entering grade 9 for the first time and did not participate in an interscholastic athletic competition for another school during the summer immediately following eighth grade. The period of ineligibility applies only to varsity-level contests and competitions. ("Varsity" means the highest level of competition offered by one school or school district against the highest level of competition offered by an

opposing school or school district.) If a pupil is declared ineligible for interscholastic athletic contests and athletic competitions in the pupil's district of residence due to the pupil's academic performance, upon participating in open enrollment, in addition to any other period of ineligibility under this rule, the pupil shall be ineligible in the receiving district for the remaining period of ineligibility declared by the district of residence. The student will become eligible at 4:00 PM on the 90th day. This period of ineligibility does not apply if the student:

- a. Participates in an athletic activity in the receiving district that is not available in the district of residence; or
- b. Participates in an athletic activity for which the resident and receiving districts have a cooperative student participation agreement pursuant to Rule 36.20(280); or
 - i. Students who participate in District athletics and activities through cooperative sharing agreements with other school districts must meet the eligibility requirements of their own school as well as those of the Waterloo Community Schools.
- c. Has paid tuition for one or more years to the receiving school district prior to making an application for and being granted open enrollment; or
- d. Has attended in the receiving district for one or more years prior to making an application for and being granted open enrollment under a sharing or mutual agreement between the resident and receiving districts; or
- e. Has been participating in open enrollment and whose parents/guardians move out of their district of residence but exercise either the option of remaining in the original open enrollment district or enrolling in the new district of residence. If the pupil student has established athletic eligibility under open enrollment, it is continued despite the parent's or guardian's change in residence; or
- f. Has not been participating in open enrollment but utilizes open enrollment to remain in the original district of residence following a change of residence of the student's parent(s). If the pupil student has established athletic eligibility, it is continued despite the parent's or guardian's change in residence; or
- g. Obtains open enrollment due to the dissolution and merger of the former district of residence under Iowa Code Subsection 256.11(12); or
- h. Obtains open enrollment due to the pupil's student's district of residence entering into a whole grade sharing agreement on or after July 1, 1990, including the grade in which the pupil student would be enrolled at the start of the whole-grade sharing agreement; or
- i. Participates in open enrollment and the parent/guardian is an active member of the armed forces and resides in permanent housing on government property provided by a branch of the armed services.
- j. Enrolls from a district of residence that has determined that the student was previously subject to a founded incident of harassment or bullying as defined in section 280.28 while attending school in the district of residence.
- k. The student participates in open enrollment because of circumstances that meet the definition of "good cause" under Iowa Code section 282.18(4)"b"; or l. The board of directors or superintendent of the district of residence issues or implements a decision that results in the discontinuance or

suspension of varsity interscholastic sports activities in the district of residence; or m. The board of directors of the district of residence and the board of directors of the receiving district 41 both agree to waive the ineligibility period

V. APPEAL PROCEDURES

In the event of any dispute regarding eligibility of a student athlete, appeals can be submitted in writing to the District Athletic Director for review by the athletic committee comprised of Athletic Directors within three (3) days of notice of violation.

Any decision made by the District administrator in charge of athletics, pursuant to the foregoing policy, shall be subject to the Student Grievance procedure found in policy 503.3-R, commencing at level three. An appeal must, however, be filed with the Superintendent within three (3) days of the delivery of the written decision of the District administrator in charge of athletics

Cross Ref.: 504.1 Drug-Free School Environment
504.3 Student Conduct Code
602.5 High School Graduation

ADOPTED: 4/96
10/97
4/98
7/16/99
2/28/00
3/2/01
5/2/02
11/29/06
8/15/07
5/1/08
11/6/08
8/26/24

Reviewed: 2/2/00, 11/3/00, 3/2/01, 5/2/02, 2/5/04, 11/29/06, 8/15/07, 5/1/08, 11/6/08, 08/12/10, 2/3/11, 3/3/11, 3/12/13, 6/9/14, 7/8/20, 8/12/20, 8/1/24