



OHIO HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

Doug Ute, Executive Director

Student Eligibility Guidance for High School Principals and Athletic Administrators

Enrollment & Attendance Bylaw Guidance

Bylaw 4-3-1, Exception 6: ORC 3313.5321

Student Athlete Mobility (SAM) Act Guidance & Business Rules for Multi-HS Districts

This document will focus on Bylaw 4-3-1 Exception 6 and the specific applicability of ORC 3313.5321, Student Athlete Mobility Act. **Please note that this state law does not require a ruling from the OHSAA;** however, a significant amount of diligence on the part of the administrator is required.

Bylaw 4-3-1 All students participating in a school-sponsored sport must be enrolled in and attending full-time in accordance with all duly adopted Board of Education or similar governing board policies of that school.

EXCEPTION 6: *Unless otherwise mandated within the Ohio Revised Code. Nonetheless, a student whose participation opportunity is afforded through these statutory provisions is still subject to the remaining eligibility requirements as with all other student-athletes including, but not limited to, age, semesters, scholarship and transfer eligibility bylaws.*

Guidance Note: Exception 6 was added to address any situations which might be mandated by the state legislature. Students covered under this exception, who are permitted to have a participation opportunity at a school at which they are not enrolled, include:

1. Home educated students
2. STEM school students whose school does not offer a respective sport
3. Community school students whose school does not offer a respective sport
4. Non-public school students whose school does not offer a respective sport
5. **Public school students whose school does not offer a respective sport (As of 2026-27 school year)**

For further guidance regarding legislative changes addressed in items 1-4 for the non-enrolled student, click here: <http://www.ohsaa.org/eligibility/CommonlyAskedQuestions> <http://www.ohsaa.org/Portals/0/Eligibility/GuidelinesForNon-EnrolledStudents.pdf>

Ohio Revised Code section 3313.5321 provides students enrolled in a public high school that does not offer a particular sport an opportunity, **not a guarantee**, to participate at a different public school operated by (or located in) a neighboring public school district that directly borders the student's district of enrollment. Participation at a different public school is subject to an agreement between the superintendent of the student's district of enrollment and the superintendent of the neighboring public school district. To determine if one school district directly borders another, you can review the ODEW's school district map here: <https://bit.ly/OhioSchoolDistricts>

A form has been developed as a template for superintendents to utilize when entering into these agreements. This does not need to be submitted to the OHSAA office. You can access the form here:

<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Eligibility/forms/SuptAgree3313.5321.pdf>

NOTE: This newly enacted state law only applies to high school students. Students enrolled in OHSAA 7th & 8th grade public schools are required to abide by Bylaw 4-3-1 and may only participate at the school in which they are enrolled.



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1. Items to note for all students:

- Students are required to continue to meet all eligibility requirements outlined within OHSAA Bylaw 4, Student Eligibility.
 - o When determining eligibility with regard to Bylaw 4-4, Scholarship (i.e. Grades), students must abide by all requirements set forth by the district **in which they are participating**, even if those requirements may differ from the district in which they are enrolled.
 - This includes providing grades as of the end of the grading period of that district; abiding by the GPA requirement of that district; submitting grades for interim grade checks; etc.
 - The OHSAA's recommended grade report sheet can be found here: <http://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Eligibility/OtherEligibilityDocs/CCP.Non-EnrolledStudentGradeSheet.pdf>
- This state law does not permit students to participate at non-public schools in which they are not enrolled.
- This state law only applies if the student's school does not offer the sport **as a whole**. Students may not petition to participate in a different district solely because a specific level of competition is not offered (i.e. Varsity, JV, Freshman, etc.).
- Female students are permitted to petition to participate within a different district if their district only offers a boys or coed team.
- If a school participates in a regular season contest and subsequently cancels the season, students enrolled in that school are **not** permitted to petition to participate in that sport at a different school until the following school year (OHSAA Bylaw 4-1-4).
- Students participating in accordance with this state law shall be Tier 1 students in competitive balance sports.

2. For students **petitioning to participate** in single high school districts:

- Confirm the student's school of enrollment does not offer the sport and has not participated in a regular season contest this school year in that sport.
 - o *If the student is enrolled in a multi-high school district, confirm that no school sponsored by that district offers the sport or that the student was denied participation at a different school sponsored by that district.*
- Confirm the student's district of enrollment directly borders your district: <https://bit.ly/OhioSchoolDistricts>
- Complete the agreement between the superintendents to finalize the student's participation opportunity: (LINK)
- Collect the documentation found here: <http://www.ohsaa.org/Portals/0/Eligibility/GuidelinesForNon-EnrolledStudents.pdf>

3. For students **petitioning to participate** in multi-high school districts:

- Confirm the student's school of enrollment does not offer the sport and has not participated in a regular season contest this school year in that sport.
 - o *If the student is enrolled in a multi-high school district, confirm that no school sponsored by that district offers the sport or that the student was denied participation at a different school sponsored by that district.*
- Confirm the student's district of enrollment directly borders your district: <https://bit.ly/OhioSchoolDistricts>
- Complete the agreement between the superintendents to finalize the student's participation opportunity: (LINK)
- **Depending on student's district of residence, student will be required to be assigned to a school in accordance with either the red or orange flow on page 2 of the Business Rules for Participation in a Multi-HS District:** <https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Eligibility/BusinessRulesMultiHSPublic.pdf>
- Collect the documentation found here: <http://www.ohsaa.org/Portals/0/Eligibility/GuidelinesForNon-EnrolledStudents.pdf>



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4. Guidance and business rules for students enrolled within a traditional* school operated by a multi-high school district:
- Students must first petition to participate at a different school within the same multi-high school district.
 - Students approved to participate within the same multi-high school district must be assigned to the school closest to the student's school of enrollment.
 - o If the school closest to the student's school of enrollment does not offer the sport in question, the student must be assigned to the next closest school to the student's school of enrollment **for that sport only**. The student's eligibility will revert back to the school closest to their school of enrollment for any other applicable sports.
 - o The superintendent of the multi-high school district may petition to place the student at a different school when extenuating circumstances (which exist through no fault of the student) prevent the student from participating at a school in accordance with these business rules.
 - The superintendent must provide a letter to the Executive Director's Office clearly and specifically defining the rationale for the request, and the letter must include documented proof of the extenuating circumstances preventing the placement of the student.
 - Students may only petition to participate within a neighboring public school district if their district of enrollment does not offer the sport at any school operated by the district or if they are denied the opportunity to participate within a different school sponsored by that district.
 - o Please review sections 2 & 3 above for steps on how to grant a student a participation opportunity in a neighboring district.
 - **Students enrolled in non-traditional schools sponsored by a multi-high school district are permitted a participation opportunity in accordance with Bylaw 4-3-1 Exception 4. Assignment for participation by students in these non-traditional schools is governed by the [OHSAA Business Rules for Participation within a Multi-HS District](#). Please review the **red** and **orange** flows on page 2 for more information.*

Please feel free to contact Ronald Sayers (rsayers@ohsaa.org) or Andy Bixler (abixler@ohsaa.org) if you have any questions!