

The Ohio High School Athletic Association

Eligibility is one issue that is on the front page for everyone. Ineligibility

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### **Step 1 – Making Sure you have ALL your student-athletes accounted for**

Sounds easy. But you want to make sure YOU know every single player that is part of your football team for example. Every school requires a **Pre-Participation Physical**. Every school also requires a number of other 'forms' – EM forms Insurance Waivers, etc. So...Step 1 – have every student-athlete submit their forms to the coach (I often say that is why we have assistant coaches!). The Coach then turns them in to you. At that point, you enter them into your data entry form OR on the OHSAA Eligibility template located at the bottom of this link: <http://www.ohsaa.org/eligibility/default.asp> You will need this Eligibility Form for submission at tournament time.

**Suggestion – put ALL 9-12 players on 1 Eligibility List. It provides you the opportunity to move kids up without having to worry if they are on the correct list. It is better to have them ON a list even if they 'quit' later on.**

### **Step 2 – Check the Eligibility**

Sounds easy again. Hopefully, your last quarter grades from last school year are not archived and you have access to them. If not, you will have to look at hard copies of grade cards one at a time. A time consuming task but the most important step. Close the door...no interruptions. What are you looking for?

- 5 Credit courses passed in the last grading period (which would have been the last grading period of 2013-14). Do not count summer school grades and make certain you are not looking at exam grades or at semester averages. Last grading period.
- A last grading period GPA that is above what your school requires. This varies based on your school district.
- No more 'F' grades than your school permits. Again...this varies from school to school.

For semester courses, etc., just see the "Q and A's" below. If there is anyone that was not in your system – that simply means they are a transfer or possibly an exchange student. Set those aside.

### **Step 3 – Correct the Eligibility Certificate by removing any name of an Ineligible Athlete – Notify their Family**

Make a list of all INELIGIBLE athletes you come across. Take their name off the Eligibility Certificate you typed. Rules actually require you to send a letter to parents of ineligible athletes simply to notify them of their son/daughter's failure to meet eligibility requirements.

### **Step 4 – Provide the List to the Head Coach of each Sport**

Provide a copy of the Eligibility List **to the head coach** with a signed note by you indicating "these are the ONLY athletes 'certified' to participate in any scrimmage, Preview, Jamboree or game. Have him/her sign the bottom (attach a memo to the list) having them DOUBLE check the list and return and indicating any discrepancy. If there IS a discrepancy, most likely it will be from step 1 – an athlete without a Physical or "packet" turned in. And...why would they be practicing???? A good question for the coach. Make it **very clear** in your attached memo that "no individual – under any circumstances – will be permitted to practice or compete without receiving an updated Eligibility Sheet from YOU.

### **Step 5– Check the Ones You Sat Aside**

Though any you sat aside (transfers, exchange students) would be omitted from your sheet – the fact they are not on the Eligibility List you created gives you time to ascertain they are legitimate. Now, "simply" go through that process. More on "Transfers" and "Exchange Students" later. Once they are approved, simply add them to your Official Eligibility List and repeat Step #4 above.

### **Finally....Update as Needed**

It may seem like a lot of work...and it is. But it SHOULD protect you from any ineligible athlete from participating in a contest. And....ineligible athletes participating in contests result in forfeiture of a contest.

## **A Few Common Questions.....and Answers!**

### **How long is a physical good?**

**Answer:** Rules permits a Pre-Participation Physical to be good for 1 calendar year. We provide an 'exception' that permits a physical taken in May to be 'good' through the next school year. This prevents an individual from having to get a new physical for 2 or 3 weeks just to get through the season.

### **Can a player play in multiple sports during the same sports' season?**

**Answer:** Yes...The OHSAA has no rules preventing this and leave it up to a school district. Obviously most common is a Soccer player participating as a kicker in football. It is permitted. If you want any advice on a 'policy' that protects coaches and Players alike, just email me. I have some great suggestions.

### **What is the latest date a player can come out for a sport?**

**Answer:** Actually, we (the OHSAA) do not care. Keep in mind that a football player that comes out late must still go through the Same 5 day acclimatization as everyone else. Also, there is a 'drop dead' date in which a player cannot participate in a NON-SCHOOL sport and be eligible to participate in that same sport for the school. This date is known as the "Non-Interscholastic date and will be covered later in depth.